

## **PM&DC URGES EXPANSION OF POSTGRADUATE RESIDENCY TRAINING SLOTS ACROSS PAKISTAN**

Islamabad, 19th March 2026: The Pakistan Medical & Dental Council (PM&DC), in its Council meeting held on 10th February 2026, undertook a comprehensive review of postgraduate (PG) medical training capacity in the country and has formally issued recommendations to Provincial Health Departments to address the growing gap between medical graduates and available PG training opportunities.

Pakistan has made substantial progress in undergraduate medical education over the past two decades, resulting in an adequate and in certain disciplines, surplus output of medical graduates. However, this expansion has not been accompanied by a commensurate increase in structured and funded postgraduate training positions.

As a result, a large number of qualified doctors compete each year for a limited number of PG residency slots, particularly in the public sector, where most accredited training programs are administered. The Council expressed concern that the primary bottleneck lies not in the supply of graduates, but in the insufficient availability of training positions and subsequent employment pathways.

The Council observed that this imbalance is a key factor contributing to the increasing migration of skilled medical graduates abroad in search of better training and career opportunities.

The Council emphasized that under the PM&DC Act, 2022, the Council is mandated to regulate standards, accreditation, and recognition of medical and dental education and training. However, the establishment, expansion, and funding of postgraduate training positions fall within the constitutional and administrative jurisdiction of Provincial Health Departments, which oversee public sector hospitals, including tertiary care institutions, District Headquarters (DHQs), and Tehsil Headquarters (THQs) hospitals.

President, PM&DC Prof. Dr. Rizwan Taj in the statement, emphasized that after detailed deliberation, the Council has unanimously recommended expanding PG Training Capacity by substantially increasing the number of postgraduate training positions in public sector healthcare institutions and, where feasible, doubled in a phased and fiscally responsible manner, aligned with the annual output of medical graduates and evolving provincial healthcare needs.

The upgradation of existing public sector hospitals, including DHQs and THQs, as training centers should be undertaken to develop them as accredited postgraduate training institutions in accordance with PM&DC standards.

Postgraduate training positions should be linked with transparent, merit-based career progression pathways within the public health system to improve retention of trained specialists and strengthen healthcare delivery at secondary and tertiary levels.

He further said that the expansion of postgraduate training positions would play a pivotal role in accommodating a greater number of graduates within the country. Importantly, such expansion would also contribute to addressing the persistent shortage of qualified faculty in medical institutions, as postgraduate trainees and specialists form the backbone of future teaching and supervisory roles.

He added that these recommendations are done in the broader public interest to address workforce imbalances, enhance institutional capacity, and reduce the ongoing outflow of trained medical professionals, while fully respecting the statutory roles of both PM&DC and Provincial Governments.