

Medicos may be made to practise on 'dummies'

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NEW DELHI: Working on major reforms in the curriculum for medical courses, the Board of Governors of the Medical Council of India (MCI) has suggested that MBBS students be made to practise on 'dummies' rather than on normal patients or trained volunteers.

"We have never considered the rights of patients but it is an issue in the developed countries," Board Member Sita Naik told journalists here on Tuesday.

She said 'skill laboratories' were being promoted as substitutes for hospitals, and dummies for patients. "The curriculum needs to change as we have not been able to keep pace with time."

The curriculum reform, she said, would include strengthening of the existing Regional Educational Units — modes of distance education — and setting up of new ones to cater to the needs of 310 medical colleges, which would be endowed with 'skill laboratories.'

The centres would promote continuing medical education and other modern methods of teaching, including tele-medicines and distance education.

These regional centres could be used to train doctors in skill laboratories for advanced life-saving methods which India lacked. "Skill laboratories are an expensive proposition, but we are seriously looking at it," she said.

The All-India Medical College Telemedicine Network, proposed by the Centre, would also help to strengthen the Regional Educational Units by sharing resources in medical colleges.

Board Chairman S.K. Sarin said reforms would be implemented from the next academic year.

The best brains went into the issue of reforms, but any decision would be taken after consultations with people of competence.

He said the reforms would also mean making course "time-efficient" and prioritising them.

"Focus needs to be more on critical care, infectious diseases and disaster management."