

Staff shortage plagues Govt Homoeopathy colleges in State

BHUBANESWAR: Think twice before pursuing degree course in Homoeopathy in any State-run Homoeopathic Medical Colleges. Education has taken a back seat in these institutions due to acute shortage of teaching staff.

The State has four Government colleges at Bhubaneswar, Sambalpur, Rourkela and Berhampur and of 144 sanctioned posts including 60 lecturers, 59 Readers and 25 professors, 115 are lying vacant for several years.

While only three lecturers are posted against 60 posts, no one is appointed to the posts of professor. The available 29 staff including 26 Readers and three lecturers are likely to retire in next five years.

Post-graduation (PG) courses in Dr Abhin Chandra Homoeopathic Medical College at Bhubaneswar have already been discontinued from 2012 because of non-availability of lecturers in departments concerned. As per norms of Central Council of Homoeopathy (CCH), minimum three lecturers are required for a PG department.

The number of lecturers too is inadequate to run the under-graduate (UG) course. All the Government colleges are now managed by Homoeopathic Medical Officers (HMOs) who have PG qualification.

Though earlier, the Government attempted to fill up 79 vacant posts of Reader and professor on contractual basis through walk-in-interview, only one Reader joined.

An HMO said though Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC) was requested to select eligible candidates for 33 posts of lecturer, the vacancies are yet to be filled up.

The HMOs have demanded regular lecturers and absorption of qualified regular in-service HMOs in teaching cadre through OPSC with relaxation of upper age limit and modification in examination pattern. The PG courses in all five disciplines can be reintroduced if the HMOs are absorbed.

If no step is taken to appoint lecturers, there will be no teacher left after five years since the existing staff would have retired by then. CCH is also threatening to de-affiliate Government colleges for shortage of staff.

Contacted, a senior official of Health and Family Welfare Department said the Director of AYUSH has been asked to furnish a proposal for filling up the vacancies with views from the OPSC on its difficulties for selecting candidates.