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Stroke team research project

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We are going to measure the outcome of developing a stroke team implementing the Stroke Core measures in the existing infrastructure in Resource strapped country like Pakistan in three different setups. South Medical Unit of Mayo hospital Lahore, DHQ hospital Rawalpindi and POF hospital Wah cantt have different setups and were chosen for the same reason with common denominator of no existing Neurologist there. IRB of the RMU has approved the project and Mayo and Wah Medical College will be completing it in the next one month. The first three months from the date of start will be data collection of the existing setup and then the stroke team will start implementing Core measures. In the third possible phase a cost effective resource intervention will be identified to bring these center at par and close to international standards.

Stroke team setup in Three Centers

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I visited three centers, South Medical Unit in Mayo Hospital Lahore, POF Hospital Wah Cantt and DHQ hospital Rawalpindi where we had a stroke workshop on Stroke Core measures. Other two teams from Lahore and Wah joined DHQ team on 3/19/19.

All three centers are excited to start the building of the stroke team which will eventually lay the foundation and complement the existing Stroke unit for IVtPA

Stroke team set up in RMU and MOU with RMU_{3/30/2019 7:04:00 PM}

MOU has been signed with RMU VC Prof Umar. This will lay the foundation for two immediate projects Stroke team building and a Family Medicine training course. Further collaboration with APPNA MERIT will continue in years to come.

Myself and Professor Ashfaq Shuaib attended an especially arranged meeting of the IRB where Stroke Team building project was approved while SK trial was preliminary approved pending its approval from the National Ethical Review board and DRAP (Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan)

Stroke team set up in POF Hospital and MOU with Wah Medical College Wah Cantt

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MOU was signed on 3/26/19 between APPNA and Wah Medical College Wah Cantt. Its affiliated hospital is civilian serving POF employees and their families with an administration from military command. The set up is such that the EMS service and the disciplined civilian staff will eventually serve one of the best models for an expedited stroke response.

MOU encompass wide range of cooperation including visiting faculty program as well as weekly webinar lectures and the research programs.

After MOU I met with the stroke team eager to start implementing the core measures after IRB approval and the data collection period.

MERIT collaboration with Pakistan Society of Neurology

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I met President of the Pakistan Society of Neurology Prof Athar Javed. We discussed APPNA MERIT cooperation with PSN.

Immediate need is to push for more stroke units and approval of the tPA by DRAP. Punjab Health Minister Dr. Yasmin Rashid met with the PSN and Pakistan Stroke Society leadership and extended GOP cooperation but advised the society to set up stroke units ready to deliver on tPA availability. Further meeting between the leadership of MERIT and PSN is scheduled for 4/6/19 in Philadelphia in AAN annual conference.

I met with the new Chair of HEC Dr. Tariq Banuri. He told me that he has been involved with APPNA Sehat and other programs including MERIT are familiar to him. He recognized APPNA MERIT role and encouraged us to play a bigger part. I discussed with him our visiting faculty program as well as an annual conference by MERIT.

I also met next day his assistant Nadia Tahir and discussed the same agenda. It seems that the visiting faculty scholarship program is being revised but the annual conference can be held for MERIT by any University under HEC and the visiting faculty can be funded. There is a vague limit of the visiting faculty but can be 40 in medical side.

Tariq Banuri suggested expanding the APPNA Winter meeting educational program and bringing it under MERIT so that there is continuity of curriculum and programs.

Director General Health and Health Services Academy

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I met DG Health in Federal Ministry of Health Dr. Asad Hafeez in his office. We discussed an annual APPNA MERIT conference. He told me he like the idea and it can be done under the federal Ministry of health. He said they do not have direct funding but once their name will be attached with us many vendors will be willing to sponsor.

He also discussed with me the five years plan which in line with the Prime Minister Imran Khan's policy of Nutrition, mother child policy will be emphasizing on Primary care. Thus training 10 K family physicians in the next five years is a top priority.

I met him again the next day in RMU conference where he presented the Federal Health care plan. I offered to assist in their Family practice training program from MERIT side and he appreciated it. He advised me to visit Health Services Academy

I met faculty of HAS and had lunch with them. That included the admin of HSA Mr. Kiyani, Associate professors Dr. Shehzad Ali and Dr. Ejaz as well as Assistant Professor Dr. Rameh Kumar. They were all very enthusiastic on collaboration not only on Family Medicine training certification program but also on the Annual MERIT conference. We formed a Whatsapp group and will add our leadership after discussing the ideas separately.

USAID representative Kanwal Bukhari reached out to me while I was in Pakistan thus I had a meeting with her. This was coincidentally right after Health Services Academy meeting. The USAID has give HSA funding of upto10 million Dollars over next five years. Both HSA and USAID would like us to participate on those programs. APPNA already has an MOU signed with USAID. Another MOU can be signed with HSA under Federal Health Ministry. USAID also want us to assist in Training Pakistan program, MCH and other health projects in KPK and Interior Sindh.

Kanwal requested a meeting in her DC visit in the first week of April.

Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto University, Federal Medical and Dental Colleges and Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS)

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I met Vice Chancellor of Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto University Dr. Memon.

There are many medical colleges under this university and Federal Medical and Dental College is one of them. I met Principal of FMDC Prof Tanveer Khaliq as well as its hospital PIMS ED Dr. Amjad.

All three are keen in being part of MERIT activities in Pakistan and wish to have an MOU signed.

At the current time there are two Universities under Federal Ministry Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Health service Academy. There is discussion to probably Merge the two as both are not strong yet. HSA is being run so far without the VC since its start last year as University after given mandate to award degrees.

PIMS is the only public tertiary care hospital in Islamabad and may become a Medical Teaching Institute (MTI) under new government policy. FMDC being attached to PIMS is the academic counterpart. APPNA MERIT collaboration with these institutions will be very beneficial and an MOU can be signed later on.

Prime Minister want to make Islamabad model health city as a pilot project with the PIMS as hub and the development of spokes BHU clinics. Our involvement with the program will be facilitated by the partnership with these Federal Institutions.

DG Medicine Maj Gen Dr. Imran Fazal reached out to us for assistance in some key areas as seen by him and the Surgeon General.

I had a meeting with both and three priority areas were named by Surgeon General Dr. Zahid Hamid. These are Stroke, ICU and ER. Family practice also is one of the shortfall area.

Surgeon General has offered to take care of the logistics for the visiting MERIT faculty to train the trainers and do the capacity building of these programs at Military Hospital Rawalpindi. They will involve the relevant teams from Peshawar and Lahore to come to Rawalpindi when our workshops in these areas will be held in MH Rawalpindi.

I d/w Surgeon General that APPNA would like to do more for the National public sector area and not limit it self with specialized organizations. To this he informed me that out of about 170 PG trainee only one quarter belong to Army emphasizing the fact that Army Medical Corps is closely involved in dissemination of training and services to the civil general public of Pakistan. MERIT and other individual members of APPNA has worked with Army Medical Corps with good outcome since it is a very organized institutions and the training objectives are met with later dissemination of that skills training and medical education meeting our mission at APPNA MERIT.

After Surgeon General identified three key areas Gen Imran Fazal arranged a meeting with thee heads who helped further discussed the need. Dr. Aslam heads ICU, Dr. Irfan will work for ER and Gen Waseem Alamgir heads Neurology and Stroke.

I think this will be a great collaboration and an MOU should be singed which will have the approval of Army Chief Gen Qamar Bajwa. I will start working on it once approved by the President APPNA

We believe that a sustainable capacity building can only happen if the host institution really needs it and is interested to closely work with us by showing that the program developers and the visiting faculty will be taken care off during their stay.

Most importantly the programs and training courses that will be built can later used anywhere else in public sector in Pakistan.

We signed the MOU with NUMS in Dec 2017 and since then we have had a close relationship which is going on. Thus I visited the NUMS secretariat and met the Dean of Education and Research Prof Mujtaba Qadri. I also met VC Gen Imran Majeed and update both on MERIT plans for 2019 and 2020. They informed me that Gen Imran Majeed will be retiring 3/29/19 however will continue as a civilian VC for NUMS for at least 18 months if not longer. Although there is some delay in building Medical City in I-17 Islamabad due to funds and the hospital size has been reduced in different phases, the research tower site is as planned in MH. In fact the foundation was inaugurated by the Army Chief and the Research facility will move into temporary site on the newly acquired four acres land where the two towers will be built.

I informed the NUMS leadership of our plan to collaborate with Army Medical Corps as requested by Surgeon General as well as Federal Health Ministry institutions of HSA, FMDC and PIMS. They appreciated our plans to work with all who need our assistance emphasizing the large need that exist for assistance of respective Medical professional and APPNA MERIT will be leading it.

APPNE (Association of Pakistani Physicians of Northern Europe)

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I met Secretary of APPNE (Association of Pakistani Physicians of Northern Europe) Dr. Irfan in Rawalpindi Pakistan as well other members of the delegate from UK who came to attend RMU conference. He requested that I bring the message of collaboration between NA and NE physicians organizations. Especially in the sphere of Medical Education where the UK physicians have been playing an important roles similar to one that MERIT is mandated for.

I recommend that we sign an MOU between APPNA and APPNE especially in the MERIT activities in Pakistan if President APPNA agrees.

Summary

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Important new avenues are

1- MERIT involvement in Federal Health Ministry in particular HAS (Health Services Academy). Once we have more clarity on the two projects, an MOU can be signed with them.

2- MOU with Surgeon General of Army Medical Corps need to be signed soon since the leadership is very hopeful that it will be signed by Army Chief. We need to put it together soon.

3- We will prepare the teams for Stroke, ICU and ER capacity building. We already have first two and will need names and may be a blast email for the ER physicians.

4- Similarly will need ER physicians team and the certification training course set up rather quickly. This will run through APPNA Academy on our website.

