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To,

All Nursing & Paramedical Training Centers
Uttar Pradesh

Sub: Policy for Rating of Courses of Nursing and Paramedical Institutes.

Dear Sir/Ma'am,

UPSMF is committed towards creating a vibrant and high-quality nursing and paramedical ecosystem in the state of Uttar Pradesh and making it a hub of nursing and paramedical professionals in India.

Towards achieving this goal, it is important to assess and enhance the quality of training at pre-service institutions in the State, affiliated to U.P. State Medical Faculty (UPSMF), through regular rating of these institutions.

In this regard, kindly find the policy on rating of courses offered by nursing and paramedical institutes, affiliated under the UPSMF, enclosed with this notice.

This policy shall come under effect immediately from the date of notification.

Secretary

U.P. State Medical Faculty

Policy for Rating of Nursing & Paramedical Institutes in Uttar Pradesh

1. Short title and commencement

- a. GoUP is committed to ensure high quality clinical services in the State. The pandemic has only reiterated the pivotal role of quality nursing and paramedical services which require credible pre-service education. GoUP realizes that there is a need to focus on not only quantity (increased access) but also quality of the pre-service education being offered in the State.
- b. This policy will come into effect immediately from the day of notification.

2. Objective and Introduction

- a. This policy is aimed at enhancing the quality of training at pre-service institutions in the State affiliated to UP State Medical Faculty (UPSMF), through regular rating of these institutions.
- b. As a part of this, institutes would be rated based on the infrastructure, internal processes and competencies that impact quality of training being imparted.
- c. In order to generate these ratings, information about infrastructure, internal processes and competencies would be collected from institutes and verified during on-ground inspections by third-party assessors.
- d. These ratings would be published in the public domain (UPSMF's website) so as to:
 - i. Provide visibility to students, parents and other stakeholders on the quality of the institute
 - ii. Signal institutes about their relative performance and areas of improvement
- e. GoUP is also committed to provide opportunities and pathways for institutions to improve their quality through mentor institutions¹ and hence their ratings.

3. Institutes Covered under this policy

- a. All nursing and paramedical colleges affiliated by UP State Medical Faculty for any course, and
- b. Have admitted at least two (2) batches of students as on the 1st day of September of the year shall be covered under this policy.

4. Basis of assessment

- a. The tools (attached in Annexure 1 and Annexure 2) broadly follow a framework of assessments through three sections- infrastructure, quality of teaching-learning

¹ *Champion institutes across the state identified through a rigorous assessment process on pre-defined quality standards*

processes and faculty/student competency to make the outcome as objective as possible.

- b. There are slight differences in the tool from course to course (ex., from nursing to paramedical).
- c. The basis of assessment shall be each course being provided by the institute.
- d. It is possible that an institute providing multiple courses may be rated differently for each course.

5. Rating Process for 2022-2023 rating cycle

All nursing and paramedical institutes affiliated with UPSMF for any course and fulfilling the condition as per para 3 above shall have a rating exercise conducted without charge of any fee as a one-time measure.

The process for rating would include the following 4 stages:

a. Institutes pre-fill data online

1. In this stage, the nodal officer of the quality control team (*refer to section on constitution of institute quality control teams below*) in the institutes shall fill certain forms and upload relevant documents as specified. Institutes will be able to access these forms through an online portal using their unique login id and password. Detailed guidelines on how to fill the data required shall be provided on UPSMF's website.
2. Institutes will be expected to fill separate forms for each of their courses affiliated to UPSMF.
3. *Constitution of institute quality control (QC) team*
 - i. Institutes will need to constitute a quality control team which shall undertake institute level assessments and gap filling. The members of the quality control team shall be nominated by the head of the institute. The team should have a nodal officer appointed, who shall be the single point of contact for the rating exercise from the institute.
 - ii. Composition of QC Team:
 1. Chairperson: Head of the institute
 2. 2 professors for overall management of the quality control process (1 of the professors would be the nodal officer, as nominated by head of the institute)
 3. 5-6 tutors for conducting self-assessments and closure of gaps
 4. Eligibility: Should be a regular full-time employee of the institute
 - iii. Key responsibilities of the Quality Control Teams have been listed below:
 1. The nominated nodal officer shall be responsible for coordinating all activities related to the rating process

2. The team should be well acquainted with the institute's infrastructural facilities
 3. The team should be well acquainted with the self-assessment procedure, assessment procedure & methodology of making an application for the rating process
 4. The team shall be responsible for submitting information on the identified parameters (from rating tools) on the online portal in the frequency defined by UPSMF
 5. Ensuring adherence to protocols and guidelines laid down by UPSMF
 6. Prioritization and action planning for closure of gaps with the help of Mentor Institutes
- iv. Detailed terms of reference for the Quality Control Teams may be shared at a later date.

b. Desktop verification

- i. UPSMF along with a panel of assessors will conduct desktop verification of the data submitted through the online form and the attachments uploaded as evidence.
- ii. If the assessor team finds any incomplete data or data entered contrary to the evidence attached, then the form will be sent back to the institutions with relevant remarks for resubmission.
- iii. The form will be verified by the assessors after resubmission until all the data elements are appropriately complete.
- iv. Failure to fill the required information by the deadline or submission after the deadline laid down by the UP SMF will result in strict action as deemed fit by UP SMF.
- v. Only once the panel of assessors are satisfied with the data entered and the relevant evidence provided as attachments, the form submission is accepted and moves to the next step.

c. On-ground assessment by Quality Council of India (QCI)

- i. Quality Council of India has been contracted to provide third-party on-ground assessments of the nursing and paramedical institutes in the State for the year 2022-2023.
- ii. The assessment team shall consist of one Medical and one Non-Medical Assessor who will be extensively trained on using the rating tool in a standardized manner.
- iii. The institutes for whom the online form is verified for all the courses offered will then be assigned to on-ground assessment teams through a

double blind mechanism. This means institutes shall be randomly assigned to on-ground assessment teams.

- iv. The on-ground assessment for institutes can occur on any working day.
- v. If an institute is found closed on a working day by the assessment team, it will automatically be assigned the lowest possible grade.
- vi. Any fee for rescheduling the assessment visit thereafter must be borne by the institute themselves.
- vii. Institutes must collate all the relevant documents (originals) required for the on-ground assessment and keep them ready for on-ground assessment, once the data filled by them online has been approved by UP SMF.
- viii. The institutes are directed to facilitate the visit by the assessor team to all the departments in the institute, hostel, teaching block, parent hospital and any other area as may be required for the assessment.
- ix. The assessor teams shall verify the on-site evidence against the data submitted by the institutes online and update their observations on a mobile application.
- x. Both Medical and Non-Medical assessors will evaluate different parts of the rating tool simultaneously and complete the assessment within the same day.

d. Approval of on-ground assessment

- i. A panel of assessors appointed by UPSMF will oversee the entire on-ground assessment process.
- ii. This panel will also conduct on-ground assessment of a random sample from each of the on-ground assessor teams to ensure appropriate quality.
- iii. In case any issues are found with the desk based reverification or on the basis of the random sample on-ground reverification, the QCI team may be asked to revisit certain institutes to get accurate data.

6. Rating criteria

- a. UPSMF has identified three major pillars against which these institutes shall be assessed – infrastructure, internal processes and competencies that impact quality of training being imparted.
- b. The detailed tools for nursing (Annexure-1) and paramedical (Annexure-2) are attached.
- c. The weightage of each of the sections would be as follows (in Table 1.0):

#	Section	Weightage in overall score (%)
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1	Infrastructure	30
2	Quality of processes	40
3	Competencies impacting quality of training	30

Table 1.0

- d. The final rating for the institutes will be calculated, using scores obtained out of on-ground assessments, based on comparative normalized scores. The method of calculating the rating will be shared subsequently.

7. Score Validity

- a. The score obtained by the institute upon assessment shall be valid for a period of 3 years
- b. Institutes need to undergo mandatory re-assessments at least once in 3 years from the pool of empaneled professional rating agencies to have a valid rating status
- c. The rating calculated based on comparative normalized scores, would be calculated and published annually in August to signal latest benchmark of quality
- d. During the admission cycle, every year, institutes shall be checked for their score validity. If the institute does not have a valid score, the institute will not be able to admit any students in the subsequent years till the institute secures a valid score.

8. Rating cycle after 2022-2023

- a. For subsequent cycles, UPSMF shall empanel professional rating agencies which will undertake the entire exercise based on approved accreditation tools.
- b. Information on the same shall be made available to all institutes, through UPSMF’s website.
- c. It will be the responsibility of the institutes to engage with one of the empaneled rating agencies at the notified cost at least 6 months prior to the expiration of their score’s validity.
- d. A panel of assessors appointed by UPSMF will oversee the entire on-ground assessment process.
- e. The panel will also conduct on-ground assessment of a random sample from each of the on-ground assessor teams to ensure appropriate quality.
- f. In case any issues are found with the desk based reverification or on the basis of the random sample on-ground reverification, the empanel professional rating agencies may be asked to revisit certain institutes to get accurate data.

9. Incentives for higher rated institutes

- a. The higher rated institutes shall be provided the following incentives
 - i. Ease of processes for expansion of seats for existing courses, and
 - ii. Ease of process for opening of new courses, as specified by UPSMF

10. Re-assessment

- a. Institutions, which would like to make a re-assessment of their rating status, may volunteer for re-assessment, with the empanelled 3rd party assessment agencies as notified by UPSMF at the cost notified.
- b. Lower rated institutes shall mandatorily undergo quality improvement processes from Mentor Institutes to improve their quality and undertake re-assessments as deemed necessary.

11. Grievance Redressal

- a. UPSMF views the process of assessment and rating as an exercise to inform the institutes on the areas for improvement to jointly work towards quality healthcare in the State.
- b. Every stage of the process is marked by transparency. The rating tools are available to the institutes on UPSMF's website to refer to.
- c. The detailed scoring of the institute on each of the items in the tool shall be provided to the institute on their login page after the ratings are finalized for all institutes, before making them public.
- d. Prior to making the ratings public, the institutes shall be provided 7 days during which they may register their appeal through the online portal.
- e. A prescribed form, with adequate evidence attached along with a non-refundable fee of Rs. 25,000 + GST shall be required to register the appeal.
- f. An Appeals Committee shall be constituted by UPSMF for the purpose of looking into all the grievances in this regard.
 - i. The ratings of any institute filing an appeal will be kept in abeyance until resolution of the appeal.
 - ii. Any appeal shall be disposed of within a maximum of sixty (60) days from receiving it, without fail.
 - iii. Recommendations on the appeals shall be provided by the appeals committee to the Secretary, UPSMF for final decision.
 - iv. The decision of the Secretary shall be final and binding on the institution.

12. Fee payment

- a. In the year 2022-2023 all institutes that comply with the guidelines that shall be issued for the rating process, will be assessed by QCI (Quality Council of India) without a fee
- b. In the subsequent rating cycles, institutes, which would like to undergo a re-assessment of their rating status, may sign-up for the rating process with empanelled professional rating agencies for a fee, as will be notified.

13. Ensuring effectiveness of processes

- a. In order to ensure effectiveness of the empanelled professional rating agencies, the agencies will be assigned “trust scores” which shall be calculated based on a random sample of institutes selected for assessment by UPSMF, after every rating cycle.

14. Publicity

- a. UPSMF and/or the empanelled professional rating agencies shall publish the list of applicant institutes and their rating status on its website.

15. Confidentiality

- a. The members of UPSMF and/or empanelled professional rating agencies involved in the rating process shall maintain strict confidentiality with the information gathered from the institutes, including documents uploaded by institutes and any other related information that might be gathered during the process of rating.

16. Liability

- a. UPSMF will not be responsible for any damages, which the institute may suffer as a result of any action or negligence by those who are carrying out the tasks on behalf of UPSMF.

17. Amendments

- a. UPSMF may at any time amend the policies and procedures related to rating of institutes and shall inform the institutes regarding such amendments from time to time.