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# Curriculum reforms at UHS: a sustainable leap toward transformative medical education

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The University of Health Sciences (UHS), Lahore, has consistently strived to serve as a beacon of excellence in healthcare education across Pakistan. As the academic nucleus for more than 200 affiliated and constituent institutions, UHS shoulders a profound responsibility not only to educate but to innovate. Our curriculum reforms, most notably the implementation of the Modular Integrated MBBS Curriculum 2K23, represent a transformative step forward in aligning local medical education with global standards while ensuring sustainability and contextual relevance.

The 2K23 Curriculum marked a deliberate shift from conventional, discipline-specific teaching to a competency-based, integrated educational model, rooted in the principles of spiral learning, professional identity formation, and early clinical exposure.<sup>1</sup> The reform process followed a structured trajectory, beginning with a thorough SWOT analysis, broad stakeholder engagement, and iterative feedback loops, culminating in a curriculum that is both standardized and adaptable to institutional diversity.

A cornerstone of this educational transformation has been UHS's bold shift toward skill-based training, designed to produce the "Seven-Star Doctor" - a professional who is not only a care provider, decision-maker, and communicator, but also a community leader, manager, lifelong learner, and team member.<sup>2,3</sup> To operationalize this vision, UHS has made six life-saving emergency skills workshops mandatory for all final-year students of medicine, dentistry, nursing, pharmacy, and allied health sciences. These workshops include basic life support, advanced life support, first trauma response, neonatal resuscitation, obstetric resuscitation, and emergency triage. Each year, more than 20,000 graduates across all health disciplines will complete these certifications

before their final exams, ensuring that every graduate enters the workforce with essential, hands-on emergency response skills aligned with global patient safety standards encompassing developed as well as developing countries.<sup>4-6</sup>

Beyond the MBBS program, UHS has expanded its reform strategy to the BS Nursing and Allied Health Sciences curricula, emphasizing interprofessional education, technological integration, and reduction of content redundancy. This holistic approach positions UHS as a leader in community-oriented medical education and reinforces its commitment to social accountability.

A hallmark of this reform is its sustainability strategy. By embedding mechanisms for continuous feedback, faculty development, digital transformation, and research-driven enhancements, the reforms are not one-time interventions but evolving ecosystems.<sup>7</sup> Our faculty development initiatives, grounded in Kern's model and implemented across all affiliated colleges, have created a ripple effect, enhancing assessment practices, teaching methodologies, and student support systems.

Simultaneously, UHS has laid the foundation for future-ready education by initiating work on incorporating AI in clinical reasoning, curricula aligned with sustainable development goals, and One Health concepts. The establishment of a dedicated Research and Development Center, integrated with the Office of Research Innovation and Commercialization, will ensure scientific currency and translational research outcomes across our network.

As we reflect on the three years of implementation, the Curriculum 2K23 has proven to be more than a set of reforms; it is a movement toward a learning culture grounded in accountability, adaptability, and academic excellence. The

positive changes are already visible: increased inter-college collaboration, improved monitoring, and the emergence of a dynamic feedback culture across institutions.

However, sustaining this momentum requires shared responsibility. While UHS has played its leadership role, it is imperative that each affiliated and constituent institution contributes actively through infrastructure investment, community engagement, faculty empowerment, and digital integration. The future of healthcare education lies in collaborative innovation.

In conclusion, UHS views curriculum reform not as a destination but as a journey; one that demands vision, resilience, and a collective commitment to nurturing a healthcare workforce that is globally competent, locally responsive, and ethically grounded. The path ahead is promising, and together, we shall continue to lead.

#### Conflict of interest

None to declare.

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