

Three team up on medical training

THREE ENTITIES are set to embrace technology to modernise training and patient care through a landmark partnership agreement.

The University of the West Indies (UWI), Era University in Lucknow, India, and the American University of Barbados (AUB) signed a tripartite memorandum of understanding earlier this year in India.

On Tuesday, the three entities officially launched their strategic partnership initiative in the Shaw Centre of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH). High Commissioner of India to Barbados, Shri Subhash Prasad Gupta, was the special guest.

UWI dean of the Faculty of Medical Sciences Dr Damian Cohall said the partnership was in line with the interests of each organisation and jurisdiction.

MOU

"This launch signifies the historic and symbolic signing of an MOU between the three institutions in August of this year at the Era University in Lucknow, India. [Your] Excellency, you will be pleased to know that this collaborative expression is a true illustration of South-South partnerships across our partners globally, as the institutional and jurisdictional priorities of both Barbados, the Caribbean, and India are very much well-aligned," he said.

Cohall said the focus on technology such as e-logbooks and digital information systems was timely, as UWI was already working with the QEH on the rollout of its



OFFICIALS present at the launch of the strategic partnership included Campus Dean of the American University of Barbados, Dr Syed Kazmi (left), and High Commissioner of India to Barbados, Shri Subhash Prasad Gupta (second right). (Pictures by Shanice King.)

digital health information system and had also launched a postgraduate certificate, postgraduate diploma, and master's of science in digital health.

Deputy dean of research and graduate studies, Professor Alok Kumar Singh, explained what the e-logbooks were and how they would revolutionise medical training.

"Previously, what happens in medical training, we develop a logbook that lists what we do as a part of the training. Students have a logbook where they document what they've done – that they did this procedure, or they observed this procedure, or they took a history, or they examined, etcetera.

"Now it's a very

cumbersome process. It is a book that, if I want to know whether this particular student is doing well, I'll have to go through the entire logbook, which is not always with me. This is why this e-logbook is a beautiful thing," he said.

Singh said the digital logbook could be shared easily between students and tutors, all at the click of a few buttons.

"At any time I want to see how a particular student is doing, all I need to do is log into it, click on that student, click on the location that he or she is in, and I would know what she has done over the past week or two weeks. So it provides the defensibility that yes, the students did do these treatments, and it also

provides real-time feedback.

"I don't have to wait for the mid-clerkship assessment or the end-of-clerkship assessment to give them the feedback after looking at the logbook.

"It's also much more objective; somebody makes a presentation, and I grade him then and there, rather than being graded later. So these are some of the big benefits of this small initiative that we are going to pilot to begin with. And that is from today," he said.

Era University representative Zaw Ali Khan said the door was open to utilising artificial intelligence (AI) and virtual reality (VR). Speaking during a video call, he said it was common practice at Era for students

to practise techniques in a virtual setting.

"At Era's simulation and study development centres, students practise their OSCE (objective structured clinical examination) scenarios and clinical cases in an interactive and timed setting," he said.

"They are able to repeat procedures like resuscitation, catheterisation, and other emergency or critical-care procedures all in simulation on virtual patients with instant feedback. The idea is simple: let students make mistakes and learn from them with zero risk to a real patient."

Khan said the partnership represented a new paradigm in medical education and health care.

"This partnership, to sum it up, works on two fronts: AI, VR, simulation, and competency-based training – all of this changes how clinicians are taught. Whereas research into chronic diseases, digital health, molecular profiling, traditional medicine or phytochemicals changes how patients are treated.

"And both of these approaches, they feed into each other. The clinical findings, they shape the curriculum and the curriculum shapes the clinicians who go on to do the research and the clinical findings," he said.

(CA)

AUB to expand free daily clinic

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF Barbados (AUB) is seeking to expand its free clinic.

Campus Dean Dr Syed Kazmi told a media briefing on Tuesday that the clinics are held daily from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. as part of their responsibility to give back to the community.

"[We see around] 15 to 20 patients every day, and we are expecting that as we improve things, and we are in the process of having some lab investigations and other things, and as soon as we put those things in place, the number of patients is going to increase," he said, adding they had also recently increased the number of doctors at the clinic to

three.

Kazmi said the beauty of the clinic was the personalised and speedy service.

"I really feel that the patients who are coming there and are seen by our physicians, they go back very happy because these patients are seen immediately.

"They don't have to wait long when they come there, and they're seen properly and given time by our physicians; that's why the number of patients is increasing, and the patients are very happy.

"We initially started with the people in the area surrounding AUB, but now people are coming from far places as

well. We are very happy that a lot of people know about this clinic now," he said.

The dean said the clinic had two main benefits: giving back to the Barbadian community and giving medical exposure to their students under rotation.

"They go there on a regular basis, and they see what the prevalent diseases and other things are in our community. And this is helping them a lot when they are going into the clinical phase," he said.

Kazmi said they were dealing with the issues surrounding non-communicable diseases but reminded the public it was an outpatient clinic, so there would be no surgeries. (CA)