Pakistan Medical Commission Minutes Third Council Meeting Tuesday, November, 10<sup>th</sup> 2020 Held at PMC, Islamabad

## Present

Dr. Arshad Taqi, President Mr. Muhammad Ali Raza, Vice President Lt. General Nigar Johar Khan, Surgeon General of Pakistan, Member Mr. Aamir Ashraf Khawaja, Federal Secretary Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations & Coordination, Member Dr. Rumina Hassan, Member (on line) Dr. Asif Loya, Member Dr. Anees ur Rehman, Member Ms. Roshana Zafar, Member (on line) Mr. Tariq Ahmed Khan, Member

Meeting was chaired by the President and called to order The meeting started with recitation of the Holy Quran The President welcomed all members of the Council.

Agenda Item 1	Grant of Provisional/Permanent license to Cuban and Bangladesh Graduates who were sent on government scholarship programs.
Discussion	In past a few student were sent to Cuba /Bangladesh on government scholarship programs. The students qualified from Escuela Latino americana de Medicina, Cuba and public sector colleges in Bangladesh. Some of the Cuban graduates after passing NEB examination and on the basis of their Internship in Cuba were granted permanent (Full) registration for <b>one</b> year as a temporary measure.
	Their further renewal of PM&DC registration was subject to the condition that they will not do independent private practice during that one year and will submit a certificate of competence by a specialist doctor registered with PM&DC under whom he/she had worked during that one year.

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	The graduates had sought to rely on a certificate from the universit that the degree is valid for licensing in Cuba however, the certificat was not equivalent to a license. As per record none of thes graduates hold a license to practice medicine in Cuba or Banglades which can be recognized by the Council.
	Council had a detailed discussion regarding grant of license to the foreign graduates from above mentioned countries under government scholarship programs and it was agreed upon the house job of all such graduates needs to be verified before issuance of license otherwise they must follow the pathway applicable to a others for grant of licenses.
	The Council decided as under : Students who have acquired medical degrees from Escuel Latinoamericana de Medicina, Cuba or Public sector colleges i Bangladesh under an old Government of Pakistan scholarshi program shall be processed for licensing in the following categorie and manner;
	<b>Category I</b> A Cuban/Bangladesh graduate who has not done a house job in Cuba/Bangladesh (whether qualified NEB or not), shall be granted Provisional License to do a house job. On completion of house job the graduate may apply for Full License upon qualifying the NLE.
Decision	Category II A Cuban/Bangladesh graduate who has passed his NEB Step III an completed a house job in Cuba/Bangladesh, shall be granted a Fu License to practice in Pakistan upon verification of the house job from the Cuban/Bangladesh Government authority.
	<b>Category III</b> A Cuban/Bangladesh graduate who has not passed his NEB Step but completed a house job in Cuba/Bangladesh, shall be granted Full License to practice in Pakistan upon verification of the house job from the Cuban/Bangladesh Government authority and co qualifying NLE in Pakistan.
Agenda Item No.2	Case of Kyrgyzstan colleges. Brief by President.
	President PMC apprised the Council regarding his meeting with Ambassador of The Kyrgyz Republic.
Discussion	He further informed the council that Pakistan Embassy in Bishke

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8495 students from Pakistan were admitted in Kyrgyz medical schools in 2019. A number of these schools were imparting substandard education to students who are being lured into these colleges by agents with the promise of guaranteed entry into medical schools without any prerequisite criteria. This concern was raised again when PMC was formed after the Parliament passed PMC 2020 Act. Meanwhile, a massive campaign to recruit students in undergraduate programmes in medicine in Kyrgyz Republic was underway and it was realized that thousands of students will be lured into these programmes if an urgent action was not taken. A public warning was therefore issued that in future graduates from Kyrgyz republic will not qualify for licensing with PMC.

In the letter it was conceded that over a dozen new private universities were formed between 2013-18 and most of these were commercial entities without any clinical bases or qualified teaching staff. It also highlighted that PMDC did not have access to the list of these universities or ever assessed them. Once the Medical Council of India shortlisted 7 medical universities for recognition, the rest of the colleges targeted students from Pakistan for marketing and admissions.

A meeting was held on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2020 in PMC office with the Ambassador and the Deputy Head of the Mission wherein he requested to remove four Public Sector Universities, which are members of the Association of Medical Universities of Kyrgyz Republic from the "Blacklist". The Kyrgyzstan Government has verified the credentials as per the Commissions requirements being validly recognized programs and capable of being licensed in Kyrgyzstan also. It was confirmed by the Ambassador that in fact many of the private colleges did not even have clinical study programs and some did not have proper buildings or staff.

The Ambassador was briefed on the background of the decision by PMC to stop the public from seeking admission to Kyrgyz Universities. The President sought cooperation of the embassy in providing the information required for recognition of their colleges in the future.

Furthermore, the Council was apprised that Foreign Secretary of Pakistan has also been informed that PMC needs to assess and verify the status of foreign medical colleges for purposes of recognition of degrees awarded by them to students who seek to apply for licensing to practice medicine or dentistry in Pakistan. Compared to the previous cumbersome procedure of verifications and foreign graduates having to take a three step examination, under the new law once the foreign college is assessed and recognized, its graduates can seamlessly apply for licensing in Pakistan and would



be required to take the same National Licensing Exam that our local graduates are required to take for grant of a practitioners license. While the colleges being assessed by PMC are from around the world, in terms of priority PMC has sought to initiate the process with those countries where there is a large number of Pakistani students studying or having graduated have returned to Pakistan and are seeking licenses.

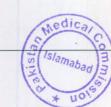
Moreover, it has been observed that there are cases where foreign graduates have degrees which are not registerable in the country from where they have graduated. This fact is borne out by the verifications received in the past from these colleges for purposes of NEB exams and licensing. It was categorically stated on these forms by the foreign colleges that their degrees were not recognized in the home country and were not valid for obtaining licensing in the home country. Even then the defunct PM&DC had been granting graduates from these colleges licenses on passing the NEB Step III exam. It was also discovered that in many cases the defunct PM&DC had been granting NOC's to some of these students for purposes of obtaining visas in respect of these unrecognized colleges. There existed no basis for grant of these NOC's and these were clearly misrepresentation on the part of the PM&DC.

Colleges which had already certified themselves on these earlier forms that their degrees were not valid for licensing in the home country should be placed on the Black List unless the government of their home country confirms otherwise as they admittedly don't fulfill the basic criteria for recognition of foreign colleges by the Commission. Also graduates from these who have applied for licensing must be refused irrespective of having qualified NEB exams or not as otherwise it would amount to granting licenses to persons who are not properly qualified for the medical profession and a mere three step exam cannot replace the primary pre condition that they have undertaken studies and qualified from a proper medical program having proper clinical education.

The four medical colleges in Kyrgystan; I.K.Akhunbaev Kyrgyz State Medical Academy, Osh State University, Kyrgyz-Russian (Slavic) University and International Higher School of Medicine, International University of Kyrgyzstan be recognized and placed on the Green List for registering graduates from these universities. All other medical colleges in Kyrgyzstan be placed on the nonrecognized list of colleges until they fulfill the criteria in the future.

The Government of Pakistan be requested that our ambassadors in different countries be engaged to expedite the assessment of the

Decision



foreign colleges. All Foreign Colleges will be assessed on the criteria which was decided in the previous meeting of the Council.

Based on the assessment a Green List of the colleges will be uploaded on the PMC Website. The list will be updated on regular bases subject to verifications received.

Colleges which are assessed and confirmed as not fulfilling the criteria be placed on a Black List representing colleges having failed verification.

Meanwhile all colleges currently under assessment be placed on a Grey List.

Any foreign graduate who has in the past applied for a license on the basis of having passed NEB exams however, the verification certificate presented states that the degree is not capable of licensing in the home country or recognized in the home country shall not be granted a license, unless the relevant foreign medical college is duly assessed and recognized by the Commission at any time in the future.

All cases of grant of NOC's by the defunct PM&DC be forwarded to the Federal Investigation Agency to inquire into whether students were misled into seeking admission into non recognized medical colleges and the involvement of the many agents of these foreign colleges operating in Pakistan.

Agenda Item No.3 National MDCAT 15<sup>th</sup> Nov,2020 –update on paper printing, logistics and conduct of examination-Presentation by Director administration

National MDCAT Examination has been scheduled to be held on 15<sup>th</sup> November, 2020.

Director Administration briefed the council on logistics and conduct of examination. He explained that the entire process for holding the MDCAT exam has been completed. The PMC will ensure that sealed boxes of the examination papers are transported from the secure printing facility to each examination center and returned to the paper checking facility from each center under security movement and the process is photo recorded and video recorded for the purpose of evidence. A control room shall be established by AGL and 1 at PMC for efficient coordination.

Discussion

SOPs with regards to COVID shall be strictly followed as per the NCOC Guidelines. The Supervisory staff has been trained accordingly. The sealed papers will only be desealed and distributed

	after all students have entered the exam center and the doors have been closed.
	The Council was informed that 197 centers have been marked par Pakistan where the test will be conducted. Number of centers in the city is proportionate to the number of applicants registered from that area.
	Multiple coordination meetings have been conducted by PMC to ensure micro management. Online web projection is being done by IT department to facilitate the students.
	Provincial and district authorities have been informed in advance for provision of security.
Decision	The Council appreciated the efforts of the Authority and the Council members emphasized that security and transparency must be ensured during the whole process.
Agenda Item No.4	Composition of Questions Review Committee for 15 <sup>th</sup> Nov,2020 and format of objection form
Discussion	It was discussed that in order to facilitate the students sitting in the NMDCAT Examination a Question Review Committee will be constituted. Each examination center shall have available objection forms, on which a student who comes across any question apparently outside their syllabus shall place the question numbe and the provincial syllabus relevant to the student and hand it to the center supervisor during or immediately on conclusion of the exam The center supervisor shall on receiving an objection form immediately communicate the same electronically to the MDCA' Questions Review Committee. The Committee shall immediately verify the question from the F.Sc and Entry Test syllabus of each province. Any question which is found to be outside the relevan syllabus shall be declared as 'invalid' by the Committee. The Committee shall put down in writing its reasons for holding question to be 'invalid' or otherwise valid giving specific reference to the relevant syllabus. The decisions of the Committee shall be available publicly. All questions declared 'invalid' by the Committee shall not be marked for ALL students at the time of checking an scoring of the papers. No student shall receive a positive or negative score for an 'invalid' question.
	It was decided that the Question Review Committee shall conven

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	The Review committee shall comprise of 2 subject specialists fo each science subject, 1 for English, 1 member from IBCC, a membe from the paper setting committee and members from the council The Committee will be headed by the President.
Agenda Item No.5	Appointment of Security Company for logistics on the basis of emergency procurement
Discussion	Due to incumbent legislation and urgency involved, the response time required for national competitive bidding cannot be adhered to as the process had to be undertaken to select the entity to provide logistics in terms of collecting sealed papers from NUMS and delivering them to the centers across Pakistan under security fo holding the MDCAT exam on 15 <sup>th</sup> November 2020. Clause (d)(iii) o Rule 42 of PPRA Rules 2004 empowers a procuring agency to engage in negotiated tendering with one or more suppliers or contractor with or without prior publication of procurement notification fo reasons of extreme urgency brought about by events unforeseeable by the procuring agency, the time limits for open and limited bidding methods cannot be met. The Council was informed that proposals and quotes have been received from Askari Guards, M&P and SMS and assessed to transport the packages all over Pakistan with full security arrangements. The services of Askari Guards and SMS have been selected as primary and 1 <sup>st</sup> backup on contingency.
Decision	The Council approved the proposal keeping in view the above mentioned constraints.
Agenda Item No.6	Recommendations of HR Committee pertaining to interview of applicants of Members
Discussion	PMC has invited the applications for the position of 7 Members vide advertisements dated 16-10-2020. Human Resource Committee in its meeting held on 6 <sup>th</sup> November 2020 considered the list of applications received. It was decided that all the applications received will be initially scrutinized as per the main criteria given in the advertisement. The Committee further decided that for shortlisting and interviews following process shall be followed:

	three categories A, B and C based on comparison of CV'
	<ul> <li>against the JD's for each position and categorizing as the best to last.</li> <li>Interview panels with three members; 1 x member HI Committee, 1x Council member, 1x external subject expert.</li> <li>Interviews will be conducted of Category A first. If Panels shortlists 3 candidates after interviewing Category A candidates then no further interviews will be conducted. If less than 3 candidates shortlisted interviews of Cat B and onwards to Cat C will be conducted.</li> <li>Final shortlisted 3 candidates selected after interview will be interviewed by the Council for final decision.</li> </ul>
	The Council approved the criteria for shortlisting as proposed by the
	Human Resource Committee
Decision	Interviews to be conducted and concluded before end of November preferably.
Agenda Item No.7	Approval of Services Regulations 2020
	Human Resource Committee in its meeting held on 6 <sup>th</sup> November 2020 considered the Employee Service Regulations 2020. Same were recommended for approval and have been forwarded to the Counce for approval.
	The Council deliberated on the structure of the service regulation and the different aspects of transparency in appointment an promotions of employees in the future as well as the benefits to b granted to the employees.
Decision	After detailed deliberation the Council approved the Servic Regulations for Notification.
Decision Agenda Item No.8	



	observed that the colleges had provided various miscellaneous expenses under multiple heads and with different nomenclature.
	It was discussed that the colleges may be directed to upload the complete details of total fee (including fixed and additional charges) on their official website in light of Section 19(7) of PMC Act 2020 which states that : "All Medical & Dental Colleges shall at least three months prior to initiating the annual admissions process, publically declare the fixed tution fee and all ancillary fee structure on an annual basis for the entire program of study in which the students are seeking enrolment and which fee structure shall not be enhanced during the students period of enrolment at the college."
	It was decided that the proposed fee submitted by the colleges will be placed in 3 categories : Fixed Charges; these are the compulsory charges including tuition and all other annual charges where the student has no option but to pay.
Decision	Optional Charges; these are the non-compulsory facility charges being availed by the student primarily including hostel, transport, mess and medical insurance. These are charges to be imposed only if a student elects to utilize the offered facility/services. Security/One Time; these are charges levied one time
	<ul> <li>PMC shall send consolidated fee data to each College for a final verification. This data will be based on the information already shared by each college with PMC. Colleges shall verify the fee data within 3 days to PMC. All colleges shall also upload the same on their website for transparency and benefit of the students before opening of admissions.</li> </ul>
Agenda Item 9	Methodology for recognition of Foreign Postgraduate qualifications and institutions
Discussion	In the past Foreign Post Graduate Qualifications were registered on individual basis. A committee of council used to consider individual case applying for registration of the foreign post graduate qualification.
Medical	Keeping in view that that there is no existing criteria for recognition of such qualifications, the Council discussed that a Green list of
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	recognized post graduate programs needs to be developed.
	President PMC informed that he is already working on the methodology to be developed for fair and transparent registration process. It was decided that the Council will set the standards and policies and the same will be implemented by the authority. The Council will also define the criteria of Post Graduate, Additional and Alternative qualification. However, academic qualifications will not be registered in the license. Council agreed that parameters need to be defined in order to award equivalence to a foreign post graduate program. It was
	further discussed that credentialing must be the next step towards standardization.
	All renewals of existing licenses having any qualifications entered thereon or any new entry of qualifications on a license shall be subject to the classification of the Post Graduate, Additional and Alternative qualifications as notified by the Commission.
Decision	FCPS in clinical disciplines and corresponding MD/MS in clinical disciplines from universities will be added to the Green list of Post Graduate and Alterative qualifications. For Foreign qualifications, MRCP and FRCS are going to be reviewed in the interim period until the council finalizes the recognized programs and classification of these qualifications for the future.
	Special committee comprising of Council Members, in consultation with external experts from foreign authorities will prepare a list of registerable qualifications. Moreover, other stakeholders may also be taken on board in the recognition process.
Agenda Item No.10	Composition of Disciplinary Committee
Discussion	Pursuant to the Section 32(4) of PMC Act 2020, the council has the power to constitute Disciplinary committee consisting of 3 members of the council of which one shall be the member having legal qualifications to hear all disciplinary matters. The member law shall act as secretary to the disciplinary committee.
	The Disciplinary Committee shall function as per Section 32(6) of the PMC Act 2020.
Decision	The Council approved the constitution of the Disciplinary Committee with the following as Members:
	1) Mr, Muhammad Ali Raza (chairman) 2) Dr Asif Loya (member)
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Agenda Item No.11	Approval of the Minutes of Disciplinary Committee meeting held i 2019 and 2020
Discussion	The Council was informed that Disciplinary Committee of PM&D meetings were held in the year 2019 and also in July 2020. However, the minutes of the Meetings have not yet been approved by the Council and therefore the decisions have not been implemented. These need to be reviewed and approved so as to not encumber those whose cases have already been heard properly.
Decision	It was decided that the minutes of the 2020 decisions may be forwarded to the Surgeon General who was a member of the Committee at that and the minutes of the 2019 decisions may be forwarded to the Vice President who was a member of the Committee in 2019 for review. They shall confirm the decisions and if may remand any decision to the Disciplinary Committee for rehearing if the record is not complete. On completion of the review, the decisions shall stand approved and notified.
Agenda Item No.12	W.P. No 57593 of 2020 -Court Order dated 9-11-2020
Discussion	The Petitioner in W.P. No 57593 of 2020 sought a direction to PM to provide a carbon copy of answer sheets to the students taking the MDCAT and upload the correct answers on its website, as per pas practice. The Honourable Court has referred the matter to PMC and directed that this issue be decided before 15-11-2020. The court has also directed the petitioners /their authorized representatives to appea before PMC on 10 <sup>th</sup> November,2020.
	In another matter W.P.No 53889 of 2020 the Petitioners sought direction to PMC to consider the issue of common syllabus. The matter was also referred by the Honourable Lahore Court vide Orde dated 26-10-2020 for hearing and decision.
	Pursuant to the Lahore High Court's orders hearing was conducted by the President in Lahore in the matter of W.P.No 53889 of 2020 and the Vice President in Islamabad in W.P. No 57593 of 2020 Details of the hearings were shared with the Council. Both filed their reports on the hearings.
	On the issue of carbon copies it was noted that;

	internationally and in Pakistan as a standard. The exception to the rule was UHS in Punjab conducting MDCAT over the last many years.
	2. There is no valid reason or requirement for a carbon copy of the answer sheet to be provided to the student. It is also pertinent that the question paper is not retained by the student in an MCC exam hence, the student does not have the question paper to compare their answers with unless an answer key is issued by the examination authority.
	3. The candidates answer sheet in original is used to undertake the scoring using OCR technology. Any candidate who wants to have their scoring rechecked may apply and do so and can verify from their original answer sheet. The original answer sheet is secured in the custody of the Commission.
	4. The candidates are required to wait for the results to be announced of all candidates at one time, which would be announced approximately ten days after the conclusion of the exam.
	The council endorsed the decision of the President as contained in his report.
Decision	The council endorsed the decision of the Vice President and reiterated the reasons contained in the reports.
Agenda Item No.13	Automated Admission System in view of Court Order
	Pursuant to the orders of the Honourable Lahore High Court in different writ petitions instituted by two colleges and PAMI the Court through an interim order has allowed the colleges to proceed with provisional admissions at their own risk an cost withou finalizing such admissions. The Honourable Court has furthe directed PMC to meet with PAMI to arrive at a consensus in view o their objections to the automated system proposed by the Council for this year only.
Discussion	In the subsequent meetings with PAMI team and the President and Vice President the primary objections of the private colleges to the automated system are two fold. Firstly that the colleges under Section 18(3) of the PMC Act having the right to set the criteria be atleast allowed to hold interviews with some value ascribed to it in the merit as is allowed to Aga Khan University and NUMS colleges Secondly, that by continuing merits lists after students keep

vedical communication	Furthermore, it was decided that all those who were not able to deposit their fee challan may upload the same by 5pm, 11 <sup>th</sup> November 2020.
Decision	The Council decided that all the students who registered themselves by the cutoff date that is 6 <sup>th</sup> November, 2020 will be issued their rol number slips subject to the deposit of their fee challan. Any studen who did not apply before the cutoff date of 6 <sup>th</sup> November, 2020 shall not be entertained.
Discussion	Last date for registration for MDCAT was 6 <sup>th</sup> November,2020. The last date was clearly communicated to all concerned vide Notifications on PMC Website . Now applications are being received from several students/parents who were unable to register within the given time seeking permission to allow them to register on compassionate basis.
Agenda Item No.14	Applications received from candidates seeking approval fo postdate registration to sit in MDCAT examination
Decision	<ul> <li>qualification (30%). In view of Section 18(3) and to ensure not discrimination amongst private colleges interviews can be permitted on an objective and transparent basis with the result being added to the final merit by the college.</li> <li>The merit lists issued by the automated system and the final meril list on the basis of which final admissions take place must be made public for transparency by colleges.</li> <li>Subject to the final Orders of the Honourable Court in the matter the Council will accordingly amend the Admission Regulations a such time.</li> </ul>
	of students to have the Commission operate an automated system to enable all students to apply centrally and consequent merit lists be created available publicly using the MDCAT and F.S.c o comparable scores. The colleges are thereafter, willing to undertake that the interview process will be transparent and final merit wil also be made public by them and admissions would be on merit. The council deliberated on the way forward regarding the Automated Admission System to be implemented by PMC and the issues raised by the PAMI and colleges. The council decided that the automated system is necessary this year to ensure not only transparency but more so the ease o students in applying to colleges. The majority of the meri weightage must be given to MDCAT (50%) and F.S.c or comparable

Additional Agenda -A	Authority Matrix proposed by Chairman Finance Committee
Discussion	Chairman Finance Committee placed Authority Matrix before the council for approval. It was proposed that the authority matrix may be approved provisionally till the appointment of Member Finance who may review and revise it if deemed necessary.
Decision	The Council approved the proposed Authority Matrix as proposed by the Finance Committee.

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