

## **Feminization of Medical Doctor Workforce in Sri Lanka**

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It has been observed in many countries around the world over the past decades, and especially in the last few years, that there are consistent trends of increased participation of females in the medical profession and that the profession of medicine is no longer dominated by males as it once was. The authors were concerned to find out if Sri Lanka is experiencing the same phenomenon in the feminization of doctors. How has the ratio between men and women medical doctor workforce changed in Sri Lanka over the years? Authors analysed medical student cohorts from 1990 to 2020, to understand the medical workforce feminization patterns using secondary from state Medical Faculties and UGC. Over the years, there has been a notable rise in the number of women entering state medical schools and pursuing careers as doctors. Between the years 1990-1995, 1996-2000, 2001-2005, 2006-2010, 2011-2015 and 2016-2020, percentage of female medical students had been 42,46,51,54,60 and 63 respectively. Above results clearly demonstrate the rising number of female medical students from 1990 to 2020. Cohorts from 1991-1995, up to 2011-2015 have already entered the doctor workforce, while a portion of the 2016-2020 are still medical students. According to the liner trend analysis, percentage of female medical students would rise to 68.6 in 2025 and 72.6 in 2030. Currently, Sri Lanka has around 7500 medical students in the training pathway and out of which nearly two thirds are females. More women are attending medical school and becoming doctors in Sri Lanka. Therefore, the authors foresee a future shortfall of male-dominated surgical trainees and specialists as medical school graduates are becoming more feminized. Sri Lankan Health policy makers should take serious note of feminization of the medical doctor workforce and act proactively from the perceptive of Health Human Resources.

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