

IMA & AHPI supports 'Save the Doctor' movement to equalise UG and PG medical seats

Bangalore, July 30: Indian Medical Association (IMA) and Association of Healthcare Providers India (AHPI) along with medical students' representatives from across the country today announced a nationwide movement 'Save the Doctor' to equalize Under Graduation (UG) and Post Graduation (PG) medical seats. This mass movement is aimed to influence the policy makers and medical institutions in the country.

Medical students want rural posting to be part of internship and postgraduate training. Over two to three lakh medical students are expected to support this movement across India.

Pursuing a Post Graduation in any stream of medicine is essential for a doctor to become a specialist such as Gynecologists, Neurologist, Surgeons, Radiologists etc. Today, India lacks specialist doctors due to the less number of (relevant/desired) PG seats in

medical institutions. Though India has the largest number of medical institutions, the disparity in the number of seats allotted for PG and UG students along with the mandatory rural posting are affecting young doctors and they end up spending 13 years merely studying. This also means that future of our healthcare system is at huge risk if things continue to remain the way it is; as senior specialist doctors/surgeons retire in the future, there will be dearth of specialist doctors and surgeons in India.

Dr. Devi Shetty, Treasurer, AHPI, said, "It is a sad plight that nearly two lakh young doctors in our country at the peak of their youth spend few years in coaching classes mugging Multiple Choice Questions rather than treating patients and learning the art of healing. These young doctors under the right circumstances can significantly improve the

quality of health care offered to our citizens." He also added, "Every Indian household once dreamt of making their child a doctor, but today it is considered as a costly and a tedious process."

There are 45,600 UG seats which is likely to reach 50,000 shortly due to the progressive steps taken by the MCI. Whereas, there are only 12,000 PG seats which most of the doctors prefer to choose. In comparison, in a developed country such as USA, there are 19,000 UG seats and 32,000 PG and fellowship seats. With a pass rate of 80% to 90% nearly 40,000 doctors graduate every year and compete for 12,000 seats with their batch mates and over a lakh seniors. In the last PG entrance exam under NEET, over 1,10,000 doctors appeared for the test to claim one of the 12,000 seats. Adding to all, the one year compulsory rural posting has worsened the situation.