

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

# HOLISTIC EDUCATION THROUGH CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.

**Shivani S, Rajesh PK.**

*Faculty of Medicine, AIMST University, Malaysia*

### **Corresponding Author**

Rajesh PK

Faculty of Medicine, AIMST University, 08100 Bedong, Kedah Malaysia

Email: [rajesh@aimst.edu.my](mailto:rajesh@aimst.edu.my)

Dear Sir,

Holistic development is a process of self-realization and learning which combines an individual's mental, physical, social, emotional and spiritual growth.<sup>1</sup> However, information management, digital skills and continuous learning are essential skills which a regular medical curriculum does not offer much focus on.<sup>2</sup>

A medical graduate of today or rather a leader or healer of tomorrow, should be trained and empowered not only with knowledge and clinical skills but also social skills, humanistic values including empathy, an excellent attitude, professionalism, communication skills, leadership skills and team skills.

The involvement of medical students in co-curricular activities allows one to learn to recognise his/her own emotions and values as well as one's strength and limitations.<sup>3</sup> This plays a huge role as hidden or not so obvious curriculum in a medical student's life.<sup>4</sup>

The students experience in medical school influences the way they will treat their patients, colleagues, and future medical students.<sup>5</sup>

A student needs the patience, the ability to reflect, the continuous self-motivation and confidence to go through every apparent obstacle and the stress faced. Co-curricular activities help in providing a holistic approach to learning. Time management, responsibility, attendance, punctuality, dress code, communication skills, team work, leadership, management of information, digital skills and etiquette are learnt experientially and collaboratively with extra and co-curricular activities.<sup>6</sup>

Embedding corporate social responsibility, ethics, professional and personal development into the curriculum and hands on experience of these during curricular and co-curricular activities will definitely mould holistic graduates, who are ready to adapt to their working environment and the community.

*RED (reach out, embrace and deliver) is a student lead charity association of the Faculty of Medicine, AIMST University. Students raise funds by means of car wash, cultural shows and food carnival. Since 2011, RED has aided more than 300 patients with cataract surgeries and other health related aids.*

## References

1. Holistic Learning in Medical Education; Progress in Medicine, Association of Physician of India, 76: 419-22.
2. Guidelines for the accreditation of Malaysian undergraduate medical education programmes, 2016.
3. Supe A. Co-curricular activities in medical education. The National medical journal of India. 2012;25(3):186-.
4. D'eon M, Lear N, Turner M, Jones C. Perils of the hidden curriculum revisited. Medical Teacher. 2007 Jan 1;29(4):295-6.
5. Kassebaum DG, Cutler ER. On the culture of student abuse in medical school. Academic medicine: journal of the Association of American Medical Colleges. 1998 Nov;73(11):1149-58.
6. Judge LW, Pierce D, Petersen J, Bellar D, Wanless E, Gilreath E, Simon L. Engaging Experiential Service Learning through a Co-Curricular Club: The Chase Charlie Races. ICHPER-SD Journal of Research. 2011;6(2):30-8.