

Hyderabad: UoH, Fernandez Foundation to train birth doulas

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Hyderabad: University of Hyderabad (UoH) and Fernandez Foundation (FF) signed a three-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Friday for undertaking academic exchange, research, and translational research initiatives between the institutions.

The MoU was signed in the presence of the Vice Chancellor – UoH, Prof B.J. Rao, and Dr. Evita Fernandez – Founder and Chairperson – FF. Dr. Devesh Nigam, Registrar, UoH, and Dr. Pramod Gaddam – Managing Director, FF were the signatories from the 2 institutions.

Present on the occasion were Prof. N.Siva Kumar, Dean – School of Life S & Chairperson of the MoU committee, Prof. Geeta K. Vemuganti, Dean – SoMSc, and Prof. B.R.Shamanna – coordinator from the UoH side. Dr. Radha Reddy and Sumani were coordinators and signatories from FF.

As an initial academic activity and a very unique skill development program, a training program for birth doulas who will be trained professional who offers continuous physical, emotional, and informational support to the pregnant woman and her birth companion during labor, childbirth, and the immediate postpartum period is being offered.

This program approved by the academic council of the University is in all readiness to go online on a blended mode with a mandatory hands-on experiential component by March 2023. This will be open to any lady candidate who has passed her intermediate exam.

In course of time, more educational and training programs aligned to the National Education Policy – 2020 and dealing with contextual issues surrounding mother and child care and collaborative research using co-development and co-creation modalities for interventions to make births safer, respectful and quality acceptable to communities shall be undertaken as part of this MoU.

Prof. B.J. Rao, Vice Chancellor opined that “This is a landmark and a unique collaboration in a discipline which is novel and much-needed for expectant mothers in India. I hope that this will pave the way for an initiative that will improve mother and child care in India and provide a model for low and middle-income countries.”

Dr. Evita Fernandez while expressing her happiness said “I am delighted to launch this training program with the University of Hyderabad. Given the immense burden on the medical fraternity, the Birth Doula course will be instrumental in improving the quality of services offered in the country”.

Dr. Pramod Gaddam, Managing Director of Fernandez Foundation, said, “Fernandez Foundation strongly believes in and supports empowered, positive, and evidence-based birthing. We make the birthing journey and experience better for every mother, and this is reflected in our practice. Through this collaboration, we seek to build a strong skilled workforce that can serve as the backbone of quality maternity care in India.”

While the multidisciplinary nature of the university provides many opportunities for collaboration and FF is at the forefront in education, training, and respectful mother and child care, it is envisaged that this is a win-win situation in this area of health care and delivery.

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