

Report on Participation in DEEPAM medCON '26 National Medical Education Conference

Introduction

The Department of Community Medicine continuously promotes active participation of faculty members and postgraduate students in academic conferences to encourage innovation in medical education, dissemination of educational research, and professional development. Participation in such academic forums strengthens teaching–learning practices and facilitates exchange of educational experiences among medical educators.

As part of these ongoing academic initiatives, faculty members and postgraduate students of the Department of Community Medicine participated in **DEEPAM medCON '26**, a National Medical Education Conference focusing on advancements in teaching–learning methodologies, competency-based medical education, and educational research in medical sciences.

Conference Details

On **23rd and 24th January 2026**, faculty members and postgraduate students from the Department of Community Medicine attended **DEEPAM medCON '26 – National Medical Education Conference**, organized by the Medical Education Unit of Government Tiruvannamalai Medical College, Tiruvannamalai.

The conference served as a national academic platform bringing together medical educators, researchers, and postgraduate scholars from various institutions across the country. The program aimed to promote innovative teaching strategies, encourage evidence-based educational practices, and provide opportunities for sharing research findings and academic experiences related to modern medical education.

Departmental Participation

The Department of Community Medicine demonstrated active academic engagement through multiple scientific contributions during the conference:

- **Two oral paper presentations** were delivered by faculty members.
- **Three poster presentations** were presented by postgraduate students.

This participation reflected the department's strong commitment toward academic excellence, collaborative learning, research dissemination, and continuous improvement in medical education practices.



Oral Presentation I

Problem-Based Learning in Community Medicine

Dr. Sakthipriyan delivered an oral presentation titled: “**Problem-Based Learning in Community Medicine**” under the guidance of **Dr. A. Balaji, Professor and Head of the Department, Department of Community Medicine, Arunai Medical College & Hospital.**

The presentation highlighted the implementation of **Problem-Based Learning (PBL)** as an innovative teaching–learning strategy designed to enhance active learning, analytical thinking, and problem-solving skills among undergraduate medical students.

Objectives of the Educational Intervention

The primary objectives of introducing Problem-Based Learning were:

- To promote learner-centered education
- To encourage critical thinking and analytical reasoning
- To strengthen collaborative and self-directed learning
- To improve application of theoretical knowledge in real-life public health situations

The intervention was conducted among final-year MBBS students as part of their regular Community Medicine curriculum.



Methodology and Implementation

Students were initially sensitized to the principles and workflow of Problem-Based Learning, emphasizing active participation and collaborative knowledge construction. The PBL sessions were structured using real-life clinical and community-based case scenarios covering important public health topics such as epidemiology, foodborne diseases and food poisoning, meat and milk hygiene, sanitary measures, outbreak investigation, and public health programmes. Students were divided into small groups to promote meaningful interaction and active participation. The sessions were conducted in sequential phases, including case presentation, pre-test assessment, guided group discussion, self-directed learning, and consolidation with feedback sessions. Throughout the process, facilitators encouraged independent thinking by using probing questions while simultaneously supporting collaborative problem-solving among students.

Innovative Teaching Techniques

To enhance student engagement, several interactive strategies were incorporated:

- Fishbowl discussion method for observation-based learning
- Trigger-question-based learning to deepen conceptual understanding
- Sociogram analysis to assess group interaction and participation patterns

These approaches improved communication skills, peer learning, and student confidence.

Assessment and Outcomes

Learning outcomes were evaluated using:

- Pre-test and post-test assessments
- Multiple-choice and descriptive evaluations
- Structured rubric-based assessment of group presentations

Assessment comparison demonstrated significant improvement in knowledge levels and conceptual clarity, supporting the effectiveness of Problem-Based Learning.



Oral Presentation II (Award-Winning Paper)

A major highlight of the conference was the award-winning research presentation titled: “**Team Based Learning Versus Tutorial Teaching Learning for Medical Students – A Comparative Study**” presented by **Dr. R. N. Vaishali, Assistant Professor**, under the guidance of **Dr. A. Balaji, Professor and Head of the Department**.

Objectives of the Study

The study compared two important teaching methodologies:

- Team-Based Learning (TBL)
- Traditional Tutorial Teaching-Learning Method

The research aimed to evaluate their effectiveness in improving:

- Student engagement
- Conceptual understanding
- Collaborative learning
- Academic performance among medical students



Scientific Contribution

The research emphasized:

- The growing importance of student-centered learning approaches
- Enhancement of critical thinking through interactive teaching
- Comparative effectiveness of conventional and innovative teaching methods
- Practical applications for competency-based medical education

The findings supported the integration of structured active-learning strategies into undergraduate medical training.

Evaluation and Recognition

The presentation was evaluated by an expert panel based on:

- Originality and innovation
- Relevance to medical education
- Scientific rigor and methodology
- Clarity of presentation
- Based on these criteria, the presentation secured the **First Prize in Oral Presentation**, marking a significant academic achievement for both the presenter and the department.



Academic and Institutional Significance

Participation in DEEPAM medCON '26 contributed significantly to:

- Academic exchange at a national level
- Exposure to innovative teaching methodologies
- Professional development of faculty and postgraduate students
- Promotion of educational research culture
- Enhancement of institutional academic reputation

The conference enabled dissemination of educational innovations while reinforcing the department's commitment to excellence in teaching and research.



Conclusion

The participation of the Department of Community Medicine in **DEEPAM medCON '26 – National Medical Education Conference** was academically enriching and professionally rewarding. The oral presentations showcased innovative teaching practices and educational research initiatives undertaken by the department.

The successful implementation of Problem-Based Learning and the **First Prize-winning research presentation** on Team-Based Learning demonstrate the department's dedication toward advancing modern medical education through innovation, research, and evidence-based teaching methodologies.

Such achievements reflect the institution's continued commitment to academic excellence, faculty development, and continuous improvement in teaching-learning practices, thereby contributing meaningfully to the advancement of medical education.

