Comments on: Senior residency: An opportunity missed?

Dear Editor,

As technology has advanced and the understanding of the subject has improved, Ophthalmology training has undergone tremendous upliftment specially in the past two decades.[3] But the challenge post residency is always to decide whether to opt for a structured fellowship programme or a comprehensive senior residency (SRship) training. We read the article by Srivastava et al. and the authors and the editorial board of Indian Journal of Ophthalmology richly deserves applause for publishing this excellent article.[2] This is one such topic which is untouched since long and needs an in depth analysis which we feel will be beneficial for the young ophthalmologist’s in shaping their career ahead. We have tried for a neck to neck comparison of fellowship vs senior residency in a tabular format.

Both fellowship and SRship have their own pros and cons. Eventually it is up to the candidate to decide what suits him/her more based on the circumstances and preferred choices. Additionally, the All India Ophthalmic Society (AIOS) as well as the International Council of Ophthalmology (ICO) can formulate guidelines for fellowship and senior residency as well as they already exist for residency programme.[3,4] This will help in narrowing down the differences between fellowships and senior residency and bring the candidates in the same sailing boat. Medical Council of India (MCI) should also formulate guidelines for considering fellowship equal to senior residency for candidates applying to Medical Colleges. This will further reduce differences and will help in increasing job application for medical colleges even in remote parts of India in near future.[5]

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Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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| Parameter               | Fellowship                                                                 | Senior Residency                                           |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Duration               | 1-2 years in majority institutes                                           | Usually 2-3 years                                           |
| Exam pattern           | Usually no entrance and exit exam. Interview based Note -Some top institutes like LVPEI, Sankar Nethralaya and Aravind Eye Care System have an an entrance exam for some specialties | Usually no entrance and exit exam. Interview based Note -Some top institutes like AIIMS, PGI have an entrance exam |
| Exposure               | Cataract + Speciality exposure Retina usually have no cataract exposure at majority centres | SR ship makes you an excellent comprehensive ophthalmologist. |
| Working hours          | Usually 8-10 hours                                                        | Usually 6-8 hours rotation                                 |
| Night duty             | Must                                                                       | May or may not be                                           |
| Rewards                | Fellowship Certificate + Speciality focussed experience                    | More comprehensive ophthalmology exposure ++                |
| Stipend                | +                                                                          | Good academic exposure with indexed publications as a motivation for promotion. |
| Academics              | +++ More academic and publication oriented exposure specially in tertiary eye care institutes. More inclination for specialty oriented publications | Training > Training                                     |
| Publications and Research exposure |                                                               | All patient exposure along with multispeciality referrals |
| Emphasis               | Training                                                                  | Teaching > Training                                        |
| Patient profile        | More exposure of speciality referred cases like Cornea, Glaucoma, Retina, etc | Less (Teaching > Training)                                |
| Mentor/ Senior interaction | More( Training)                                      | Continue in same Medical college                            |
| Job opportunities      | Continue in same institute/ corporate hospital as a super specialist Private practice Switch to another place Medical college work as a SR | Continue in same Medical college Private practice Fellowship Switch to another place |
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