

Way Forward for Trainees in Pediatric Gastroenterology and Hepatology In India

Dr Surender K Yachha

MD (Pediatrics), DM (Gastroenterology)

Commonwealth Medical Fellowship in Pediatric Hepatology & Pediatric Liver Transplantation (King's College, London)

Director Pediatrics and Pediatric Super specialty, Head of the Department:

Pediatric Gastroenterology, Pediatric Hepatology & Liver Transplant

Head of Sakra Academics, Sakra World Hospital, Bangalore-India 560103

Fortunate are those pediatricians who get in to various super specialty training programs. In this country we are lagging behind adults in development of such super specialists. Questions that cross the minds of doctors before joining such courses are those of short and long term benefits. There is no doubt that today' India demands best and specific treatment of the child. In a way specialized care is required which is possible if the doctor is trained in a particular specialty, possess confidence and expertise. Limited option of seat availability in pediatric specialty in India is a reality at this stage. Therefore those doctors who get selected should utilize their training period to best of their learning.

Medicine is an art where in applied clinical skills have to be strong that entails problem oriented approach and clear plan of investigations and management. One needs to develop acumen of analysis and evaluation of a given clinical problem coupled with background knowledge of the subject. Management planning is the key and should be focused on immediate requirement and finding out etiology. Always prioritize the diagnostic possibilities based on clinical evaluation, and common conditions and also the spectrum of disorders prevalent in that geographical location. Investigations that can give clue to diagnosis have to be specific/minimal and not drawn in a vertical fashion the way they are given in book tables particularly from foreign countries. Management line

adopted should depend upon availability and cost-effectiveness.

Wisdom of a doctor is of equal importance. Parents of a given patient usually approach you with a bundle of investigations / prescriptions and want you to see them in the first go of interaction with doctors. The best approach for a good doctor would be to tell parents that I will see all your papers at the end.” Let me understand the illness of your child- similar to writing on a fresh clean board. Any illness how so small it may look to you as a doctor is big for parents. Therefore one needs to give importance to all those pointers while processing the relevant information of importance in your own mind for evaluation. While conversing with parents or child you can ascertain their bent of mind. Their inclination should be taken in to consideration for implementation unless you find this not in the interest of the patient. In that situation the pathway of conversation can be tactfully and wisely distracted. A good human behavior cum interaction is vital for success. You need to understand patient's socioeconomic status, family structure, affordability and willingness of treatment. A great deal of confidence and firmness is required to have an impact on the patient's satisfaction in you. Too rigid, too hard talking and too lenient approach are not useful. A soft, smiling and helpful attitude; patient friendly and convenience in obtaining things done without a long wait are factors of great patient / parent satisfaction.

As a trainee doctor you face a great deal of stress: be it limitation of scientific knowledge, fear of seniors/ teachers, academics, patient-family retaliation, suboptimal nursing care, non-cooperation of other paramedical staff or colleagues and more importantly your own difficulties such as separation from family or domestic pressure. This phase of life is real but manageable with wisdom and some adjustments keeping your ego at the lowest level.

Trainees should possess appetite for skillful leaning from seniors including teachers. Trainee at times feels that the senior is no good, does not possess adequate knowledge or is boring. The trainee then carries an impression within that he/she knows better than teachers. This kind of notion is not correct. Every person in this world is talented in one or the other domain. Recognize and identify good qualities in that person and try imbibing them for your good. Your attitude should be such that you change yourself for absorbing meaningful knowledge from your seniors.

A good trainee is one who is punctual, targeted towards work, honest, a good team worker, adjustable to surroundings, devoted and has the

passion of delivering the best to the best of satisfaction of seniors and patients. Having exercised such attitude will give you inner happiness that is priceless. Trainees should partly engage themselves in to some kind of healthy entertainment/relaxation, prayers and take reasonable care of their health, finances as well as family and loved ones. All these aspects are important for holistic living in this universe.

Teachers have also to realize that trainees are an integral part of health care delivery and they are expected to train them. Trainees are our investment of future. Our generations will remain secure if they are nurtured by seniors respectfully, with great deal of dignity and are empowered with genuine knowledge and ethical practices.

The writer of this message has also been a trainee himself and also a trainer for a long time. Whatever has been expressed in this article here is my own experience. I enjoyed being a trainee as well as a trainer. Having served public sector for several decades I have now moved to private sector for development of pediatric super specialty and new training programs. March towards positive developments is my passion.