

## Dr. Naresh Trehan

Diplomate American Board of Cardiothoracic Surgery  
Chairman & Managing Director, Medanta - The Medicity  
Chairman, Medanta Heart Institute

**February 6, 2020**

**Dr. Harsh Vardhan**

Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare  
Govt. Of India.

**Subject: Recommendation for recognition of Post-Graduate Diploma in Clinical Cardiology (PGDCC).**

Dear Dr. Harsh Vardhan :

The prevalence of cardiovascular diseases is increasingly alarming in India. According to the Global Burden of Disease Study report, nearly 28% of all deaths in India are related to cardiovascular diseases. OPDs and IPDs in every small and big hospitals, private or govt., are overwhelmed with cardiac patients. Despite the rising burden of ageing population and cardiovascular diseases in India, there is an acute shortage of doctors trained in cardiology in the country. This has to be viewed very seriously. Given the increasing population and increasing disease burden with each passing year, it is going to be quite impossible to fill this gap through academic programs like DM (cardiology) and DNB (cardiology) alone, as these specialists are mostly limited to tertiary care hospitals in Tier 1 cities. The poor and needy patients in majority of Tier II, Tier III cities and rural areas do not have access to these specialists, putting these patients at a huge disadvantage.

With the aim to address the growing patient need for cardiology services in Tier II, Tier III cities, and rural areas, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi, in the year 2006, launched a 2 year full time clinical training program i.e. Post Graduate Diploma in Clinical Cardiology (PGDCC). The objective was to establish a core program dedicated to train larger number of medical graduates in Clinical cardiology to deal effectively with the early recognition, management and prevention of common cardiovascular diseases (Non-Invasive Cardiology) at the community level.

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The PGDCC syllabus, having active teaching and clinical training components, was meticulously planned by eminent academicians and clinicians in cardiology. MBBS doctors were selected on the basis of a national entrance exam conducted by IGNOU, and were allotted 2-year residency in 77 tertiary care super-specialty hospitals/study centers including Government medical colleges. The 2-year PGDCC program ran parallel to 3-year DNB program in above institutes under the highly qualified and distinguished faculty, which rigorously trained both DNB and PGDCC candidates. PGDCC doctors were trained to manage all non-invasive aspects of cardiovascular illnesses. The PGDCC candidates were awarded the diploma by IGNOU on successfully completing 2 years training and clearing an exit theory as well as practical exam. The overall standard of the PGDCC program was at par with other degree/diploma programs recognized by Medical Council of India.

A total of 1706 successful candidates have been awarded PGDCC between year 2006 - 2015. Unfortunately this course was discontinued in 2014. Many of these doctors are working independently and providing services at the community level to the poor and needy patients suffering from cardiovascular illnesses. Kerala Government appointed PGDCC doctors in Thaluk and District hospitals to provide services to patients with cardiovascular diseases. Leading hospitals, are also utilizing the services of PGDCC qualified doctors for assisting super-specialist doctors in managing overwhelmed out-patient departments and in-patient departments like emergencies, Non-Invasive Labs, ICUs, pre-op/ post op care and follow-ups.

PGDCC doctors are involved in spreading awareness, early recognition, prevention & treatment of cardiovascular diseases at primary healthcare level where patients do not have access to super-specialist doctors. PGDCC doctors are helping in bridging the gap between the General Practitioners & the Intervention Cardiologists.

PGDCC qualified doctors are a great asset to public healthcare system in India. These doctors are making a significant contribution in tackling cardiac disease burden in the country, and are contributing to the 'health for all initiative' of the **Government of India under the Ayushman Bharat** program, which was envisaged to deliver an expanded range of services to address the primary health care needs of the entire population in their area, expanding access, universality and equity close to the community.



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Ministry of Health has recently (September 2019) granted recognition to 2 years 'Diploma in Cardiology' from GSVM Medical College, CSJM University, Kanpur.

We from the Cardiology Community strongly recommend the recognition of Post Graduate Diploma in Clinical Cardiology (PGDCC) granted by IGNOU as PGDCC qualified doctors have proven to be a strong pillar of our healthcare system. I also recommend that this course be restarted to further strengthen Ayushman Bharat program in the larger interest of the population. Recognition of PGDCC shall be a huge justice to both PGDCC doctors as well as patients in need of access to cardiac services.

Thanking you

With Best wishes



**Dr. Naresh Trehan**



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