Scope of Behavioural Science in Medical Curriculum

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Objective of the session

- To discuss the importance of behavioural science
- To list the challenges and strategies for incorporating behavioural sciences
It is well recognized that behavioural sciences should become an integral component of medical training curriculum.

The PMDC has also accepted the need to incorporate such training in medical education, however little progress has been made in improving the quality of teaching in behavioural sciences.
Integrating behavioural science is important...........

- Firstly, leading causes of death indicate that role of behaviour is significant in the treatment and prevention of diseases.

- The primary culprits are unhealthy diet and activity patterns, preventable exposure to microbial agents (e.g. failure to get immunization, not washing hands etc), exposure to toxic agents, illicit use of drugs etc.
Integrating behavioural science is important...........

- Secondly from 1990-2020, the proportion of people aged 65-74 years is projected to grow by 74% with large increases in the 75 and older age group.

- This in turn requires training in prevention, behaviour change, health policy and skills in working with multidisciplinary health care teams.
Integrating behavioural science is important……..

- Thirdly literature supports that stress is a precipitating factor to a wide variety of diseases including cardiovascular disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, smoking and cancer.

- Interventions to reduce stress-related diseases must include a solid understanding of psychological and sociocultural variables.
Integrating behavioural science is important..........

- Finally, it promotes more humane medical education and practice.
BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL DIAGRAM

PSYCHOSOMATIC OVERLAP

BIOSOCIAL OVERLAP

PSYCHOSOCIAL OVERLAP

CLINICAL REALITY
Recommended domains for integrating behavioural sciences
The Institute of Medicine recommended six domains for behavioural sciences in medical education:

1. **Mind – body interactions**: to learn about the interaction between biological, behavioural, psychological and social factors which contribute to health issues.

2. **Patient’s behaviour**: Comprehends behaviour that puts patients at risk and help them develop interventions for behaviour change.
Recommended domains for behavioural sciences

3. **Physician’s role and behaviour**: Highlights how the doctor’s personal background, beliefs and attitudes influences patient care.

4. **Physician - patient interaction**: Promotes effective communication skills with patients and their families.

5. **Social and cultural issues in health care**: Provides appropriate care to patients with differing social, cultural and economic backgrounds.

6. **Health policy and economics**: To help students understand their health-care systems.
Challenges to incorporating the curriculum

Findings indicate that there are no:

1. Uniform guidelines
2. Well established curricula
3. Training modules or materials and
4. Severe shortage of adequately trained teachers
Strategies for curriculum change

1. **Strong leadership:**
   Throughout the twentieth century, the most important experiments in curriculum change have been led by deans committed to educational reform.

   • However leaders can include faculty members and administrators who provide direction to educational programs and mentor junior colleagues interested in teaching.
2. **Faculty development programs:**

Leads to improved skills for all faculty members as educators and scholars, and should be part of institutional policies for the promotion of academic excellence.

- These skills can include the ability to
  - Write educational objectives
  - Design and select teaching methods,
  - Develop and apply principles of learning,
  - Enhanced presentation skills,
  - Lead small-group discussions,
  - Use effective questioning strategies,
  - Refine evaluation and feedback skills, and
  - Use educational technologies effectively
3. **Formal curriculum change process:**
   Successful curriculum change processes have followed a standard model that includes:
   - Needs assessment
   - Specification of learning objectives
   - Selection of content and teaching methods
   - Evaluation of the change
4. **Establish a career development awards program:**
   - Curriculum development awards fund schools to initiate or reform a curriculum.
   - They support faculty members, allowing them to pursue the acquisition of new leadership skills, develop curriculum changes, or complete research projects.
In a nutshell ............

- The scope of behavioral science integration in medical curriculum is not only an interdisciplinary cooperation between non clinical and clinical disciplines, but direct relevance to the treatment of patients.

- A curricular innovation is more likely to be adopted when the faculty members involved understand its theoretical underpinnings and are trained in the skills required for its implementation.
THANK YOU