



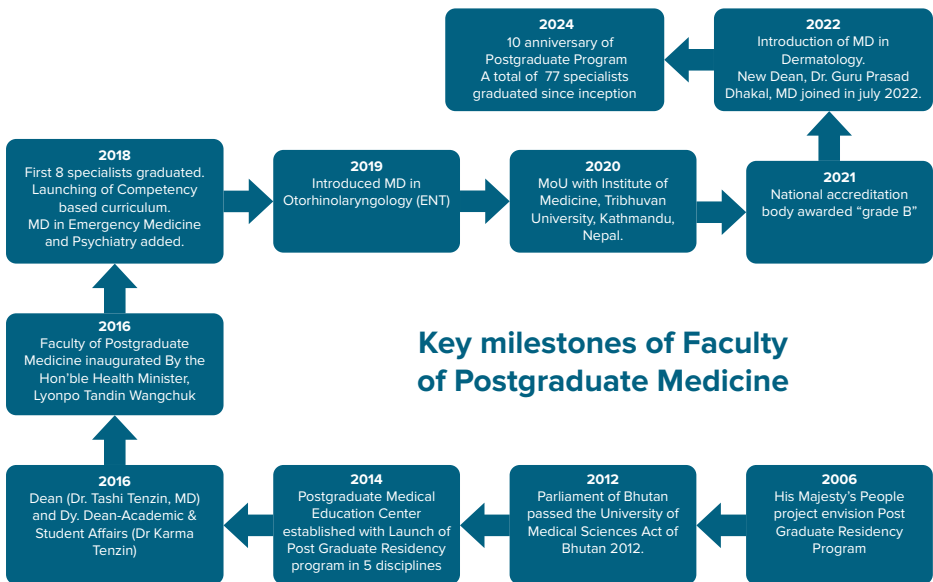
A MILESTONE IN MEDICAL EDUCATION:
Ten Years of Postgraduate Programs at
Khesar Gyalpo University of Medical Sciences of Bhutan

Background

The journey of the Postgraduate Medical Education Centre (PGMEC) began in 2014. Recognizing the evolving healthcare needs and systemic gaps, it was upgraded to the Faculty of Postgraduate Medicine on May 14, 2016, by Health Minister Lyonpo Tandin Wangchuk.

As of 2024, the institute offers twelve different four-year residency programs in clinical specialties. These residency programs have been pivotal in addressing the chronic shortage of specialist human resources in healthcare. Additionally, they have alleviated the challenge of securing specialist training seats in other countries.

This year (2024) marks the tenth anniversary of the Postgraduate Programs at the Khesar Gyalpo University of Medical Sciences of Bhutan (KGUMSB), a significant milestone in Bhutan's medical education landscape.



A Chronicle of Deans and Deputy Deans (2014-2024)

- Dr. Phurb Dorji, Program Director from 2014-2016.
- Dr. Tashi Tenzin, Dean from 2016 - 2021.
- Dr. Karma Tenzin, Deputy Dean Academics and Student Affairs, 2016-2018.
- Dr. Karma Tenzin, Deputy Dean academics from 2018-2023
- Dr. Kuenzang Chhenzom, Deputy Dean Student Affairs from 2018-2023.
- Dr. GP Dhakal, Dean, 2022 - ongoing
- Dr. Karma Sherub, Deputy Dean Academics, 2023- ongoing.
- Dr. Santosh Mukhia, Deputy Dean of Student Affairs, 2023-ongoing.

Overview of Programs

At present, the faculty offers a Doctor of Medicine (MD) program in twelve different disciplines, each spanning four years. The disciplines include:

- Anesthesiology
- Dermatology
- General Practice
- Emergency Medicine
- Internal Medicine
- Obstetrics and Gynecology
- Ophthalmology
- Orthopedic Surgery
- Pediatrics
- Otorhinolaryngology (ENT)
- Psychiatry
- General Surgery

As of 2024, a total of 77 graduates have completed their MD Program in their respective disciplines and are serving in the Central Regional Referral Hospital, Eastern Regional Referral Hospital,

Phuntsholing Hospital, Trashigang District Hospital, Samtse District Hospital, Tsirang District Hospital, Wangdi District Hospital and Bumthang District Hospital. The deployment of MD graduates has enabled access to quality healthcare services for the Bhutanese population.

The table below provides the number of medical doctors who have completed the Post Graduated since its inception in 2014:

Discipline	Number of Graduates
MD in Pediatrics	12
MD in Ophthalmology	7
MD in Anesthesiology	7
MD in General Surgery	11
MD in Obstetrics and Gynecology	9
MD in Internal Medicine	12
MD in Orthopedics	5
MD in General Practice	4
MD in Psychiatry	2
MD in Emergency Medicine	6
MD in Otorhinolaryngology (ENT)	2
Total (2018-2024)	77

In addition, the Faculty of Postgraduate Medicine, KGUMSB has facilitated various subspecialty fellowships for graduates, enhancing the depth and breadth of medical expertise in the country.

Current Residents

Presently, the faculty has a total of 44 residents enrolled in various postgraduate courses as given below:

Discipline	Number of Residents
MD in Pediatrics	2
MD in Ophthalmology	4
MD in Anesthesiology	3
MD in General Surgery	5
MD in Obstetrics and Gynecology	2
MD in Internal Medicine	8
MD in Orthopedics	3
MD in General Practice	3
MD in Psychiatry	3
MD in Emergency Medicine	6
MD in Otorhinolaryngology (ENT)	3
MD in Dermatology	2
Total	44

Role played by Postgraduate medicine in enhancement of health systems:

Establishment of postgraduate medical education at KGUMSB has significantly strengthened the Bhutan healthcare system.

The program has produced specialists, who are deployed across the country, enhancing the quality and accessibility of healthcare services. These graduates have not only filled critical gaps in the medical workforce and also brought advanced medical knowledge

and skills. This development has greatly improved the delivery of specialized healthcare services, allowing the local population to access services closer to home rather than traveling to higher-level health centers.

Consequently, this has improved the gatekeeping mechanism for organized referrals and reduced household out-of-pocket expenditures for seeking medical care, as specialized care is now readily available in nearby health centers. Similarly, the fellowships have also ensured the availability of subspecialty care in the country, further reducing the need for patients to seek treatment abroad.

Overall, the faculty effort has been instrumental in fulfilling the aspiration of a robust and self-sustaining healthcare system in Bhutan.

Future Plans

Looking ahead, the Faculty of Postgraduate Medicine, KGUMSB plans to introduce MD programs in new disciplines and further aims to introduce fellowships in selected disciplines.

Efforts are also being made to institute the intake of foreign students in various disciplines.



Khesar Gyalpo University of Medical Sciences of Bhutan
Royal Government of Bhutan
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