

PAKISTAN MEDICAL AND DENTAL COUNCIL INSTRUCTED PUBLIC MEDICAL AND DENTAL COLLEGES TO ESTABLISH ANTI-HARASSMENT COMMITTEES

"Retaliation for Reporting Misconduct Emerges as the Most Pervasive Form of Workplace Harassment"
Prof.Dr.Rizwan Taj

Islamabad 19TH November 2024: The Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PM&DC) has instructed all public and private medical and dental colleges to establish anti-harassment committees within their institutions to prevent and address harassment complaints. This directive aims to create a safer and more respectful environment for students, faculty, and staff in medical and dental institutions across Pakistan.

Workplace harassment is a significant issue in Pakistan, affecting both men and women. These anti-harassment committees will likely focus on handling complaints related to harassment, raising awareness about respectful conduct, and implementing measures to prevent harassment. This move aligns with broader efforts in Pakistan to strengthen anti-harassment policies and protect individuals in educational and professional settings.

The Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PM&DC) has taken a decisive step to ensure safe, respectful, and harassment-free environments within public medical and dental institutions across the country. As part of this initiative, PM&DC has mandated the establishment of anti-harassment committees in all public medical and dental colleges.

The PM&DC directives stated that all public medical and dental colleges nationwide form dedicated committees to combat harassment in educational institutions. This critical step, will help create respectful and supportive spaces for students, faculty, and staff.

These anti-harassment committees will be entrusted with investigating harassment complaints and will be bound to submit their reports within 10 days of receiving a complaint to the respective institution harassment committees.

The president PM&DC Prof.Dr.Rizwan Taj stated in the press release that PM&DC believes that these anti-harassment committees will play an essential role in promoting accountability, strengthening preventive measures, and will encourage individuals to report any cases of harassment without fear.

He emphasized that workplace harassment goes beyond sexual harassment and demands for favors; it encompasses a wide range of discrimination and mistreatment, including Gender-based discrimination that undermines professional abilities. Verbal harassment, like offensive language, insults, and rumor-spreading. Physical intimidation or unwanted contact. Psychological harassment through bullying, criticism, and exclusion. Ethnic, and disability-based discrimination, often involving slurs and stereotypes. Age-related and religious harassment, involving derogatory comments or exclusion and abuse of authority, with unrealistic expectations or public humiliation.

He added that these types of harassment create a toxic work environment, impacting mental health and productivity. Rather the biggest harassment is the punishment for reporting these types of issues or opposing unethical practices, harassments.

PM&DC encourages all students, faculty, and staff to actively contribute to maintain a respectful atmosphere by supporting and cooperating with these committees. Together, we can create an academic environment where everyone can work, learn, and grow without the threat of harassment.