AbstractID: 11901 Title: Certification of Medical Physicist - Indian Perspective

Medical Physics is one of the most challenging and rewarding application of physics to human health care programme. Medical physics is mainly concerned with use of ionizing radiation in diagnosis, therapy and research in health care. Though use of ionizing radiation in health care has started in India as early as 1904, no specialized training for medical physics was available until 1950.s. With growth of application of radiation in health care a strong need of Medical Physics training in India was realized in 1950's. Bhabha Atomic Research Center [BARC], which supplied radioisotope for medical application, took keen interest in development of Medical Physics discipline in India. After training scientists from Division of Radiation Protection BARC started one year postgraduate diploma course in hospital and radiological physics [Dip. R. P.] in 1962 with collaboration of WHO. One year extensive training includes 300 lectures, 50 tutorials and twenty five practical. In addition 6 weeks outstation field training in reputed cancer hospital and 4 week training at TMH and Radiation Medicine Center [RMC] is given. In addition to BARC training programme in Medical Physics, Anna University Chennai in collaboration with Adyar cancer institute is conducting two years M. Sc. Medical Physics programme since 1982 and Mangalore University Mangalore since 1992. In addition to the teaching at respective Universities, 2 weeks training on Radiological Protection and related subject is given for these students at BARC and examination is conducted by BARC to assess the knowledge about radiological safety. Presently in India about 600 Medical Physicists are working in hospitals in radiotherapy, Nuclear Medicine and radio diagnosis.

The job of Medical Physicists requires to assure the safe and effective delivery of radiation to achieve a diagnostic or therapeutic result as prescribed in patient care In recent years it is felt that one year training provided by BARC and the M. Sc Medical Physics degree from other universities with the practical training of few weeks is not sufficient to work independently as Medical Physicist and handle complex dosimetry setup. Unfortunately in India once the candidate acquires the university degree in Medical physics he can start to work as Medical Physicists without any legal requirement to acquire CME credit during his profession. There is requirement of radiation safety officer for each radiation center from competent authority, AERB; however no registration, licensing nor accreditation is required to practice as Medical Physicist. For Nursing, Pharmacy and other health professional the council/ registration body exists at national and state level but such council or registration body for medical physics does not exist. In last twenty years almost over six fold growth in radiation technology in health care has taken place and there fore there is a need of continuous professional development [CPD] programme along with accreditation, certification and registration of medical physicist. Details will be discussed in this communication.