



SHOULD LOW VISION STUDENTS BE ELIGIBLE TO PURSUE MBBS

In a recent Supreme Court ruling, a person with low vision has been allowed to pursue MBBS on the basis of his NEET score in the disability category

RULING IN CONFORMITY WITH LAWS

Students with low vision or other forms of impairment can pursue Medicine since there are no dearth of options. The SC's ruling is in conformity with both national and international laws since India has ratified the Rights of the Person with Disability (PwD) under the UN convention. We need to have systems in place to accommodate persons with special needs. Had the Supreme Court put a blanket ban on the student from the MBBS course, it would have spoken of prejudice. When a person has low



vision, it does not necessarily mean s/he is suffering from it.

★ **AMITA DHANDA**, HEAD OF THE CENTRE FOR DISABILITY, NATIONAL ACADEMY OF LEGAL STUDIES AND RESEARCH (NALSAR), HYDERABAD

EVALUATION IS A MUST

The protocol of medical education starts with history-taking followed by physical examination of the patient to make an accurate diagnosis. In such a situation, a doctor with visual impairment will have to fight the odds. It is important to evaluate the level of visual impairment of a student to certify his eligibility for MBBS



course. Since the SC has given the verdict in the student's favour, he can pursue specialisations which does not require active visual inputs. In medical learning, time is of significant essence because the syllabus is so vast. And even in the emergency room where the patient is hanging between life and death, it is important to consider whether a doctor with low vision can address the crisis.

★ **DR AMITABH PARTI**, ADDITIONAL DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL MEDICINE, FORTIS MEMORIAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE, GURGAON

NEED MEDICAL SCHOOL FOR SUCH CANDIDATES

As long as the student with visual impairment is planning to pursue Medicine where there is no active intervention, the Supreme Court ruling seems well justified. There is a need to set up special medical



schools for the visually impaired with provisions for braille. While differently-abled students should not be denied access to medical education, the lives of patients

should not be put at risk.

★ **CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH**, BIOLOGY FACULTY, CAREER LAUNCHER

DISABILITY NOT A DETERRENT

The student can pursue nonclinical branches since it involves teaching MBBS students. Even in some clinical branches such as Radiography, visual impairment will not be a hindrance. The Supreme Court has given a favourable ruling because he has qualified as per his merit in the category of Persons with Disability and only after a thorough medical assessment.



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— As told to **Rajlakshmi Ghosh**