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Press Release (Pakistan Medical & Dental Council)

Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) determined to collaborate with the Pakistani Psychiatry Association of North America (PAPANA) to Spearhead a Mental Health Awareness Campaign in Pakistan

In a landmark collaboration, the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PM&DC) determined to collaborate with the Pakistani Psychiatry Association of North America to launch a comprehensive mental health awareness campaign across Pakistan. This strategic alliance aims to address the growing need for increased awareness, understanding, and destigmatization of mental health issues within the country.

The PMDC, as the regulatory authority overseeing medical and dental education and practice in Pakistan, recognizes the critical importance of mental health in the overall well-being of individuals and communities. By teaming up with the Pakistani Psychiatry Association of North America, renowned for its expertise and commitment to mental health advocacy, the collaboration seeks to leverage international knowledge and best practices to benefit the Pakistani population.

In this regard, the President Pakistani Psychiatry Association of North America (PAPANA) Dr. Muhammad Zeeshan visited PM&DC and met President Prof. Dr. Rizwan Taj. During the meeting, it was discussed to strengthen the capacity-building process of Psychiatrists working in Pakistan. He apprised that 600 to 700 Psychiatrists are currently working in Pakistan whereas more than 1000 Pakistani Psychiatrists doctors are practicing in United States.

Dr. Muhammad Zeeshan stated that there is a huge need for mental health awareness, relevant courses, and pieces of training to cope with rapidly growing depression, anxiety, and other mental illnesses etc. He added that President PM&DC Prof. Dr. Rizwan Taj was kind enough to allow me to collaborate and for that, we have started working on online courses, child psychiatry, addiction psychiatry, elderly psychiatry, etc. He also added that since there is not much literature available on psychiatry in Pakistan and in light of that Dr. Rizwan Taj, myself, and Professor of Harvard University Dr. Harrison wrote two books namely Psychiatry for medical and nursing students. Dr. Muhammad Zeeshan said that our society aims to further collaborate with PMDC and to improve the training, certification courses, and short courses regarding psychiatry. Without collaboration, we cannot achieve the objective.

President (PAPANA) Dr. Muhammad Zeeshan said that our core objectives are to raise awareness, Destigmatization, Combatting societal stigma associated with mental health issues by fostering open conversations and understanding, and Education by providing accessible and accurate information about various mental health conditions, their signs, and available treatments, Advocacy by Encouraging individuals to seek professional help and advocating for improved mental health policies and resources in Pakistan.

He also added that by Conducting educational workshops and seminars in collaboration with mental health professionals to disseminate information about mental health, launching a robust media campaign across various channels, including television, radio, and social media, to reach a diverse audience and raise awareness about mental health, Training for Healthcare Professionals, organizing

training programs for healthcare professionals to enhance their understanding of mental health issues and improve patient communication and by Community Outreach initiatives by Engaging with communities through grassroots initiatives, involving local leaders, and organizing events to foster a culture of understanding and support a tremendous change can be observed.

President PM&DC Dr. Rizwan Taj stated that "The collaboration between PM&DC and the Pakistani Psychiatry Association of North America is a significant step toward addressing the pressing mental health needs in Pakistan. By combining our resources and expertise, we aim to create a positive impact on the lives of individuals and families affected by mental health issues. "He apprised that with the collaboration of (PAPANA) we have launched a book for teaching medical students about mental health issues today, especially for adolescent, children and medical students with Psychiatry needs, and ADHD medical students so they can cope with their issues.

In addition, further on line seminars are also planned on mentorship of teachers in medical Colleges across Pakistan.

He added that this collaboration marks a pivotal moment in advancing mental health awareness and support in Pakistan. The PM&DC and the Pakistani Psychiatry Association of North America are committed to working together to create lasting change and contribute to the well-being of the Pakistani population.



"President PMDC Prof. Dr. Rizwan Taj Presents Shield to Dr. Muhammad Zeeshan of Psychiatry Association of North America (PAPANA)"