

The fall meeting report from APPNA MERIT:

This year APPNA MERIT has a bold new vision of specialty based and multiple projects focused partnership with Pakistani health institutions. We presented this vision in APPNA summer convention in Orlando where MERIT had arranged a symposium, "Spot light on Medical education in Pakistan". Basically it will be a spoke and hub model with APPNA MERIT facilitating different specialties to do their projects in Pakistan. The infrastructure will be the same namely arranging for US visiting faculty in Pakistan a safe, comfortable, meaningful and rewarding experience with the help of these institutions. On ground training will be supplemented by the ongoing online curriculum based education in a hybrid learning module. We started working with two partners in Pakistan since March of this year.

National University of Medical Sciences (NUMS) is a unique new national initiative with the vision of developing centers of excellence in basic science and research in addition to clinical care departments. It was started in 2015 and is developing a medical city in Islamabad in addition to guiding the medical schools and all Armed Forces institutes including Postgraduate level departments. Lt General Imran Majeed is Vice chancellor and especially came to APPNA summer convention in Orlando. He attended APPNA MERIT symposium, "Spot light on Medical education in Pakistan" and had many side meetings with APPNA leaderships. As a result APPNA MERIT is holding a special one-day program at NUMS Rawalpindi on 12/19/17 just before its winter conference in Lahore. An MOU will be signed with NUMS for future collaboration between APPNA MERIT and NUMS to enhance and compliment medical education in Pakistan, thus improving health care services and patient care in Pakistan. That is why APPNA MERIT was created 10 years ago.

Another important partner will be KPK province represented by Dr. Noshawan Burki who is the special advisor to the KPK government on health care. Dr. Burki is a professor of Medicine in Univ of Connecticut and was also present in Orlando meeting. APPNA MERIT had detailed discussions with Dr. Burki to understand the need and ground realities in KPK and agreed to work with KPK government. We will start working on two projects of immediate need in the province namely Neurology and ICU. These projects will start in Lady Reeding hospital in Peshawar and then later will extend to other parts of the province. Khyber Alumni Association of North America will be partnering with APPNA MERIT for these projects. Another MOU will be signed in winter meeting between APPNA MERIT and KPK government. Pakistan Society of Neurology and Pakistan International Neuroscience Society are partnering in these projects to ensure its success.

In addition to these two main institutional projects, we have been discussing with Higher Education Commission of Pakistan to renew the visiting faculty programs with USA academicians. APPNA MERIT has also engaged The College of Physicians and surgeon of Pakistan for subspecialty programs and fellowships such as Sleep Medicine as well as stroke centers development in various regions. Child Psychiatry fellowship approved in the past year was a big success of APPNA MERIT and now we have undertaken Child Psychiatry course for General Adult psychiatrist. Neurology chapter of APPNA MERIT has started a six months curriculum of Movement disorder on line for Neurology residents in Pakistan.

In the meantime our very popular weekly live lecture program on line is successfully teaching faculty and students alike various important topics in medicine.

The purpose of MOUs with these institution are to develop a viable and sustainable infra structure which will be used by different medical specialties to achieve mission of APPNA MERIT through a hybrid of online and on ground training of the trainers so that health services and patient care in Pakistan can be improved. Once pilot program this year will be successful it will be replicated with all different specialties through different chapters in APPNA MERIT and specialty network. Medical education in Pakistan is the sole focus of APPNA MERIT and our vision is that it will be helped by two other APPNA educational committees namely RESA and specialty network under long term goal of APPNA education.

This new vision and direction of APPNA MERIT is grand but is do able with the continued help from the future leadership of APPNA, as continuity is the key to the success of these programs. This vision will take many years of continued hard work to achieve its target goals.