
From thyroid uptake to molecular imaging – a journey of Nuclear Medicine in Bangladesh

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Nuclear Medicine was evolved in 1940's in medical science to improve human quality of life by using radionuclide in diagnosis and treatment of some diseases.

However in our country nuclear medicine service started in 1962 at Dhaka Medical College Hospital in a tin shed building. In the year of 1970 two more centres were established, one in Rajshai and another in Chittagong. In the year of 1980 an institute namely Institute of Nuclear Medicine (INM) was established in Dhaka at the then IPGMR campus (now BSMMU). In 1982 nuclear medicine services were expanded in Sylhet and Dinajpur. Scintillation camera and computer interfaced instruments were started to add to the nuclear medicine at that time. Parallal to that for the first time of the country medical ultrasound system was introduced in medical field at INM in the year of 1981 and then at Sylhet in 1983. Radioimmunoassay (RIA) started at INM in 1984 and there after it was introduced in all nuclear medicine centers of Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC).

Now in Bangladesh there are 15 nuclear medicine institutes under BAEC in different

parts of the country giving services to more than 500,000 patients per year. The government is getting a handsome amount of revenue also from this sector. Besides a few private medical centres have also introduced nuclear medicine facilities and giving services to the patients.

INM, now the National Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences (NINMAS) is an educational institute affiliated to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) and giving postgraduate degrees to the nuclear medicine physicians. The other nuclear medicine institutes are also coming forward to open post graduate courses.

Nuclear Medicine has traversed a long way from thyroid uptake to molecular imaging. Bangladesh has also entered into the era of PET-CT. After private sectors the first PET-CT in government sector has been installed at NINMAS. The purchase of cyclotron is under process. Meanwhile NINMAS needs F-18 FDG urgently for running the PET-CT for patient's service as well as maintainance of this costly instrument. The Society of Nuclear Medicine, Bangladesh hopes an early solution of the problem.