

BMC hires 186 private doctors to teach speciality courses in peripheral hospitals

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Mumbai

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The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has hired around 186 private consultant doctors to teach Diplomate of National Board (DNB)—a three-year specialisation course — and provide treatment at six of its peripheral hospitals.

The move is expected to reduce the number of critical patients that are referred from a peripheral hospital to a tertiary-care centre for treatment and thereby, help the patients receive life saving treatment in time.

Although BMC has 16 peripheral hospitals, over 40% of its patients are referred to major civic-run hospitals such as King Edward Memorial, Dr RN Cooper, BYL Nair and Sion Hospital due to unavailability of specialists.

The 186 superspeciality doctors who have been hired by BMC, each with six to eight years of experience, will teach DNB to postgraduate medical students from the next academic year at the six peripheral hospitals— Rajawadi Hospital, Bhabha Hospital in Kurla and Bandra, VN Desai Hospital, Bharat Ratna Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Hospital which is also known as Shatabdi Hospital in Kandivali, and Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya Hospital in Govandi.

“Our main intention is to strengthen the peripheral hospitals which are the first line treatment-providing facilities. This will help us lessen the workload in major hospitals and also help in saving more lives,” said Suresh Kakani, additional commissioner, BMC.

At present, specialists have been hired for fields such as medicine, surgery, gynaecology, paediatric, orthopaedic, anesthesia, radiology, ENT among others. The senior and junior consultants will be paid Rs 2 lakh and Rs 1.50 lakh per month respectively.

“These doctors will be responsible for providing theoretical and practical teaching to the students. So, they will also be involved in treating the patients,” said Dr Ramesh Bharmal, dean of Nair Hospital who was part of the hiring committee.

One of the criteria for hiring the doctors was their close proximity to respective hospitals so that in case of medical emergencies, they can be called on duty immediately to attend to the patients. BMC has plans to gradually increase the number of seats for the students and expand the teaching faculty to produce more specialists every year which can help in bridging the gap of patients and specialist doctors in peripheral hospitals.

“Any MBBS students, after their one year of medical bond, can apply for the course. We have plans to transform these six peripheral hospitals into mini-medical colleges for post-graduation,”

said Dr Bharamal. The first proposal is the regard was declared in the annual budget of BMC in 2020.

Along with this, BMC is working on increasing the number of peripheral hospitals in the suburbs. Kakani said a 500-bedded hospital will be inaugurated in Bhandup next month. Also, a 50-bedded hospital will also come up in Chandivali, Andheri East. “We are starting the reconstruction work on Shatabdi Hospital, Kandivali from next month. We are hoping to complete the revamping of Siddharth and Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Hospital in Vikhroli soon,” said Kakani.

Though healthcare activists have welcomed the move of BMC, they also demand to lay more emphasis on the already available infrastructure.

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“The initiative is encouraging but in the long run, it is essential that BMC also focus on dispensaries which have the infrastructure but aren’t being used efficiently. And the pandemic holds live testimony to it,” said Milind Mhaske, Director, Praja Foundation.

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