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Health Ministry provides new avenues for medical degree holders

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A PhD in Medical Microbiology or Medical Biochemistry shall be required for Medium & Advanced Laboratories



Ministry of Health & Family Welfare in its latest gazette notification regarding Clinical Establishment (Central Government) Amendment Rules 2020 on 14/02/2020 made it official that, professionals with MSc degree in Medical Microbiology or Medical Biochemistry with three years of laboratory experience can become authorized signatory in diagnostic laboratory for tests respective to their specialization without recording any opinion or interpretation of lab results.

As per the notification, “A PhD in Medical Microbiology or Medical Biochemistry shall be required for Medium & Advanced Laboratories.”

This notification came after the Board of Governors in supersession of MCI gave its decision regarding the role of authorized signatory to the ministry.

Dr. Sridhar Rao, President, National M.Sc Medical Teachers' Association welcomed this move of the ministry and said, "it was indeed a long battle to win back our rights. Signing authority was snatched from us and many of our members lost jobs or demoted at workplace and faced a lot of hardships.”

He thanked the Board of Governors and the central Health Ministry for restoring the signatory rights by giving due consideration to the NMMTA’s detailed representations.

“Clinical scientists signing laboratory reports is practiced all over the world, including the US, the UK, the European Union, Middle East countries, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Nepal etc. In fact, the West Bengal government had included the clinical scientists in its Clinical Establishments Act guidelines. With the Union government clearing the way, rest of the states must adopt these guidelines", he added.

Arjun Maitra, Secretary, National M.Sc Medical Teachers' Association said, “We were waiting for this day for long. From 2014 we were fighting for our professional dignity and the opportunity to work in the field of our specialization. Appropriately trained clinical scientists will compensate the acute deficiency of doctors specializing in laboratory medicine.”

Since the knowledge and skills regarding the techniques used in the laboratory tests are acquired in the postgraduate course (Medical MSc) itself and the fact that Ph.D doesn't confer any additional knowledge or skill in routine diagnostics, the requirement of Ph.D for medium and advanced laboratories may be omitted. NMMTA has always asked for the restoration of signatory authority based on the PG qualifications, with or without Ph.D. As of now we thank and welcome the decision of the ministry and all else who have supported us.

National M.Sc Medical Teachers' Association (NMMTA) is a registered association of persons who have medical M.Sc postgraduate degree in Anatomy, Physiology, Biochemistry, Pharmacology or Microbiology awarded under the faculty of medicine and conducted by any medical college/institution (recognized by the Medical Council of India).