MAHATMA GANDHI INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, SEVAGRAM

Webinar on
Enhancing Student Engagement in Online Settings

Date: 7 August 2020

REPORT

In the midst of the COVID pandemic, medical education has witnessed several disruptions. Faculty and students have been forced to shift to the online mode of teaching and learning which has been uncomfortable for most. For faculty in particular, adapting to a mode of teaching which they have not themselves experienced as learners has been difficult. To discuss these issues, the Medical Education Unit (MEU) of MGIMS Sevagram organized a webinar on "Enhancing Student Engagement in Online Settings" on 7 Aug 2020.

Dr Anshu, MD, MHPE, Professor of Pathology and Joint Coordinator of the MEU conducted the interactive webinar. Around **34 faculty members** from different departments of MGIMS joined the webinar. The **objectives** of the webinar were to familiarize faculty with the basic

principles of student engagement and demonstrate how they could easily be done in online settings.

Dr Anshu discussed the importance of keeping the focus on the learner rather than being swayed by technology. "Pedagogy should always come before technology," she emphasized. She used the **Community of Inquiry Framework** to demonstrate how learning happens best when the cognitive presence is supplemented with the teaching presence and the social presence. "If social interaction and learning from peers was not important, students could have sat at home and studied on their own," she said. "Social presence is an important factor which enhances the educational environment".

Techniques of **synchronous and asynchronous student engagement** were discussed. Demonstrating ways in which interactivity could be inbuilt on online settings all along, she showed faculty how polls, in-class assessment and sharing of resources real time using QR codes could be done by simply using smart phones. The faculty enjoyed being learners for a change and learnt about new apps which could be used in online classroom teaching. Learning is definitely not a spectator sport. The student needs to feel involved with the content.