

# Doctors differ over exit exam for MBBS graduates

Sunitha Rao R | TNN | Updated: Jan 3, 2018, 10:00 IST

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**BENGALURU:** If the proposed National Medical Commission (NMC) Bill becomes a law, MBBS graduates will be automatically eligible to start practice. They will have to clear another exit exam to obtain a licence to practise medicine in India.

The IMA's Bengaluru branch and medical students in the city are categorical in their opposition to the proposal, but

there are many doctors who back the idea. The exit exam backers argue that given the plummeting quality of teaching in medical colleges, it is the best way to weed out ineligible candidates from practising medicine.

The NMC Bill proposes to conduct NEET and National Licentiate Examination (exit exam). Medicos fear that the exit exam renders medical colleges redundant, as passing of MBBS, postgraduate and specialty courses will not be enough, and the control over their right to practise medicine will be hostage to the central government.

"After five-and-a-half years of study, we clear MBBS. The exit exam is nothing but an additional burden. The MBBS exams also test our capability, so why have another exam to test the same?" says Anand Kumar, general secretary of Bangalore Medical College Students' Association, who is in his third year of MBBS.



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"It's strange that the NMC Bill proposes to introduce exit exam for MBBS students, but nothing for Ayush doctors who can start practising allopathy after taking a six-month 'bridge course'. This is not at all in the interest of patient safety," Dr Srinivasa S, president, IMA Bengaluru branch, says.

However, there are doctors who strongly support the idea of an exit exam. Well-known oncologist Dr Ajai Kumar, CEO, HCG Private Limited, says, "Exit exams can weed out incompetent doctors from practising medicine. The standard of teaching medicine is not the same in all medical colleges. It's important to check how competent a doctor is. Doctors must be confident of writing such exams."

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When MBBS candidates go abroad and take up similar tests to become eligible to work in the UK and US, why are they worried about taking such exams here, wonders Dr H Sudarshan Ballal, chairman, Manipal Hospitals.

"I personally feel there is a need to conduct pan-India entrance and exit exams for medical courses. There is a need to maintain standards, given that universities have wide variations. While some colleges are of top class standard in training students, some colleges lag behind. When we recruit junior doctors, apart from clinical skills, we consider their attitude and soft skills," he explains.



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