

## **"Advisory/Information for students desirous of Pursuing Medical Studies abroad"**

Over the years, there has been an increase in the number of Indian students going abroad to pursue medical education. Earlier, all students interested in taking a medical qualification from outside India were required to get an eligibility certificate from the government before leaving for their studies. However, since 2019, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has made mandatory for the students to clear the NEET-UG (National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test-Under Graduate) exam, which is the entry examination for undergraduate medical education in India, as a prerequisite to pursue medical education abroad.

Beginning 2019, only those students who appear for the NEET-UG for admission to Undergraduate medical education in India will be eligible to appear for the screening test, namely, the Foreign Medical Graduates' Exam (FMGE). This step has been an important advancement in screening of students and has been well received by the host countries as well. However, as the quality of education in various countries differs considerably; continued and systematic efforts in providing guidance to students regarding selection of course and institution to gain maximum academic exposure is needed.

As per the IMC (Indian Medical Council) Act, 1956, all students who acquire a medical qualification from countries outside India are required to clear the FMGE in order to practice in India. The Exam is conducted by the National Board for Examination (NBE) twice (i.e. in June and December) every year.

It may be noted that the number of students, having medical degrees from Institutions abroad, appearing for FMGE in 2009 was 6170, which has increased to 21,351 in 2018. However, the pass percentage of students appearing for the FMGE has been very low, and continues to be below 20%. NBE has published a list of country-wise performance of Indian candidates in FMGE for the period 2015-2018.

All Indian students desiring to undertake medical education abroad should take into account the above-mentioned information. In case they need any clarification about any particular institution, they may contact Indian Mission in the country where they seek to take admission. The students are also advised to visit official website of Medical council of India (<https://www.mciindia.org>) constantly to know the list of accredited foreign medical institutions/universities for MBBS or equivalent courses; and other important useful information.