

**E-BULLETIN**

**JUNE-AUGUST 2019**

**GENDER IN MEDICAL**

**EDUCATION**

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## About CEHAT

Centre for Enquiry Into Health and Allied Themes (CEHAT) is the research centre of Anusandhan Trust, involved in research, training, service and advocacy on health and allied themes.

The aim is to provide socially relevant and rigorous academic health research and health action at CEHAT for the well being of the disadvantaged masses, for strengthening people's health movements and for realising right to health and health care. CEHAT acts as an interface between progressive people's movements and academia.

#### The core 4 Thematic Areas of CEHAT are:

- 1) Health Services and Financing
- 2) Health Legistaltion and Patients' Rights
- 3) Women's Health
- 4) Violence and Health

The Topic for this quarter of Bulletin falls under the Theme :

### “Women’s Health”

#### About the Theme:

CEHAT developed the theme to increase tge knowledge and understanding of gender considerations as important social determinants of Health and Healthcare in India and to undertake research in the concerned areas and create information and implementations at various levels.

A few projects undertaken in the past:

- **EXPLORING RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION AGAINST MUSLIM WOMEN AT HEALTH FACILITIES:** Through this study, CEHAT sought to understand how this communalisation of both the State as well as civil society impacts women's health and access to health care in Mumbai. The study looks at the experiences of both Muslim and non-Muslim women's experience in accessing health care facility around their locality. The findings suggest that gender, class and religion all play a role in Muslim women's access to health services as well as the behaviour that is meted out to them there in.
- **POLICY RESEARCH ON MATERNAL HEALTH:** In February 2013, CEHAT in collaboration with Oxfam India, organized a roundtable on the Maternal Health MDG and the progress that India has made so far. The aim of the consultation was to draft recommendations for a post-2015 agenda, based on India's experience so far. The roundtable was attended by 23 experts in the field of Maternal Health in India and Internationally.

## Introduction to Gender in Medical Education

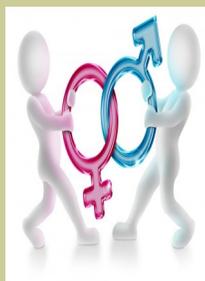
Health of an individual or a community is often predicated on social structures with prescriptive gender identities and associated power relations. Gender is a pivotal determinant of health. Health is experienced differently by men, women and intersex persons owing to 'sex-specific vulnerabilities' and 'gendered vulnerabilities'. Gender's interaction with health is also witnessed in the variation in access to health systems and services for men, women and intersex persons/transgender. In India, we find that medical education comprising training and curriculum, is far removed from gender theory and perspective. The WHO recognises the need for a systematic integration of gender in medical education specifically, in the 'pre-service training curricula' of students.

In this context, CEHAT, with the support of Directorate of Medical Education and Research (DMER), Maharashtra University of Health Sciences (MUHS) and UNFPA, has been able to implement a project on integrating gender in medical education in Maharashtra. The project has been implemented in select medical colleges in Maharashtra with the aim to sensitise medical students and health professionals to gender inequity and its interaction with health. Specifically, the GME project seeks to achieve gender sensitisation and awareness on public health issues such as sex selection, abortion and violence against women by integrating gender perspective in the medical curricula.

With the Integrating Gender in Medical Education project, CEHAT aims to inject change in the education of future healthcare providers so as to create a generation of medical doctors who will come forward to take up their role in promoting sexual and reproductive health rights while dealing sensitively with concerns around gender-based violence, access to safe abortion and sex determination.

The National Health Policy commits to gender mainstreaming in health programmes and medical education. In order to ensure good quality of care, there is a need to earmark funds towards different activities on mainstreaming gender into the medical curriculum.

GME has been the recent effort to contribute towards the theme. Building on the earlier experiences in India and abroad, CEHAT provided GME training to 19 medical professors across 7 medical colleges in Maharashtra, to identify the gender gaps. Later, the CEHAT team along with mentors and Gender experts, developed gender content for the lectures reviewed by the stake holders.



## Project Activities

### **Training of Trainers (TOT) for medical educators:**

Medical educators from seven medical colleges in Maharashtra participated in the 10-day Training of Trainers aimed at introducing the concept of gender and related issues of marginalisation, sexual and reproductive health rights and gender-based violence. At present there is a pool of 19 GME trained educators across 7 medical colleges of Maharashtra.

### **Action Research:**

An action research was carried out to assess the shift in knowledge, attitudes and skills of medical students owing to the gender training imparted to their educators and the use of gender-integrated modules by the trained teachers during lectures.

### **Development of gender-integrated modules for MBBS curriculum:**

Gender integrated modules for five subjects of the MBBS curriculum which are psychiatry, medicine, community medicine, forensic medicine & toxicology and Obstetrics & gynaecology, have been prepared by the GME team, the mentors and the trained educators. These are used by the trained medical educators during their lectures for the MBBS students.

### **Advocacy:**

Based on the outcomes of the project, advocacy would be undertaken at the state and national level for the integration of gender in the medical curriculum.

### **Outreach:**

State-level GME conferences and workshops are organised regularly in order to reach out to a larger audience. A Virtual Resource Centre and social media accounts are other means of sharing the latest updates and information related to GME.

The project goes hand in hand with renowned medical institutions/colleges in Maharashtra such as: GMC, MGM, Swami Ramanand Teerth Govt. Medical College, Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj Government Medical College, Shri Babusaheb Hire Government Medical College Dhule. Swami Ramanand Teerth Government Medical College, Ambejogai.

### **Assessing Impact:**

Findings from the study indicated-

- 1) Consistent positive shift in the attitudes of medical students in the intervention category across different themes.
- 2) A few themes pertained to recognition of the role of gender in health, awareness of challenges faced by women in seeking abortion services, recognising reproductive and sexual health needs of diverse groups and understanding the health impact of gender-based violence showed a statistically significant shift.
- 3) The curriculum is silent on the issue of diverse people such as homosexual, transgender and intersex persons, thus there stands a need to deepen the understanding on sexuality across the entire medical curriculum.

**GME**  
Gender in Medical Education



### GME Events



#### **Gender: Mainstreaming it in Medical Education An Interview with Dr. Sundari Ravindran**

In the interview with Dr. Sundari Ravindran talks about the present status of our healthcare system and focuses the importance of gender sensitive medical services. She also discusses about her own experience and highlights the gaps in understandings among medical professionals in regard to gender issues in medicine.

#### **Conference on Gender in Medical Education**

Centre for Enquiry into Health and Allied Themes (Cehat) Mumbai, in collaboration with Government Medical College Aurangabad, Directorate of Medical Education and Research (DMER), Maharashtra University of Health Sciences (MUHS) and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) organized a one day State level Conference on 'Integrating Gender in Medical Education' .



Dr. T.K. Sundari Ravindran



## Programme Updates

CEHAT-DMER's initiative for integrating gender concerns in the medical curricula has been a success. The Academic Council of Maharashtra has approved the gender-integrated curriculum. A directive for implementation of the gender-integrated curriculum has been issued in 2018 to medical colleges across Maharashtra. A positive beginning has been made. Moving forward will require champions within each medical college who would ensure and sustain the implementation of the revised curriculum. For these champions to maintain their interest, efforts need to be made at an institutional level to continually update and upgrade their knowledge on gender and health concerns. It is important that the doctors have a clear understanding of how both biological differences and gender and other inequalities impact different aspects of health, how disease manifests itself, as well as the capacities of patients to protect themselves from the disease. Doctors with the competency are more likely to provide righteous care. Further, "Evidence based clinical practices: A workshop for gender sensitivity" was organised by CEHAT in collaboration with DMER aimed at increasing gender-sensitivity in the medical curriculum. The workshop was attended by mid to senior level medical practitioners and professors from all over Maharashtra. The 1.5 day workshop was a rich pool of demonstrations; sessions on gender and healthcare, ethical conduct and accountability of the doctors towards the patients; guidance on how to provide respectful maternity care and a focus on creating a gender sensitive environment in the medical field. The gender integrated-curriculum to be taken seriously, gender concepts should be embedded in the assessment and evaluation of undergraduate medical students, pertaining to which, Orientation towards Gender Integrated Modules workshops were organised which emphasized on the need to understand the needs of the people while imparting healthcare. The 4 sets of workshops aimed at directing healthcare providers from the 7 hospitals, in carrying out their duties while also eliminating gender disparities in health as well as providing a support system to victims of gender-based violence.

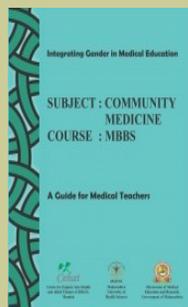
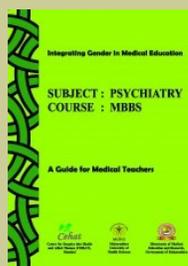
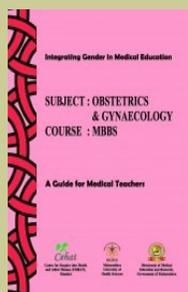
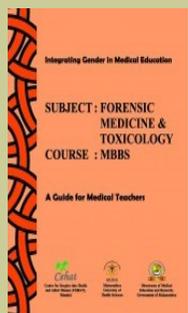
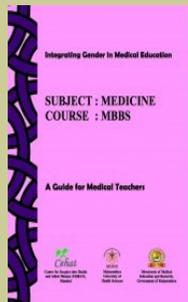
The Modules are a result of the constant efforts of CEHAT, DMER and MUHS. They are supplementary to the existing MBBS curriculum and are structured with key messages for medical educators, and knowledge, skills and attitude changes expected in the medical students. The modules consist of case studies, debates, group discussions to assist medical educators in engaging students on gender and health.

Five disciplines were shortlisted for integrating gender concerns:

- 1) **Community Medicine:** The discipline works towards ensuring that MBBS graduates acquire competencies needed to solve common health problems of the community and how take gender into consideration in a systematic semester wise course. Eg: Understanding sex ratios, Gender as a social determinant of Health etc.
- 2) **Forensic Medicine and Toxicology:** The discipline explains the use of toxicology to aid medical or legal investigation of death, poisoning, and drug use, with a gender construct. Eg: Domestic Violence as a cause of reported assaults, burns and poisoning etc.
- 3) **Medicine:** This module represents the study of medicine with the inclusivity of gender. Eg: Gendered nature of communicable diseases, Gender and nutrition etc.
- 4) **Obstetrics and Gynaecology:** The study sensitizes towards gender, sex and care. Eg: Gender aspects of Infertility, Concept of gender and sex, interaction between gender and health etc.
- 5) **Psychiatry:** The discipline integrates gender and mental health. Eg: Gender sensitive clinical checklist.

The rationale for their inclusion was that these disciplines were expansive and had maximum scope to integrate gender perspectives.

The motive is to provide better healthcare to all.



World Health  
Organization



Maharashtra University of  
Health Sciences

## Publications pertaining to Gender in Medical Education by CEHAT

### 2019:

- Rege, Sangeeta, & Deosthali, Padma; Shingare, Pravin; Gadappa, Shrinivas; Deshpande, Sonali; Gaikwad, Nandkishore; Vaidya, Shailesh Integrating gender perspectives in gynecology and obstetrics: Engaging medical colleges in Maharashtra, India, International Journal of Gynecology and Obstetrics, 2019; 145: pp. 253–257, PDF at Wiley Online.

### 2018:

- Barai-Jaitly, Tejal; Vernekar, Durga Exploring the phenomenon of violence faced by resident doctors in public hospitals of Maharashtra by patient/s and / or relative/s and or escort/s Factsheet : A study by the Centre for Enquiry into Health and Allied Themes (CEHAT) in Collaboration with Seth G.S. Medical College and King Edward Memorial (KEM) Hospital and Maharashtra Association of Resident Doctors (MARD), CEHAT, 2018, 2p.
- CEHAT; MCGM Understanding Dynamics of Sexual Violence Study of Case Records, CEHAT, viii, 93 p.
- Ravi, Ashika IMA launches programme to sensitise doctors on sexual health, but fixation on male concerns does disservice to issue, FIRSTPOST: The Ladies Finger, Jun 09, 2018
- Rege, Sangeeta, & Deosthali, Padma Integrating gender in medical education: A step in addressing health inequities, Special Issue Health Inequities in India: A focus on some under-researched dimensions, eSocialSciences and Humanities, Vol. I, No.2, 2018, pp. 92 - 102

### 2017:

- Bavadekar, Amruta; Rege, Sangeeta; Deosthali, Padma Integrating gender in medical education, Quest in Education, Vol. XXXXI, No. 2, April, 2017, pp. 9 - 20
- CEHAT CEHAT Calendar 2017 Gender in Medical Education, CEHAT, Gender in Medical Education, Calendar 2017, 16 p.

### 2016:

- CEHAT; MUHS; DMER Integrating Gender in Medical Education: Assessing Impact, Mumbai: CEHAT, xiv, 74 p., ISBN : 978-81-89042-72-1

### 2015:

- CEHAT GME Brochure, Gender and Medical Education (GME) Brochure, 2015
- John, Priya; Bavadekar, Amruta; Hasnain, Ameerah; Karandikar, Asilata Gender in Medical Education: Perceptions of Medical Educators: Study conducted among medical educators of seven medical colleges in Maharashtra, Mumbai: CEHAT, 2015, xvi, 56 p., ISBN: 978-81-89042-69-1

### Related Publications:

- Promundo Global, Engaging Men and Boys for Gender Equality and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, 2017

