
EDITORIAL**Keeping abreast with knowledge and information***Pramod John**Editor-in-chief, Journal of Krishna Institute of Medical Sciences University, Krishna Vishwa Vidyapeeth (Deemed to be University), Karad-415539 (Maharashtra) India*

Practice and academics are two sides of the coin as far as medical profession is concerned. Though, some continue both, there is always a conflict of divided loyalty. There are some who balance both, though, quite efficiently. There may be advantages and disadvantages for both. Practice brings in more income and fame, obviously. Those who are taking up academics are doing a tremendous work in shaping the future healthcare professionals. Teaching is always the mainstay of medical education. Without teaching, students cannot learn. However, I feel that those who are taking up teaching as a career should have a deep passion for teaching.

In the backdrop of practice and academics, there are always opportunities for those who are engaged in practice to keep abreast with the newer developments happening and in recent times, evidence-based medical practice is gaining foothold in practice. Though there are a number of Continuing Medical Education programmes (CMEs), conferences organized by local Indian Medical Association (IMA) chapters as well as speciality conferences that help as a platform for dissemination of knowledge and information as well as social interaction with fellow professionals, not everyone is keen and inclined to attend these programmes due to various constraints.

One of the prominent presence in many of these conferences is the pharma companies. Their aim is

to promote their drugs and with that objective in mind, they sponsor many of the events. These companies also organize product launching events. However, these things are of the past because of the newer directives that the healthcare professionals should not accept the sponsorship of the pharma companies. By being a devil's advocate, I can always say that pushing or thrusting the expenses on the pharma companies can help in reducing the financial burden involved in organizing conferences.

The ethical issues involved in seeking the help of pharma companies and thereby having an obligation to prescribe their drugs is, however, not desirable. The same is true in seeking the assistance or sponsorship of pharma companies to travel abroad to attend international conferences or even to enjoy vacations.

Keeping out the pharma companies from providing sponsorship for conferences is one thing, but compulsion to prescribe generic medicine may not be a wise decision. Therapeutic efficacies of drugs can be different. Time to time, the government is also publishing the list of drugs not having therapeutic efficacy. On the flip side there are certain manufacturers who prepare medicines and pack them in different trade names for different companies and again involving vast cost difference, though the same formulation is prepared by

the same manufacturer. So, prescribing generic medicines can greatly help the patients financially and the monopoly of certain companies can also be controlled.

All these contrasts prevail in the practice of medicine or teaching of medicine. Let us all strive to have quality and value in medical profession.

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