Creation and Expansion Community Medicine in Iran

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Received: 13 January 2018   Accepted: 13 January 2018   Published: 8 February 2018

Abstract
In 1972 a research was performed by the author at John’s Hopkins University, regarding migration of Iranian medical graduates in the United States. We found up to 90% of Shiraz medical graduate and 40% of Tehran graduate were permanently migrating to the United States. Further research indicates the cause of migration to be military housing, income and sociopolitical facts.
Furthermore, we found the curriculum of most medical schools in Iran is a carbon copy of western medical schools and had no relevance with the need of over 70% of the Iranian population who were residing in rural communities in 1970s.
In order to alleviate this, we established the department of community medicine in 1972 in Shiraz to modify the curriculum of the Shiraz medical school with an established and strong academic of clinical discipline was not an easy job, particularly when the medical staff was determined to make Shiraz a “center of excellence” and we in the department of community medicine felt we are desperate for a “program of relevance”.
As I was a professor of both medicine and community medicine and the chairman of medicine was extremely friendly with our program. We could compromise and eventually we decided to embark on a new medical school with the totally new program. The new medical school, which was established in Fasa was a successful program for recreating students from a small town and we found recently 90% of graduates of the first two years are still residing and practicing in Fars province. Unfortunately, later this medical schools was joined with all other medical school with the national matching program, which was against our initial purpose for recruiting from small towns.
The other major achievement of the department of community medicine was establishing a health centers in rural community which was evaluated and approved by WHO and within eight years more than 1.5 Million rural populations were covered by that program.