**TITLE-**

**Ethical issues with MS ( Ayurved) Shalya Tantra/Shalakya Tantra.**

**ABSTRACT-**

The recent amendment of the **Central Council of Indian Medicine Regulations, 2016, has proposed to introduce formal training in Shalya (general surgery) and Shalakya (diseases of ear, nose, throat,**

**ENT, eye, head, oro-dentistry) specializations for postgraduate students of Ayurveda.**

According to the Gazette, t**he Ayurvedic doctors can now perform surgeries like a colostomy, rhinoplasty, amputation, cataract surgery, etc.**There is a doubtful efficacy of this program as

the surgical management of a patient requires a multidisciplinary approach where various disciplines of allopathic medicine are involved in patient care, which is questionable in the Ayurvedic system.

**It is a major ethical issue to**subject the patients to surgery in the hands of Ayurvedic students who do not have detailed education on

anatomy, pathophysiology, and pathogenesis of the diseases. Moreover, the Ayurvedic system, although efficient in the management of noncommunicable diseases, has not yet fully evolved to handle the complex surgeries.

**MAIN TEXT-**

The recent publication in the Gazette of the Government of India regarding the MS ( Ayurved) Shalya Tantra/Shalakya Tantra for the postgraduate students of Ayurveda has aroused a nation-wide debate. There is a questionable efficacy of such a program in terms of providing appropriate surgical treatment to the patients apart from raising other ethical issues (1).

The Centre amended the **Central Council of Indian Medicine Regulations**, 2016, to introduce formal training in the disciplines as mentioned above as part of the curriculum for postgraduate students of Shalya (general surgery) and Shalakya (diseases of ear, nose, throat, ENT, eye, head, oro-dentistry) specializations.

The postgraduate (PG) trainee of Shalya and Shalakya shall be practically trained to acquaint with as well as independently perform some pre-defined procedures so that after completion of their PG degree, they will be able to perform the procedures independently, mentions the gazette notification issued on November 19 (1,2).

The notification also said students will be trained in two streams of surgery and will be awarded titles of MS (Ayurved) Shalya Tantra -- (General Surgery and MS (Ayurved) Shalakya Tantra (disease of the eye, ear, nose, throat, head, and oro-dentistry).

The training modules for surgical procedures will be added to the curriculum of Ayurvedic studies.

The decision of the Government will allow Ayurveda practitioners to legally perform procedures such as skin grafting, cataract surgery, and root canal treatment.

The list of procedures that will be taught includes — all types of skin grafting, ear lobe repair, excision of simple cyst and benign tumours (lipoma, fibroma, schwannoma, etc.) of non-vital organs, excision/amputation of gangrene, traumatic wound management — all types of suturing, ligation and repair of tendon and muscles, foreign body removal from the stomach, colostomy, cataract surgery, local anesthesia in the eye, rhinoplasty, hair lip repair, loose tooth extraction, carries tooth/teeth, root canal treatment etc. (1,2).

It is noteworthy that the diagnosis and surgical management of a patient requires a multidisciplinary approach involving various disciplines of allopathic medicine, which have developed over a period of time. The specialized branches like Radiology, pathology, microbiology, and biochemistry are involved in the diagnosis of the diseases. Any surgical procedure requires pre-anesthetic checkups involving various disciplines like cardiology and complicated patients also may require clearances from nephrology, endocrinology, neurology, gastroenterology, etc. Anesthesia has developed over a long time and is presently fully equipped to handle extremely complicated surgeries. Post-operative care requires a dedicated intensive care unit set up, especially for complex surgeries run by fellows from Anesthesia and critical care medicine.

Developing traditional medicine is a welcome step, but the skills and expertise of 8-10 domains are learned over a period of 8-10 years by the allopathic system. Is it possible to develop the so-called MS (Ayurved) Shalya Tantra / Shalakya Tantra with a few years of training to develop the same degree of expertise without prior tedious and detailed training on the surgical anatomy and pathophysiology of the diseases mentioned in the voluminous medical books?

The Ayurvedic surgery system is not that recognized presently, and it has not yet evolved to handle complex surgeries and their complications. So, it is a major ethical issue to subject the patients to surgery in the hands of Ayurvedic PG students. It is unclear how the referral system will work in case of complications in these highly skilled operations performed under general anesthesia.

The lack of debate among stakeholders will lead to disastrous results in terms of patient care and will be quite unethical.

Ayurveda has a glorious history of 3500 years. Even today, proficient practitioners of Ayurveda, although reduced in numbers due to the poor quality of academic training, continue to command public respect while delivering effective health services. There are reputed Ayurveda hospitals and clinics across the globe. The core strengths of Ayurveda lie in the management of non-communicable diseases (NCDs). It also has unique expertise not available in other health sciences in designing wellness strategies based on its concept of homeostasis (swasthya) at multiple levels of the biological system (3)

We need to integrate the Indian systems of medicine, AYUSH, including the promotion of Yoga as a form of lifestyle change to tackle non-communicable diseases.

If not handled correctly, this integrative system of medicine would create a "khichdi medical system" and would be a cocktail of disaster (2).

**REFERENCES-**

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