

## **GSMC MUHS UNESCO Bioethics Unit**

**Seth G S Medical College & K E M Hospital, Parel, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India**

### **Guest Lecture “Doctors without Borders”**

**Speaker: Dr Bharat Kelkar**

**19<sup>th</sup> September 2016**

**Venue: JMLT, College building**

- GSMC MUHS UNESCO Bioethics Unit organized a guest lecture “Doctors without Borders” by Dr **Bharat Kelkar** on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2016. An alumnus of GSMC, Dr Kelkar is an orthopaedic surgeon and MSF volunteer. It was an awareness raising session where the speaker shared his experiences while volunteering with **MSF**—a medical humanitarian organization.
- This event was organized as part of the World Bioethics Day Celebrations (19<sup>th</sup> October) and also as a part of 90 years celebrations of the institution.
- The **Students’ Wing** of the Bioethics Unit had taken the lead initiative in organizing this event in co-ordination with the Steering Committee under the guidance of Dr Santosh Salagre, Head of the Unit.
- The event was attended by more than 300 undergraduate students (MBBS, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and nursing), postgraduate students and faculty.

#### **Proceedings:**

- EktaPatil and Prajakta Kulkarni (members of the Students’ Wing) began the proceedings by welcoming the dignitaries. This was followed by a prayer sung by Vineeta.
- Dr PadmajaMarathe, Head, Steering Committee, apprised the audience about the GSMC MUHS UNESCO Bioethics Unit. She highlighted the importance of incorporating the subject of bioethics in the current curriculum of healthcare education and also briefed about the activities of the Unit and its future plans.
- Human Resource Officer-Operations, MSF;India, AkanshaArora introduced and presented the achievements of MSF.
  - Doctors without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) is an international organization active in more than 70 countries worldwide. It provides quality medical care and emergency medical assistance free of cost especially in resource-limited conditions irrespective of nationality
  - In India, it helps in running various health programs of the government.

- A recipient of Nobel Peace Prize in 1999, it has been extending services during various natural and manmade disasters and epidemic outbreaks in India and outside.
  - She also provided information on requirements of and opportunities for healthcare professionals from different specialities in MSF teams and urged the audience to be volunteers.
  - A short video film describing the experiences of Dr Alan de Lima, an MSF doctor, while serving in Chhattisgarh (naxal affected region), Ethiopia and Sudan was screened.
- Dr Kelkar gave an inspiring account of his experience while serving on Jordan-Syria border as an MSF Volunteer.
    - He began his talk by recalling the GSMC and KEMH maxim “NonSibiSed Omnibus” which was one of the factors that motivated him to be MSF volunteer.
    - In June 2014, he served at MSF Hospital in Ar-Ramtha, Jordan to provideservices to the war affected patients in Syria (UNHCR refugee camp)
    - He described different injuries inflicted in the war by bomb blasts, mines, bullets, torchers.
    - The situation was “many nations, one mission” with doctors, nurses and support staff from different countries.
    - The team had to work in resource –limited conditions with no facilities like CT scan and had to depend on surface anatomy.
    - They used debridement, rotational flaps, and arterial repairs for treatment and had to triage thepatients according to priority, following ICRC protocols.
    - He emphasized that there was a lot to learn from his experiences.
    - He would be taking up his next mission in Yemen in October 2016.
    - To remember: “You cannot change the world but you make a huge difference for that one patient you treat!”
- The lecture was followed by an interactive session. There were questions from students and faculty which led to informative discussion. Psychological support to MSF volunteers, risk to their lives, and preparation for survival protocols, language barriers, and initiatives taken by MSF in dealing with these issues were discussed. Important bioethical aspects like autonomy, consent, importance of documentation, beneficence, neutrality (impartiality) were deliberated.

- Dr Anjali Telang (faculty co-ordinator, Steering Committee) proposed the vote of thanks and mementos were presented to the dignitaries.
- The program concluded with rendition of the national anthem.