

Dist hospitals will now be upgraded to med colleges

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bangalore: In a decision that will radically change medical education, the Medical Council of India (MCI) has given its go-ahead to upgrade district hospitals to medical colleges across the country.

The apex medical body has asked the Union health ministry to relax norms for starting new colleges in areas with poor healthcare access and limited seats to study medicine. Thanks to the decision, about 100 colleges will come up in the next two years. Currently, 64% of colleges are in western and southern India and 54% are in private hands.

The decision to start colleges in public-private partnership (PPP) models is designed to fight the shortage of doctors. "Most district hospitals already have 200-500 beds, and by roping in private players, medical colleges can also be set up. The revenue earned can be shared between the two parties. A campus with thousands of students changes the economic scenario of the district," a member said.

District-headquarter hospitals will have medical, nursing and paramedical colleges affiliated to them. Each new government medical college is expected to cost about Rs 50 crore.