

Issue pertaining to Health Center

The Health Centre is primarily responsible for provide medical facilities to the Campus communities and the Campus residents.

Since my last 2 years of stay in IIT Kanpur, I have heard a lot of complaints and discontentment towards the HC facilities. The same issue was taken up in 2012, wherein a new committee was formed to look into the issue. However, there has been no significant change, especially in the service provided to the patients.

The document has been highly focused on the issues faced by HC and the positives have not been mentioned for everyone to concentrate on the fact that there are some serious issues that we need to deal with.

Few of the cases that I have come across are:

- One of my friend was forcefully admitted in HC just for Nose Bleeding on the grounds that the staff feared that he had liver infection. However, no diagnosis for the same was made and the student was released after 3 days without any new treatment.
- One of my other colleagues went to HC with a case of fever. He was assigned around 3 medicines of heavy doses and a Cough Syrup without the doctor even diagnosing the patient. He was not even checked with a Stethoscope or Thermometer. The student complained that the doctor assigned him the medicine just by looking at him.
- In another case, a student was forcefully admitted in the HC for a minor cut on his head. He was given Tetanus injection and then the Pain killer injection without his full agreement.
- In a serious case discussed by a first Yearite on a Facebook page, the student described how his friend had caught with a fever and vomiting. He took his friend to HC, where the receptionist took about 15 minutes to call the doctor. The doctor first asked him that was that a case where the student didn't want to give an exam and that's why he wanted to get admitted. The doctor then jokingly said that she could even do this. Then, without even proper diagnosis, the student was given medicines and an injection. The nurse present there recommended an additional injection to which the doctor agreed willingly.
- In my personal case, I had caught up with a severe throat pain. I was assigned a medicine and two extremely heavy doses of injections without the doctor even looking inside my throat. I was later diagnosed with Chronic Tonsillitis and Fungal Infection in my throat.

To summarize, the main problems faced by students in HC are:

- **No proper Check-up:**
 - Students have complained that the Doctors prescribe them a list of medicines without proper check-up. In many cases, it has come to notice that the doctors give a list of medicines just on the basis of the problem suggested by the student.
 - A numerous cases have been reported when a student was admitted in the hospital just on the basis of the explanation given by him/her. This is hugely responsible for the deteriorated belief in the genuineness of the HC reports by the Professors and the Campus community.

- **Unnecessary treatment:**

- Students having elementary health problems like common cold are prescribed extremely heavy doses of antibiotics and injections. Students have been regularly complaining that they are asked to get admitted in HC for diseases which can be simply cured by giving medicines.

- **Support Staff:**

- Students have complained that the nurses always recommend pain killer injections irrespective of the disease or the problem.

- **Reception:**

- There have been instances where there are people other than the staff sitting on the reception desk and busy playing on the computer, paying no heed to the patients.

The important point is that the problem is not at all new. Students have been complaining about the HC facilities for long. The committee formed in June 2012 had come out with similar problems. The Senate needs to come up with a solid and a permanent solution. Sessions with CMO, asking doctors to be more careful is not the real solution. The Senate needs to take up some strong decisions. Some of the possible short-term solutions that I would like to suggest from my side are:

- Presence of a forum where students can register complaints against the HC facilities. In case of regular complaints against a particular doctor, the HCUC nominee must take up the same with higher authorities and recommend immediate removal of the person concerned from the service.
- There needs to be regular surprise checks by the higher authorities to ensure that the HC is functioning properly. In case of any discrepancy, they should take proper action against the person concerned.
- The doctor while prescribing medicines must be strictly asked to mention the diagnosis in the HC booklet. In case of issues noted, the doctor will automatically become accountable for the problem caused.

These, I strongly feel are solutions in short run. There needs to be a permanent solution to this issue:

Privatization of Health Centre:

This is what I find as the best possible solution. I believe that the time has come when we need to privatize the HC facilities. It may become a little costlier for the students, but I think that an improved facility is far better than a cheaper facility. Tender must be released for the HC, and the authority must be given to a fairly experienced firm.