



श्रीरामाय स्वतुभ्योऽभिवादनम्
AIIMS, NEW DELHI

PULSE'09

SOCH - Students Of Conscientious Healthcare

Our vision is '**Aarogya Swaraj**'. We envision a population which is healthy in body and in spirit. We see a society where patients can get healthcare with dignity - by timely access to affordable quality care, by being educated about their illness and treatment options, by keeping the healthcare providers accountable for their professional services by having fora for redress and appeal.

Broadly speaking, 'Aaryogya Swaraj' or 'Health Empowered Society' will stand on three pillars. The patients who need to be educated about their rights. The Providers who should be constantly aware of their social and professional responsibilities and honestly working towards achieving it. And, the Government to provide a regulatory framework which discourages predatory practices and is the arbiter of disputes arising out of such patient-doctor interaction.

Our aim is to engage medical students in this movement. We wish to encourage medical students to learn about the healthcare challenges faced by patients and families - so that young doctors should empathize with patients. We believe that the sympathetic medical students should be aware of public health policies and the Government's mandate, so that they feel empowered. By seeing the 'big picture' of illness and disease in society, some may be inspired to explore careers in public health and healthcare administration. We hope that this exercise will infuse them with professional and social responsibility so that they become active citizens and 'conscientious' professionals.

National Health Scenario:

Over the five decades since independence, the overall state of health in the country has improved. However, the general health indices in the country are still below the average for developing countries, and are also way below socially acceptable levels.

The country still carries an enormous share of the global disease burden and deaths from Tuberculosis, Malaria, HIV, acute respiratory illnesses, diarrhea and other vaccine preventable diseases. Targeting these diseases does not require very high clinical expertise, or expensive and high-tech diagnostic aids - and fall within the ambit of primary healthcare services.

Also significant is the fact that *average* health indicators hide a wide range of variations between different parts of the country. Most of the qualified doctors and hospitals are in urban areas but not equally accessible to all citizens, and primary healthcare services in many rural areas is understaffed or defunct. This leaving the majority of our country's population under-served. Without an efficient screening and referral system at the primary level, the unscreened burden of primary care diseases falls upon the few and scattered tertiary care centers which become inordinately overloaded.

It appears that there is a dire need for strengthening primary healthcare services in the country. By primary health care services we imply, principally, primary sector services (promotive, preventive and ambulatory curative services), along with a small package of inpatient services and family welfare services. Let us explore the barriers in achieving this for our country.

We invite you all to participate in this discussion by sharing your thoughts in form of an essay competition.

- **Prizes Worth More than Rs.15000**
- **Publication by peer-reviewed journals**



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SOCH - Essay Competition Topic:

“There is a need for generalists among qualified health care practitioners in India. But the market for specialists and subspecialists is more lucrative. The Indian healthcare system needs generalists not specialists. Yet the majority large number of health care practitioners respond to the markets and overlook social needs. If you agree with this statement, please suggest how the social needs and lucre can be balanced. If you disagree, please elaborate on how social needs should be the primary factor in the career choices of medical trainees.”

Discuss this argument in a 2000-3000 word essay. You may agree or disagree completely or take a neutral stance.

Instructions:

- Electronic submission using MS Word 97/2002 standard word processor.
- Use Arial font, size 12, double spaced.
- Expected length 2000 to 3000 words excluding title, headings and references.
- The first page should have title, your name and institution. Your name or name of your institution should not appear anywhere else in the essay.
- Language should be easy to read and understand, there will be no extra points for prolixity. Authors are encouraged to think about readability of their essays- they should be easily understood by medical students, doctors, policy makers as well as the general public.
- References should be included for any figures or literature quoted. They should be numbered for example (1) within the text in the order in which they appear. At the end of the essay all references must be listed in the order in which they appear (For journal articles- Authors/Editors, Journal/Publishes, Year, Issue, Page numbers. Provide full weblink for online references)

Submission deadline and Judging process:

Please email your entries to SOCH.chalo@gmail.com by 14 September 2009.

Your entry will be received and acknowledged by a return email. Each entry will be given a unique reference number, the identifier page of your essay will then be removed and forwarded to the SOCH shortlisting committee.

All judges will be blinded to your name or institution/ medical school.

The entries will be judged in two steps.

First, Ten entries will be shortlisted by the SOCH committee. The shortlist will be based upon

- (1) clarity of thought and argument,
- (2) well researched content,
- (3) includes insights from personal experiences,
- (4) logically flows from problem to solution,
- (5) provides actionable solution(s) which students themselves can act on,

In the next stage, these ten entries will be judged by a panel of experts in the field of public health in India.

Then two winners will be declared.

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Award:

The Winners will receive cash award and Pulse certificates. We will mentor the authors of the two prize-winning essays and to prepare their essays to a level where they can be accepted for publication by peer-reviewed journals

All participants will reap the benefit of self exploration and appreciating the healthcare challenges facing our country. Eventually, this appreciation will evolve into research, debate, dialogue, and reforms leading upto 'Aarogya Swaraj'.

For any queries regarding essay contact:

Ankita Chakravarty

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REMEMBER: Please email your entries to SOCH.chalo@gmail.com by 14 September 2009.

Debate

Topic: “Doctors practice where there is money- mandatory internship is the only way to make them contribute to rural healthcare”

Rules:

- All entries must be as teams, each consisting of two speakers, one for and one against the motion.
- A maximum of two entries per college.
- Speaking time: 5 minutes (4+1)
- Two interjections after completion, no cross questions.
- Best five teams make it to the finals.

Attractive Prizes to be won in debate.

Panel Discussion

A Panel Discussion will be organized on “Healthcare Reforms in India” with renowned healthcare personalities at JLN Auditorium.