

Development of subspecialty within specialty

Every specialty of medical science has various subspecialties. When the manpower and other human resources are scarce, same person has to take care of all the related fields. This hinders further development of subspecialties. When manpower flourishes with time, then each individual can take care of each subspecialty leading to its further development.

In the context of Nepal, medical manpower and expertise are still inadequate. However, in some specialties there seems to be adequate manpower though not overwhelming. Moreover, many more new generation and young doctors are coming up. Recent observation shows that more than 1500 new doctors are coming out both from inside and outside the country every year. In one hand, we are worried whether these youngsters will get opportunity or not and on the other hand we don't have any long term plan and prospects to develop subspecialties. If we have plans of developing subspecialties, young upcoming medical manpower can be consumed and utilized for this purpose.

WHY TO DEVELOP SUBSPECIALTIES?

Subspecialty is needed to develop appropriate approach to diagnosis and treatment of an ailment. Without development of subspecialty diagnostic and therapeutic approaches can't be optimized. Without development of subspecialties conventional treatment will continue and further advancement in diagnostic and therapeutic approach can't be achieved.

Similarly, research is one of the essential components of Medicine. Without development of subspecialty research can't advance and vice versa. So research is the ultimate key to development of medicine and its subspecialties.

Shearing the responsibilities among the people is important to develop a system. This can be achieved by development of subspecialties.

Oncology is an example. It is one of the major fields of medicine and it includes vast and wide area of human body system. Oncology of each human body system is different from others. It has its own diagnostic and therapeutic approaches. It has its own pathophysiology and outcome. Without its knowledge in a holistic way, in terms of systemic approach, treatment of only cancer without specialization in particular system is not adequate and accurate. In other words, treatment of a cancer of one system by a cancer expert in that system may be more worthwhile than treatment by a cancer expert not related to that system.

For example, there seems to adequate number of gynecologist in this country and gynecology is advancing with time in Nepal. Gyneoncology is one of the major components of gynecology and it can be developed into a separate subspecialty. There are various types of gynecological cancers. They can have their own presentations, complications and outcome which can be better understood by a gynecologist rather than other medical specialist. Therefore gyneoncologist can be a better person than general gynecologist or general oncologist to treat gynecological cancers.

Neurooncology can be another example though manpower of neurosurgeons is too few in Nepal. Neurosurgeon who is a brain expert, can better understand about brain tumors it in a holistic way. Therefore, development of neurooncology can lead to more appropriate

management of brain tumors according to socioeconomic status of Nepalese patients.

In highly developed countries they have the system of subspecialization as explained above. For example a neurooncologist deals with a brain tumor in all respects including neuropathological evaluation, but doesn't do other general neurosurgical works. This is the example of highly developed subspecialization.

By writing this, it is not meant to insult somebody who is already working in a particular field as a general physician but it is meant to emphasize that now time has come to develop subspecialty within a specialty.

It is equally true for not only oncology but also for other subspecialties within a specialty. Development of radiological subspecialty, neuroradiology, within neurosurgery, development of pathological subspecialty, neuropathology, within neurosurgery, development of spinal subspecialty within orthopedic surgery, development of intervention in radiology, interventional radiology, development of intervention in cardiology, interventional cardiology, are examples of subspecialties.