

## **Speech by Dr.B Somaraju – Chief Guest OSMECON 2024**

This is the first time I am attending this session. This is, I attend, registered at this session with the goodwill of Dr. Pari Plavi. We were together in Osmania Medical College from 1978 up to now.

And then she was a student at that time and she retired. But I haven't retired. So, I will just take a few minutes for you to just tell you what we are going to do in this session now.

Can I have the slide? Being in medicine today, by the sight that you are ready, a monster sitting here, did you notice anything interesting? Any of you can speak. Medicine is not just for doctors and nurses alone. It is everybody across the system we deliver.

It is, whole society has to be part and parcel of it. And I see, I pointed out this earlier when I attended these sessions, I don't see any single medical administrator here. I don't see anybody who administers medicine from the secretariat.

That's not right. I also don't see many teachers participating in these sessions. That's again not right about medicine.

So, medical education today, I was talking to your principal, he was telling me there were some significant changes. The NMC, National Medical Council, they have done a good job in doing this. And the problem at the time when we were educated, and also some of you are going through this, technology has changed our world.

And the practise of medicine has enormous changes in it to the extent technology over to patients and nurses in medicine. But this widening gap between technological, say, application in medicine and its application to individual patients and the community has become a serious problem. In 1910, Abraham Fleckner came out with a report on medical education of that day.

He started a very, very critical report to the extent around 150 colleges were closed with years in Canada. And then the emphasis was on clinical skills, biological knowledge, and also research. So, today's practise of medicine, there are two pillars, namely basic sciences and clinical sciences.

For the last more than 100 years, we have been practising this. I believe NMCA has made some changes. I'm very happy to hear about it, but it's not adequate.

So, when you apply this basic science and clinical science, we realise now that the care we provide in the hospitals we all go, the practises we are involved in, tertiary care hospitals, so-called high-end hospitals, both high-end and public, they deliver only less than 10% of required healthcare. So, you can see the tip of the iceberg. We make a difference only to that smallest population who fall in, and rest of the healthcare delivery system is completely ignored.

To make it happen, we need to alter the way people are educated and also practise now. That's called introduction of the health system sciences. In the late 90s, the American Medical Association came up with an idea of introducing the concept of health system sciences, beyond basic science and clinical science.

The health system sciences involve the third pillar, is not only individual patients, not only individual doctors, but whole healthcare delivery model, not only doctors and nurses, physician assistants, everybody involved, nutritionists, psychiatrists, whatnot, everybody has to be involved in delivering care. The students have to be involved at the beginning of their career in the first year, not later, after second or third years, in caring for the patients. So, that is the third pillar of, say, delivery of healthcare.

So, the students must understand now that the broader system of healthcare, the principles of policy, economics, population health management, interpersonal collaboration, behavioural and social determinants of health, health system improvement, currently most medical education programmes are not providing sufficient education for health system, clinical and social. I'm glad to know the NMC made some beginnings in the way they are doing it. Not only that, in the days when we entered medicine, or even today, the basis was biological science.

If you knew mathematics well, you went to engineering. If you don't know mathematics, you entered medicine. But it's no longer acceptable today because advances in technology, molecular biology, genetics, information technologies, all this required that still you have to know physics, otherwise you won't understand technology.

You have to know chemistry. Chemistry is biology. You have to know social sciences.

You have to learn management skills. You have to know leadership skills, what not. So, the requirements have changed.

So, this requires that we learn to manage ourselves. To manage ourselves, you have to not only learn clinical skills and individual components of medicine we are doing now, but all the sciences. You have to come into this.

But none of us, neither as teachers or students, can go through all this. That's the reason why students from different backgrounds, backgrounds of mathematics, information technology, chemistry, biology, they have to enter it. The concept of, say, the concept of, say, a healthy university or medical college in isolation is an anomaly.

That won't be able to deliver the message. The medical college should be part and parcel of a university or a larger system where teachers from other walks of life come in. Students also go in.

To the extent, imagine, a social science teacher in university gets around in the hospital. So that's the way it should be. So, but to be able to do all this, the famous saying of American Medical Association is, we'll never transform the prevailing system of management without managing, transforming our prevailing system of education.

They are the same system. Then, I was asking your principal and Pari Plavi, is there anyone from medical administration or secretary or any politician attending this? The moment we say politicians, people generally have a negative opinion about it. And also, a loss of trust in medicine also made even doctors not trusted these days as it used to be.

But don't mistake the profession for the practitioner. Politics is a great science. But don't mix it up with the way politics is practised.

Same thing applies to medicine. You know, how many of you heard of Rudolf Virchow? Can you raise your hands? The father of pathology.

You know, in 1948, in Germany, what he said? Medicine is a social science and politics is nothing more than medicine on a grand scale. Without political involvement, nothing great can be achieved. Do involve them.

Educate them. Get them into the system. Take the risks.

That's the reason. So I suggest, how many of you heard this book or saw this book? It is published by American Medical Association, Health System Science. I think everybody should read it.

Not only the students, but also the teachers, politicians, health secretaries, and of course others. They have to read this book. So how do they achieve it? So, how much more time do I have? You can just tell me and I'll finish.

You can tell me. Okay, I'll just, a few more minutes. How do they achieve all this? This requires that you have to be healthy and well.

It is fundamental. We are all healthy and well. We are going to deliver the system.

In, say, Greek belief, Greek philosophy, to be healthy is considered a virtue. So, to be healthy, the American Heart Association came out with, it's called Life's Super 7. More healthy areas. You have to be physically active during the day.

You have to eat the right type of food. Not to use tobacco, not to be overweight. And three health factors are cholesterol, blood pressure, and blood sugar.

Then, physical activity. Don't sit idle from morning to evening. Every one and a half hour, move around.

That's particularly important. Not only you do that, tell your family members, tell the community. How many of you never got your blood pressure checked? Can you raise your hands? How many of you never got your blood pressure checked? All of you got? You are all improved from the heart rate and all.

I see even the cardiologists never got their blood pressure checked. Ophthalmologists never had their eyes checked. It's happening even now.

So, I extend this fundamentally. But beyond 30 years of age, our muscles slowly atrophy. It's called sarcopenia.

So, if your muscle mass disappears, your insulin resistance rises, diabetes increases. So, do some strength exercises, yoga, and walking. I won't go into details, I'm just telling you.

Sleep is fundamentally healthy. Minimum at your age, you should sleep for eight to nine hours. And as the age advances, it may become less.

But ideally, it should be more than seven hours. Don't use, don't see the TV, don't use your cell phones often, don't look at your computers, two hours before going to sleep. So, at the end of all this, you have to have a purpose in life that keeps you engaged through the right institution and platform.

And we need to ask you fundamental questions at the end of all that. How will you measure your life? What do you want to be remembered for? For some of us sitting here, it may be too late. But for you, it's time to ask.

What is it you want to be remembered for? Thank you very much. Thank you.