

Business Standard

NITI Aayog panel favours replacing Medical Council of India with a new body

Comprising nominated members, the new institution would bring transparency and improve quality of medical education in the country

Sanjeeb Mukherjee | New Delhi July 27, 2016 Last Updated at 00:30 IST



A high-powered panel, constituted under NITI Aayog vice-chairman Arvind Panagariya is likely to recommend winding up of the Medical Council of India (MCI) and replacing it with a new institution, comprising nominated members, to bring transparency and improve the quality of

medical education in the country.

The panel, which has additional principal secretary in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) P K Mishra, Union Health Secretary B P Sharma and NITI Aayog chief executive officer Amitabh Kant as its members, was constituted to look into restructuring the MCI, following numerous complaints and suggestions.

According to sources, the Panagariya-led panel would recommend that MCI should be replaced with a 20-member National Medical Commission, which would comprise four boards. These boards would be for undergraduate medical courses, postgraduate medical courses, medical assessment and accreditation, and registration and ethics. Each member of the commission would have five-year tenure.

Each of the four boards would be headed by a chairman and be fully autonomous in its functioning. The existing

National Board of Examination, which conducts postgraduate medical exams, would get subsumed into the postgraduate medical board.

That apart, a medical advisory council, with representatives from states, would advise to the Medical Commission. The members and heads of the commission's boards would be selected by a search committee, comprising health ministers and others.

To make such a structure operational, the Medical Council of India Act would have to be amended, for which a Cabinet note would be floated by the ministry soon.

“The new Medical Commission would reduce the arbitrariness in the selection process for MCI and the opening of medical colleges. It would improve the quality of medical education in the country,” a senior official said.

Earlier, a Rajya Sabha standing committee had favoured winding up of the MCI to bring transparency in the system. The MCI is a statutory body with the responsibility of establishing and maintaining standards of medical education and recognition of medical qualifications in India. It registers doctors to practice in India.

At present, a Supreme Court mandated oversight committee is looking into the working of the MCI, following allegations of improper functioning.

Another Panagariya-led panel is working on revamping the structure of University Grants Commission, All India Council for Technical Education, Homeopathic Council of India, and the body to regulate the ayurvedic and alternative medicines sector.