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Webinars in COVID Era: Boon or Impediment

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Editorial

We all are facing an unprecedented situation, and witnessing a historic period, in this COVID era. Initially, Indian Government reacted to COVID pandemic, by enforcing nationwide lockdown in four phases (21 days, 19 days, 14 days and 14 days respectively), starting from 25th March 2020 and ending on 31st May 2020. Then, Unlock 1.0 started from 1 June 2020 and ended on 30 June 2020. Presently, we are in Unlock 2.0 and this phase will end on 31 July 2020. In this Era, we all have found various ways to avoid public gathering, so as to prevent COVID transmission. Now, we will be crossing twelve lakh mark in India in next 24 hours, with increasing number of cases each day, with no immediate hope of flattening the curve.

Learning is an ongoing part and parcel of life, for all medicos, and before COVID pandemic, attending CME/Conferences at site, was the main avenue for gathering knowledge and for learning new skills. But, due to COVID pandemic, group gathering has stopped and we all have resorted to online teaching, in form of webinars. These webinars are meticulously planned, informative, and provide excellent opportunity for participants to interact with the Faculty. Radiology residents are getting opportunity to learn basics, as well as an opportunity to interact with Examiners, by participating in online Mock Examination and by presenting cases in Online Virtual Conferences. Few webinars are specially focused and doing live demonstration workshops on ultrasound, with opportunity for residents to learn skills from stalwarts. Even meetings of Radiology departments are being done through online mode, with everyone getting opportunity to actively participate. But, all this has a flipside also. Suddenly, a rat race has started, with overlapping schedule of webinars. Secondly, many informative

webinars are being scheduled on weekends, resulting in compromised family time and having consequence on Quality of Life. Moreover, Residents are staggered and call for duty at different time of day and night. Due to this, many residents are forced to miss informative webinars, as patient care takes precedence over online teaching. Some webinars can be seen in spare time, in form of recorded lectures. But, recording of all webinars is not made available to residents and this unnecessarily puts stress on our residents. COVID pandemic is in itself, a stressful time for residents, as they have to limit their movement. This has resulted in many professionals seeking Psychological counseling and help. Due to some webinars, residents even have started changing their sleeping hours, as some webinars are being broadcasted from overseas, with significant difference in time zone. A major concern that needs to be addressed here, is the concern about usefulness of these webinars in long run. The plethora of information that has been suddenly made available to our residents, has failed the very purpose of their implementation. Conflicting guidelines advised by different societies, has made these webinars even more confusing for our residents. Now, we all are trying our level best, to take steps to return to work slowly. Slowly and steadily, we all have accepted the fact that COVID is going to stay and we all have to learn to adapt to this scenario. But, COVID has taught us an important lesson, that we still are unprepared for such pandemic situations and that nature is supreme, in spite of human development. All residents should carefully scrutinize and do a careful selection, before attending any webinar. And most importantly, all residents are advised not to binge participate, without having any specific aims and objectives to attend webinar.