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PREAMBLE

In Cognizance with the powers and functions provided for by chapter III and chapter VI of the Medical and Health Council Act, 2002, the Bhutan Medical and Health Council hereby formulates regulation for postgraduate medical education programme.

WHEREAS Sections (2) and (3) of Chapter III of the Medical and Health Council Act, 2002 empowers the Bhutan Medical and Health Council to prescribe minimum requirements for the establishment of specific Medical and Health institutions and minimum standards of training facilities in terms of staff, equipment and physical facilities.

WHEREAS under Chapter VI of the Act, the clause (h) empowers the Council to prescribe minimum criteria for recognition of institutes, teachers, and courses while the clause (m) provides for setting up minimum requirements for induction of teachers of medical and health sciences.

In exercise of the powers and functions conferred by the aforementioned provisions of the Act, the Bhutan Medical and Health Council hereby formulates this regulation as follows:

Part I: THE PRELIMINARIES

SHORT TITLE AND COMMENCEMENT

1. This regulation shall be cited as “Postgraduate Medical Education Regulation, 2014.”
2. This Regulation shall come into force on the 16th Day of the 6th Month of Wood Horse Year of the Bhutanese calendar corresponding to the 11th August, 2014.

APPLICATION AND EXTENT

3. This Regulation shall apply to:
 - a) Any Institution, Faculty of Medicine or Teaching Hospital recognized by the Council with the intent to introduce or start Postgraduate Medical Education Programme in the country; and
 - b) All the introduced or started Postgraduate Medical Education Programme prior to coming in force of this Regulation.
4. This regulation shall extend to all the Postgraduate Medical Education Programmes within the Kingdom of Bhutan.

REPEAL

5. Upon coming into force of this regulation, any existing regulation in the country pertaining to the subject matters addressed by this regulation shall be repealed.
6. Notwithstanding the repeal in section 5, anything done or any action taken before coming into force of this regulation shall be deemed to have been done or taken under existing, relevant guidelines, policies and regulations.

INTERPRETATION

7. In this regulation, unless the context indicates otherwise, the singular shall include the plural and masculine shall include the feminine.

PART II: APPLICATION FOR ESTABLISHMENT OR INTRODUCTION OF POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Application

8. An application for establishment or introduction of Postgraduate Medical Education Programme shall be made in duplicate to the Council in Form 1 as stipulated in Annexure and accompanied by the processing fee as stipulated in Annexure at least one year prior to start of the Programme.
9. An application for establishment or introduction of Postgraduate Medical Education Programme shall be made to the Council only upon completion of every other formalities from relevant agencies as per the laws of the land.
10. Upon receipt of the proposal by the Council, the Council shall adhere to the procedures enshrined in the relevant Guidelines.
11. The Council shall defer, deny or grant provisional or full registration depending upon the fulfilment of the requirement by the University/Institution as prescribed by the Council.

ESTABLISHMENT

12. No university or equivalent institution shall be allowed to establish, introduce or start Postgraduate Education Training programme without prior sanction of the Council.
13. Any institution, proponent, Joint-Venture or FDI with intent to establish, introduce or start Postgraduate Education Training programme shall adhere to specific Regulations and Guidelines framed by the Council.

REGISTRATION AND RENEWAL OF REGISTRATION

14. Any University/Institution that intend to introduce or any institution that is already involved in imparting Postgraduate Medical Education Programme shall register with the Council as per the prescribed Guidelines.
15. The Certificate of Registration shall be renewed three months prior to completion of the validity period of five years.

FEES

16. The established/recognised institution shall pay fees for Registration, Renewal and Introduction of new Programme Fees; and any such fees as deemed necessary by the Council as per the prescribed Regulations and Guidelines.

Part III: GENERAL OUTLINE OF POSTGRADUTE MEDICAL EDUCATION TRAINING PROGRAMME

COMPETENT AUTHORITY

17. The Bhutan Medical and Health Council (hereinafter referred to as Council) shall be the competent authority to grant provisional, authorising the institution to proceed with implementation of the Medical Education Programme and admission of residents as per the prescribed guidelines framed hereinafter.
18. The Council shall be authorized to defer provisional approval and programme implementation pending further development as per the prescribed guidelines framed hereinafter.
19. The Council shall be authorized to deny provisional approval as per the prescribed guidelines framed hereinafter.
20. The programme shall not admit residents unless the provisional approval has been granted by the Council.

ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION OR DEPARTMENT

21. Subject to fulfilment of the minimum requirements as may be prescribed by the Council from time to time, the following institutions are eligible to impart postgraduate medical education programme:
 - a) Faculty of Medicine or other Institution already imparting undergraduate medical training programme;
 - b) A Teaching hospital recognized by the Council as suitable for imparting Post Graduate Medical Education Training Programme.

CATEGORY OF POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL COURSES

22. The postgraduate medical training programme shall be as follows:
 - a) Postgraduate degree in broad specialties

NOMENCLATURE OF POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL DEGREES

23. The various specialties in which postgraduate medical training may be undertaken and the nomenclature of such training leading to the award of specific Post Graduate degrees.

PRIOR QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENT FOR POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL COURSES

24. The prior qualification requirement for eligibility to get enrolled into various Postgraduate Medical Education training programme shall be Bachelor's degree of Medicine & Surgery (MBBS) or equivalent as recognized by the Council.

DURATION OF POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL COURSES

25. The Postgraduate Medical Education training Programme shall be for a minimum of three years.
26. Notwithstanding anything in section 16, every Postgraduate Medical Education training programme shall be extended for maximum of two years for each category of Postgraduate Medical Education training programs.

Part IV: POSTGRADUTE MEDICAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

GENERAL OUTLINE OF POSTGRADUATE CURRICULUM

27. The postgraduate curriculum shall be clearly defined in terms of learning objectives and outcomes, nature of course, training content and duration, modes of delivery, and academic structure.
28. The training contents and curriculum shall be structured on a modular approach to achieve a systematic exposure to the various sub-specialities concerned with the discipline.
29. The training shall involve 'community-derived' or 'community-targeted' learning experience and therefore encompass exposure of the trainees to community based activities.
30. The curriculum contents shall reflect the competency, skills and knowledge that shall enable the learners to put in practice after the training.
31. The curriculum shall be validated by academic board of University or equivalent institution and approved by the Council.
32. The curriculum shall be evaluated by the University or equivalent institution and Council and may be updated every five years.
33. University or Institute shall seek prior approval of the Council if it intends to make more than 30% changes in the curriculum.

COMPONENTS OF POSTGRADUATE CURRICULUM

34. The major components of the Postgraduate curriculum shall be:
 - a) Theoretical knowledge;
 - b) Practical and Clinical skills;
 - c) Attitudes including Communication skills;
 - d) Training in Research methodology; and
 - e) Evidence –based medicine

CORE COMPETENCIES

35. The postgraduate medical programme in every discipline or field of study shall be designed to infuse six core competencies as mentioned below:
- a) Patient care with focus on Patient safety;
 - b) Medical knowledge;
 - c) Practice-based learning and Improvement;
 - d) Interpersonal relationship and Communication Skills;
 - e) Professionalism including Medical Ethics; and
 - f) Systems-based Practice

Part V: STUDENT ADMISSION AND SUPPORT SERVICES

SELECTION AND ADMISSION POLICY

36. The institute shall have written documents outlining its policy on admission, eligibility criteria, and selection examinations.

SELECTION EXAMINATION

37. Candidates for postgraduate medical courses shall be selected through a competitive selection examination conducted by the University or equivalent institution.
38. Individual's academic performance in the selection examination shall constitute not less than 70% of the total marking system for the purpose of selecting the candidate. The remaining 30% of the total marking system may be earmarked for other criteria established by those responsible for each specific postgraduate medical training programme conducting the examination.

NUMBER OF POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS TO BE ADMITTED

39. The number of students to be admitted in the various Postgraduate medical education programme shall be one candidate per year per two recognised postgraduate teachers in a department, for each additional candidate, one more teacher shall be added.

POSTGRADUATE STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

40. The students shall be provided with accommodation facilities within the hospital campus, to facilitate smooth discharge of their clinical teaching-learning responsibilities.
41. The trainees shall be paid stipends or other remuneration in accordance with the applicable laws and government policies.
42. The institution which is engaged in providing Postgraduate Medical Education Programme shall create conducive environment for learning and meaningful engagement of the students.
43. The trainees shall give feedback regarding academic, administrative and disciplinary matters to ensure their roles in quality improvement of training programme.

Part VI: CONDUCT OF TRAINING PROGRAMME

COMMENCEMENT OF COURSE

44. The courses for various postgraduate trainings shall commence in January or July.
45. The selection process shall be completed not less than two months from the date of commencement of the training.

ACADEMIC TERM

46. All the training programmes shall be structured in academic term consisting of Six months.

TEACHING-LEARNING METHODOLOGIES

47. The trainees shall be given graded responsibility in the management of patients (OPD and IPD) entrusted to their care under close supervision of trainers. There shall be a system to ensure the continuity of individual patient care by a trainee, serving as a self-learning process and life-long learning.
48. The training methodology shall encompass participation in morbidity and mortality conference, grand rounds, seminars, journal clubs, and interesting case discussions and in clinical and clinico-pathological conferences.
49. The postgraduate trainees shall be required to participate in the teaching and training programme of undergraduate students and interns.
50. Provisions shall be made for access to adequate learning materials such as reference books, medical journals and other publications, whether in electronic or printed form.

TRAINEE ATTENDANCE

51. All candidates joining the Postgraduate training programme shall work as full time residents during the period of training, attending not less than 90% (ninety percent) of the training during each calendar year.
52. Notwithstanding anything in section 45, a candidate who fails to attend 90% but not less than 70% attendance may be allowed to sit for the examination when it is deemed genuine by the University or equivalent institution.

STUDENT LOG-BOOK

53. All postgraduate students shall maintain a log book /portfolio to document record of the work carried out by them and the training programme undergone during the period of training including details of medical or surgical procedures observed, assisted or done independently by the candidates.
54. The record books/portfolio shall be checked and assessed by immediate supervisor and finally signed up by the head of the department/institute imparting the training.

SUPERVISION AND MENTORSHIP

55. The postgraduate students shall be provided with dedicated supervision and mentorship by senior faculty members and designated specialists.

RESEARCH PROJECT

56. Every postgraduate trainee shall be required to carry out work on an assigned research project under the guidance of a recognised postgraduate teacher.
57. The trainees shall submit their research work to the head of the department at least six months before the final theoretical and clinical / practical examination.

Part VII: ASSESSMENT AND TRAINING EVALUATION

TRAINEE ASSESSMENT

58. The trainees shall be formatively assessed to assure the continuous gain of individual's needed competencies, and summatively assessed through a combination of annual summative assessment including portfolio/log-book review (40%) and the final examination including research work at the end of programme (60%).

EXAMINATIONS

59. The examinations shall be structured on the basis of 'grading' or 'marking system' to evaluate and to certify a student's level of knowledge, skill and competence at the end of the training.
60. The final exit examinations for various postgraduate courses shall be conducted at the end of academic term for the respective training programme.
61. The examinations shall comprise of:
 - a) written papers;
 - b) Clinical or practical;
 - c) Research project; and
 - d) Oral or viva voce.

NUMBER OF EXAMINATIONS

62. There shall be at least one examination annually for regular students.
63. Unsuccessful candidates shall be permitted to appear for re-examinations within a period of one to two months, if the candidates fail in the re-examination then the candidate shall have to re-appear in the next annual examinations.

THE MINIMAL PASSING LEVEL (MPL)

64. The cut-off marks for passing examination as a whole shall be a minimum of 60% marks when combined in all components of the examinations.

EXAMINERS

65. All the postgraduate examiners shall be appointed from amongst the recognised postgraduate teachers holding recognised qualifications in the respective discipline.
66. The Examiners for written, oral or practical examination shall be appointed from the University, other Hospitals in the Country, from recognized Institutes/Universities outside the Country or amongst the retired professionals within the Country with prior approval of the Council.
67. All practical examinations shall be conducted by a minimum of three examiners, out of which at least one shall be the external examiner.
68. The research project work shall be examined by a minimum of two examiners –comprising each of internal and external examiners who shall not be the examiners for theory and clinical/practical examinations.
69. The external examiner shall be invited from other recognised Institutions/University outside the country.
70. The selection, appointment, remuneration, and conduct of the examiners shall be governed by guidelines developed for this purpose by the University/equivalent Institution.

Part VIII: GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT

71. Faculty or Unit shall be established under the University to oversee the Conduct of the Post Graduate Medical Education Programme.
72. Dean of the Faculty or Programme Director of the Unit shall be responsible for leading the team of Post graduate trainers in implementation and quality control of the programme in coordination with relevant Course coordinator/head of departments and other officials of the University and the Teaching hospital.

COURSE COORDINATOR

73. A course coordinator shall be appointed from amongst the postgraduate teachers of respective discipline to coordinate and implement the postgraduate programme.
74. Dean/The Programme Director shall function in accordance to the terms of reference developed by the University.

QUALITY CONTROL OF THE EDUCATION PROGRAM

75. The Faculty or Unit shall have quality assurance system for Medical Education Programme comprising of Continuous Quality Improvement, Annual Internal Quality Assessment, and External Quality Assessment every four years.
76. The Quality Assessment report shall be submitted to the Academic Board of University or equivalent institution and Council not later than 3 months at the end of the academic year.

BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

77. There shall be constituted boards and committees comprising of membership with requisite qualifications and expertise to discharge the various components of postgraduate medical education programme under a specified terms of reference.
78. University or equivalent Institution may constitute sub-committees if deemed necessary.

AFFILIATION

79. The postgraduate medical education programme shall be affiliated to a recognized University inside or outside the country.
80. The Postgraduate Medical Education Programme shall be linked at least in part through exchange programme with institutions outside the country in order to facilitate the trainee's exposure to a different setting of technological advances and disease pattern.

AWARD OF DEGREE

81. The award of certificates leading to various postgraduate degrees shall be conferred by the University or equivalent institutions to which the programme or institute is primarily affiliated with.

MIGRATION POLICY

82. Migration or transfer of trainee undergoing any postgraduate degree/ diploma / super specialty training shall not be permitted from one institute to another Institute in the Country unless the institute is affiliated to the same University, Similarly students from Institutes/Universities outside the Country shall not be permitted to migrate to the institutes/University in the Country unless the University/Institutes in the Country has a written memorandum of understanding with the foreign Institutes/Universities to allow migration of students.

Part IX: MINIMUM INSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

TRAINING FACILITIES

83. The Institution engaged in imparting Postgraduate Medical Education Programme shall ensure adequate and regular financial resources to sustain the educational programme.
84. In order to facilitate optimal teaching-learning processes, a minimum of the under-mentioned facilities shall be provided:
 - a) Requisite physical facilities for the staff and trainees to ensure proper delivery of the curriculum. The physical facilities include lecture rooms, office space, practical rooms, laboratories, libraries, information technology facilities, and accommodation for staff and students;
 - b) Sufficient equipment and clinical training facilities (teaching hospital, district hospitals) to support clinical practice and skills-based training;
 - c) Adequate number of computers (trainee to computer ratio of 1:5 at minimum), printing, copying and binding facilities and audio-visual aids for effective teaching- learning activities;
 - d) Adequate information technology providing access to medical and scientific knowledge in relevant areas;
 - e) Adequate number of patients to meet the trainee' learning objectives; and
 - f) Wide range of cases in the relevant specialties.

TEACHING FACULTY

85. There shall not be less than two dedicated core faculty, comprising of Professor, Associate Professor or Assistant Professor for each discipline to teach and supervise one trainee. For each additional trainee, one more faculty member shall be appointed/ needed.
86. The teaching faculty shall have access to a system of continuing professional development program in order to update and maintain their expertise and competence.
87. Teaching faculty shall be appointed as per the "Appointment of Teaching Faculty Regulation of Medical and Health Council, 2014."
88. The teaching faculty appointed under section 86 shall be provided with prior training in medical pedagogy and teaching methodologies and techniques.
89. The teaching faculty shall hold a minimum of Master's degree in relevant clinical speciality which is recognized by and registered with Council.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR A TEACHING HOSPITAL

90. A hospital designated as a teaching hospital for postgraduate medical education programme shall have the minimum requirements as prescribed in the "Teaching Hospital Regulation of Bhutan Medical and Health Council".

PART X: OFFENCES AND PENALTIES

OFFENCES

91. Any person/facility that contravenes or fails to comply with any provisions of these Regulations and relevant guidelines commits an offence.
92. Any Institution that contravenes or fails to abide with any provisions of this regulation thereby violating BMHC Act, Regulations and Guidelines commits an offence.

PENALTIES

93. Any person/facility/institution that commits an offence for first time shall be warned and asked to rectify and comply accordingly within the period specified by the inspection team.
94. Any person/facility/institution that commits same offence for second time shall be fined with minimum wage for a maximum of ninety days or suspension of certificate of registration till the lapses are rectified or complied with or both.
95. Any person/facility/institution that commits same offence for third time shall be fined with minimum wage for a maximum of one eighty days or suspension/cancellation of certificate of registration or both, depending upon the severity of the case.
96. Any Institution that commits an offence shall be dealt accordingly as per the existing BMHC Act, Regulations and Guidelines.
97. Any person/facility/Institution that commits an offence which is not under the purview of this Regulation but under the purview of existing relevant Acts, Regulations and Guidelines shall henceforth be dealt accordingly as per the existing relevant Acts, Regulations and Guidelines.

PART X – MISCELLANEOUS

INSPECTION

98. The Council shall be empowered to visit the Institution/University to inspect the Physical facility and other educational resources prior to grant of approval.
99. The Council shall coordinate ad hoc inspection whenever the Council deems necessary as per the prescribed guidelines.
100. The University/equivalent Institution shall hand over every record and documents maintained to the Inspection Team as deemed necessary by the Council.

AMENDMENTS AND APPEAL

101. This regulation shall be revised from time to time as may be required by the Council.

DEFINITIONS

102. In this Regulation, unless the context otherwise requires:
 - a) **“Broad Specialties”** shall mean Masters degree in Clinical specialties
 - b) **“Core faculty”** shall mean a regular faculty member in an appropriate area of specialization.
 - c) **“Council”** shall mean the Bhutan Medical and Health Council.
 - d) **“Institution”** shall mean the institute imparting medical education
 - e) **“IPD”** shall mean In-patient Department.
 - f) **“Master Degree”** shall mean postgraduate degree leading to specialization in a clinical discipline and shall not be equivalent to PhD.
 - g) **“OPD”** shall mean Out-patient Department.
 - h) **“Postgraduate Medical Education”** shall mean any education/training program leading to Masters Degree in an appropriate area of specialization or in respective disciplines.
 - i) **“University”** shall mean university imparting postgraduate medical education.

**BHUTAN MEDICAL AND HEALTH COUNCIL
MINISTRY OF HEALTH**

Application for approval of New Medical and Health Educational Program

Name of Training Institution:

Correspondence Address:
(in block letters)

Head of Department/Program:

Phone No. Office:..... Mobile:

Fax:.....

Email address:.....

Website, if applicable.....

Title of proposed course:
.....

Duration of the course:.....

Proposed date for course:.....

Note: Duly filled in application form should be accompanied by the following:

1. Processing fee (Nu. 25000/-) for Application for approval of launch of new courses as indicated in Regulations BMHC, 2005, Part –V (27.4).
2. Institute Brochure(if any)
3. Detail educational documents(curriculum)

This form together with attachments should be submitted to:

**The Registrar
Bhutan Medical and Health Council
Ministry of Health
Thimphu**

Declaration:

I/We certify that the information provided in this application is true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I realize that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements may be subjected to administrative penalties. I am fully aware and understand the Registration Regulation for the introduction of New Course.

Signature(s) of Head of Training Provider/Training Institute: _____

Name:

Signature:..... **Designation:**..... **Date:**...../...../.....