

Contribution of National Journal of Health Sciences (NJHS) in the Propagation of Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) Site-Specific Tumor Boards: A Snapshot from the Past

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The contributions of our late colleague, Late Prof. Tahir Shamsi to healthcare in Pakistan are unparalleled, particularly his pioneering role in hematology and his visionary approach in centered patient care through multidisciplinary collaboration. His vision laid the foundation of coordinated, team-based patient management in order to improve treatment outcomes.

In this journey, the role of the National Journal of Health Sciences (NJHS), in advocating multidisciplinary, site-specific boards across Pakistan deserves special recognition. Over the years NJHS has emerged as a platform for sharing healthcare

quality insights and has been a driving force behind the adoption of various site-specific multidisciplinary tumor boards (MDTs) (Table 1).

We will further be extending our journey with the intent of introducing and establishing innovative tumor boards to strengthen patient care and improve trans disciplinary coordination and collaboration with special emphasis on Geriatrics, Adolescents and Young Adults, Molecular, Rare tumor boards, Onco-Nutrition, Onco-Fertility, Pain MDT, Cardio Oncology, Psycho Oncology, Palliative, Rehab MDT, Clinical Engineering and Radiomics.

Table 1. Key Publications and NJHS Contributions to Advancing the Healthcare Landscape in Pakistan through MDT Establishment.

NJHS Issues	
Volume 1, Issue 1, 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of site specific Multidisciplinary Tumor Boards. Emphasizing on the establishment of site-specific Multidisciplinary Tumor Board, comprising core specialists and allied professionals, enhancing collaborative learning and decision-making for patient centered care. Such an environment harbors a learning environment and promotes team building [1].
Volume 4, Issue 2, 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mandatory site-specific tumor boards – A Lifesaving collaboration. Multidisciplinary Tumor Boards (MDTs) improve cancer care by enhancing treatment plans, patient outcomes, and reducing costs. While common globally, Pakistan faces challenges in fully implementing MDTs, but further institutional support is crucial to make MDTs a standard in cancer care across the country [2].
Volume 5, Issue 2, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motivating collaboration for MDT shared care. The establishment of Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) Tumor Boards in developing countries is largely driven by the voluntary efforts of specialists, as it remains an unregulated practice in Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMIC). NJHS has dedicated a page to promote the importance of MDTs in cancer care, emphasizing their life-saving potential. This initiative encourages contributions on this topic to support the advancement of collaborative cancer management [3].
Volume 5, Issue 4, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Onco-fertility tumor board. Cancer treatments can lead to infertility, necessitating specialized support, especially for younger patients. Our team advocates establishing multidisciplinary boards to address fertility preservation, ensuring expert counseling prior to treatment. Onco-Fertility Tumor Boards could enhance patient confidence and care in these contexts [4].

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Volume 6, Issue 1, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MDT contributing in Post Graduate Medical Education. Postgraduate residency programs play a crucial role in preparing future specialists to. Non-institutional tumor boards in Pakistan enhance collaboration among specialists and improve patient management, providing valuable experience for postgraduate trainees in terms of education and Team building for future prospects [5].
Volume 6, Issue 3, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MDT role in Professional Development Planning. The educational benefits of multidisciplinary team (MDT) Tumor Boards for faculty and post-graduate residents, not only enhances collaborative learning and improve patient outcomes, but by integrating MDT participation into medical education, this innovative "active learning" methodology fosters problem-solving skills and aligns with a professional development plan, equipping learners to navigate the evolving healthcare landscape [6].
Volume 7, Issue 4, 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MDT contributing in organ preservation. This review highlights the essential role of multidisciplinary teams (MDT) in the neo-adjuvant setting in Rectal carcinoma, especially concerning radiation therapy, and emphasizing the importance of MDT collaboration in achieving successful organ preservation outcomes [7].

Future directions for MDTs in Pakistan hold great potential, such as expanding site-specific boards, integrating newer technologies, and promoting more collaborative publications through NJHS, all as part of Prof. Shamsi's enduring legacy.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Declared none.

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