

# MODERN GURUKUL SYSTEM FOR AYURVEDA

## MAHARASHTRA STATE MODEL

**A** *Yurveda*, the ancient Indian Medical Science is fast gaining global acceptance and popularity. The reason for this global resurgence of *Ayurveda* lies in its unique and holistic approach towards health promotion, disease prevention and effective disease management system. *Ayurveda*, the science of life, which traces its roots in the holy Vedas, has an unparalleled and unbroken tradition of scientific medical knowledge and practice of its basic fundamentals and treatment modalities since thousands of years. The fundamentals of *Ayurveda* were conceptualised and derived by the ancient sages and seers based on their extensive experiential knowledge and wisdom and then codified into concise and precise *Sutras*. This scientific knowledge of *Ayurveda* was considered sacrosanct and imparted by the *Acharyas/Gurus* to their select and deserving disciples through *Aptopadesha* or personal discourse in a highly pious and dedicated manner i.e., through *Guru-Shishya Parampara* in *Gurukul* setup. The *Atreya Parampara* or School of Medicine founded by *Acharya Atreya* and the *Dhanwantari Parampara* or School of Surgery founded by *Acharya Dhanwantari* are famous examples of the prevalent *Gurukul* System of *Ayurveda* in those ancient times. The remnants of the world famous Universities of *Takshashila*, *Nalanda* and *Vikramshila* stand testimony to the highly developed and institutionalised *Gurukul* System in India. The classical *Ayurvedic* texts quote *Aptopadesha* as the foremost tool of gaining knowledge. *Charak Samhita* contains an entire chapter (*Charak Samhita Vimanasthana* eighth chapter) dedicated to the ideal method of learning *Ayurveda* and states *Adhyayan*/Self study, *Adhyapan*/teaching and *Tadvidya Sambhasha*/ debates and discussions with peers as the three modalities of learning *Ayurvedic* Science. It also mentions the ideal qualities of *Guru* and *Shishya*. *Ashtang Sangraha* describes the *Guru Shishya* model of study in *Shishyopanayaneeyam* chapter. *Sushrut Samhita* elaborates the concept of *Vishikhanupravesha* wherein aspiring *Ayurvedic* surgeons evolve into expert surgeons after dedicated surgical training on inanimate practice objects and



Prof. Dr. Kuldip Raj Kohli, Director AYUSH, Govt of Maharashtra

models. The holy and revered spiritual text *Gurugita* describes *Guru* as the one who removes the darkness of ignorance with the tool of true knowledge and bestows clear vision and thinking to the disciple.

अज्ञानतिमिरांधस्यज्ञानांजनशलाकया।  
चक्षुरुन्मीलितमयेनतस्मैश्रीगुरवेनमः ॥

This highly effective teaching and training way of *Gurukul* system lost much of its significance in the colonial British era with the imposition of the Modern didactical method of teaching introduced by the erstwhile Lord *Macaulay*. The problem has been compounded by the present era of Information Communication Technology and digitization where there is an explosion of knowledge and the young eager minds are being forced to acquire this knowledge relentlessly thus leaving little scope for nurturing their creativity, reasoning, independent thinking and practical application of the knowledge. The essential qualities like sense of curiosity, empathy, sensitivity to social issues and ethics in addition to subject knowledge are neither emphasised nor inculcated in the students. The present Education system is also evolving and developing continuously to gel with the demands of modern era. *Ayurvedic* Education system also needs to be continuously upgraded and modified to stay abreast with the rapid progress in

science and technology. There is also a parallel need being felt in the *Ayurvedic* fraternity to rejuvenate and reintroduce the ancient *Gurukul* System in modern day *Ayurvedic* education so as to learn and practice *Ayurveda* in its purest form.

In fact the National Accreditation and Assessment Council that assesses and accredits higher education Institutions (HEIs) in India also emphasizes the importance of Mentor Mentee Scheme in the Institute and data of Mentor- Mentee ratio for academic and stress related issues in its Impact Assessment Criteria.

Under the able guidance of the Hon'ble Minister Medical Education Mr *Girish Mahajan* and Hon'ble Secretary Medical Education and Drugs, Govt of Maharashtra, the Directorate of AYUSH has conceptualised and proposed the idea of "MODERN GURUKUL SYSTEM FOR AYURVEDA-MAHARASHTRA STATE MODEL" for comprehensive academic, clinical and technical skill development of *Ayurveda* Graduation Course students. As a pilot project/ first phase of the project, the Directorate of AYUSH has chosen the first year Undergraduate students admitted in prestigious R A Podar *Ayurved* College, *Worli*, *Mumbai* in the academic year 2018-19, to transform and mould them into ideal students of *Ayurveda*. Major highlights of this novel education model are summarized below-



- The 100 first year Undergraduate students have been grouped into 10 cohesive batches of 10 students each. Each segment of 10 students will be called as Group and a Group Leader will be chosen from amongst themselves every six months on a rotatory basis. The Group Leader will be able to work as an instant help in reaching the issues of any of its group members to the Guru or Mahaguru. Rotation will also enable inculcating Leadership qualities in all students of the batch.
- Each batch has been assigned a young and dynamic Assistant Professor (who is a young and promising teacher) of the college as a Guru/Mentor.
- A Mahaguru/Chief mentor and Sahayak Mahaguru/ Assistant Chief Mentor have also been assigned to monitor and coordinate the entire functioning of this Gurukul system in the College.
- The regular teaching program as per the Council's norms shall continue. In addition focus shall be laid on making these young students proficient in Sanskrit & English besides building up their confidence levels so as to make very confident Ayurveda Practitioners/ Teachers/Professionals in days to come.
- Each Guru/Mentor shall be responsible for addressing all the academic and college campus life related issues including personal and family related issues affecting his disciples/students assigned to him/her and strive wholeheartedly for their professional and overall development during the Graduation period of five and a half years.
- The Guru/Mentor shall identify the strengths, weaknesses, likings, hobbies and areas of interests of each student and inspire and guide

them to excel in academics and extracurricular activities in which the student has a special natural affinity.

- The entire batch of students will be given all round exposure in academic, clinical and research fields of Ayurveda. They will be encouraged to actively participate in various state level, national and international competitions, workshops, exhibitions, seminars, debates, conferences, training programmes and other related events.
- Special educational excursions and field visits to various reputed National Institutes, Research Institutes, Pharmacies and Drug Testing Laboratories, Medical Plant Gardens and Pharmaceutical Companies will be arranged for them 2-3 times annually.
- Regular knowledge update through access to various national and international peer reviewed Journals of Ayurveda and related fields.
- To inculcate the scientific temper in the students they will be encouraged to present papers and posters in national and international conferences/seminars and publications 2-3 times annually.
- Eminent personalities and stalwarts from Ayurved and big achievers from other fields will be invited to deliver motivational lectures for the students.
- Special emphasis will be given on gaining proficiency in spoken and written **Sanskrit language**. It is being made mandatory for the Under graduate student of Ayurveda

to gain proficiency in Sanskrit language especially *Vyakaran/ Grammar* since all the classical texts or *Samhitas* are composed of Sanskrit Sutras. To study the original Sanskrit text from classical Samhitas and to comprehend the precise meaning of these *Ayurvedic sutras* is essential for the student to have a thorough knowledge of Sanskrit language. Hence it is proposed to introduce a Dual Degree Course for these students wherein after tie up with reputed Sanskrit University the students will be regularly taught Sanskrit Language by conducting extra classes throughout the Ayurvedic Graduation Course. The students will be conferred with B A Sanskrit Degree and M A Sanskrit Degree after the completion of three years and five years respectively, so that the student passing the BAMS / Ayurveda Graduation course will also have a M A Sanskrit Degree. Award of BA and MA degree in Sanskrit will be kind of an award for putting extra efforts throughout the course of BAMS studies.

- Equal emphasis will be given to gaining proficiency in English language to enable them to interact and present themselves at various interdisciplinary platforms as also to prepare these young students for international exposure.

It is especially worthwhile to quote the positive thoughts and ideas of Prof. Dr. Kuldip Raj Kohli, Director AYUSH, Govt of Maharashtra, Dr. Deelip Mhaisekar Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Dr. Kalidas Chavan, Registrar, Maharashtra University of Health Sciences, Nashik and the Teachers and students of R A Podar Ayurved Medical College, in this regard.





"I have always been of the view that we are for sure missing something in teaching Ayurveda to students as the product walking out of the campus was not confident and enabled to face the real challenges head on, be it practice of Ayurveda, teaching of Ayurveda or even as he goes abroad to represent Ayurveda. That 'something' was the method of imparting education which could neither make good Ayurveda practitioners nor could make good Ayurveda Teachers in last 70 years of independence. I am of a very considered opinion that the students opting for Ayurveda in premier institutes like R A Podar Ayurved College at Mumbai are of the same calibre as that of the students which go to any of the medical colleges. Students admitted in Ayurveda College need to hold their heads high in personal esteem with backing of a sound knowledge of Shastras, with best knowledge of modern sciences and clinical skills. With a huge syllabus before the students this would surely require motivation and a little push by the teachers on whom these students can rely and hence the Modern Pattern of Gurukul system was devised. I am sure the students of this batch of 2018-19 will bring laurels not only to the Institute but also to Ayurveda. I am grateful to my first year students and the teachers who have been appointed as Gurus/Mahaguru as their involvement in this scheme has been an inspiration for me to do more in this direction. All the Authorities in Ministry of Ayush, MUHS and the state Govt have promised me full cooperation in this regard."



**Prof. Dr. Kuldip Raj Kohli**  
Director, Directorate of AYUSH  
Govt of Maharashtra

" This concept of Modern Gurukul System for Ayurved with special emphasis on learning Sanskrit and imparting Dual Degree is a novel one. At present the University does not have a provision to conduct Dual Degree Course. We shall be keeping the issue before the Academic Council of University and then taking the recommendations of Academic Council, we shall be approaching the Hon'ble Governor of Maharashtra in this regard and after his concurrence, we shall grant the approval. On similar lines we will also explore options for starting Dual Degree courses in other faculties as well, as there are already Degree Courses offered to working persons and professionals in Open Universities. Therefore it is worthwhile to offer Dual Degree Course to these students of Ayurveda as well. I appreciate this novel concept and will extend all possible cooperation for its success."



**Dr. Deelip Mhaisekar**  
Hon'ble Vice Chancellor  
Maharashtra University of Health  
Sciences, Nashik

"This concept of Mentor- Mentee is laudable and it is also being emphasised by NAAC. This is a very good project. Emphasis on Sanskrit is essential as all Ayurvedic classical texts are in Sanskrit. We will have to prepare a framework and time schedule for the proposed Dual Degree Course. We are initiating work in this regard at the University level. I extend my best wishes for this Project."



**Dr. Kalidas Chavan,**  
Registrar,  
Maharashtra University of Health  
Sciences, Nashik

The Guru Shishya Parampara has been prevalent in our country since ancient times. The chief reason for the survival of the divine Vedas in their original form is this oral unbroken tradition of Gurukul. Ayurveda was also taught in similar fashion in ancient times and hence it survived and flourished in its pure form. Charak Samhita in 8th Chapter of Vimansthana describes in details the qualities of ideal Guru and Shishya. In the past one-two centuries, this Gurukul tradition received a setback. Our visionary, Director Prof K R Kohli Sir has revived this Gurukul system. I am confident that the teachers who have been selected as Chief mentor, Assistant Chief Mentor and mentors will whole-heartedly work towards the success of this Gurukul system and the selected batch of 100 students of my College will excel in future as successful Ayurvedic academicians, clinicians and practitioners.



**Prof. G.Y.Khati**  
Dean,  
R A Podar Medical College (Ayu), Worli,  
Mumbai

It is a matter of great honour and privilege for me to be appointed as the Maha Guru / Chief Mentor of the first year students batch selected for Modern Gurukul System. This age old and time tested concept of Gurukul combined with all modern teaching tools will provide the much needed impetus for the academic, professional and overall development and growth of all these students. Special emphasis on mastering Sanskrit Language will encourage the students to read and correctly comprehend the classical Ayurvedic texts and help them in becoming successful Ayurvedic practitioners in the future. I will take all efforts to ensure the success of this Modern Gurukul Concept for Ayurveda.



**Prof. D. V.Shukla**  
Chief Mentor & Professor & HOD  
Sharir Rachna Department  
R A Podar Medical College (Ayu),  
Worli, Mumbai

The proposed Modern Gurukul System of Ayurveda will greatly improve the communication between students and teachers. The teachers selected as Gurus/Mentors will be enabled to be familiar with the students and recognize their problems and will be able to solve them with personal involvement. It will help in overall improvement of all students. All the Gurus/mentors and students are very much eager about this project.



**Dr. D. S. Meshram**  
Guru & Assistant Professor  
Sharir Rachna Department  
R A Podar Medical College (Ayu), Worli,  
Mumbai

I am grateful to the Director AYUSH, Govt of Maharashtra for choosing us for this Modern Gurukul System for Ayurveda. This Mentor-Mentee theme will enable greater interaction between teachers and students and this will help in identification and resolution of various problems faced by the students during their academic and campus life. Special coaching for Sanskrit will help the students to accurately grasp the meaning of sutras in Ayurvedic texts.



**Miss Rachna Tiwari**  
Group Leader & First Year BAMS Student  
R A Podar Medical College (Ayu), Worli,  
Mumbai

I am very enthusiastic towards the whole project of Modern Gurukul System. I am planning to take the recitation of Sutras from various Samhitas during the morning time for the Shishyas of my group. Also I am planning common Yoga practice in the morning. This will improve their Health & Well being. Each student from this batch will have a bright career in future.



**Dr. Sachin Uplanchiwar**  
Guru & Assistant Professor  
Swasthavritta Department  
R A Podar Medical College (Ayu), Worli,  
Mumbai

As a student selected for the Modern Gurukul System, I am very eagerly waiting for all the opportunities we will be offered to learn Ayurveda in a better way. This will help us for our overall development as well as make us healthy and responsible citizens in future.



**Miss Pooja Mahto**  
Group Leader & First Year BAMS Student  
R A Podar Medical College (Ayu), Worli,  
Mumbai

I am pleased to be an integral part of the Modern Gurukul System. This System will provide a valuable platform for comprehensive interaction between teachers and students resulting in benefit and progress of both the students and the Gurus/Mentors. This ancient traditional education system being implemented in today's technological era will provide the student with the best avenues for their all round development.



**Dr. Sandip Kale**  
Guru & Assistant Professor  
RogNidan Department  
R A Podar Medical College (Ayu),  
Worli, Mumbai.

The Modern Gurukul System being proposed will help us interact with our teachers gainfully thus enhancing and fine tuning our academic and extracurricular skills. Simultaneous use of modern technology and learning aids will also aid in improved learning and grasping of various aspects of Ayurveda.



**Miss Shweta Khangar**  
Group Leader & First Year BAMS Student  
R A Podar Medical College (Ayu), Worli,  
Mumbai

