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National Medical Commission (NMC)

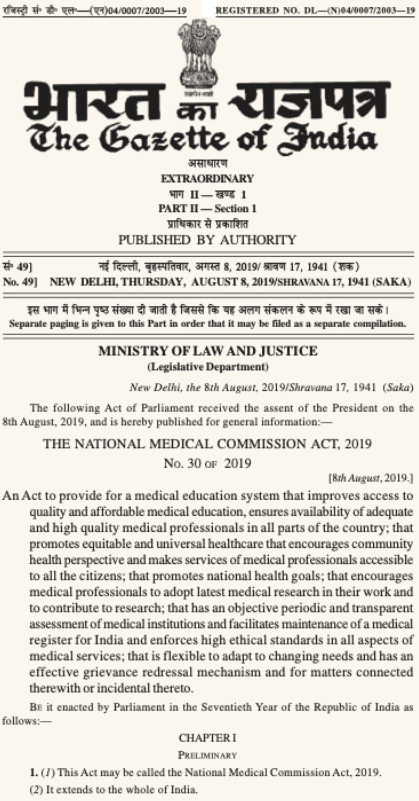
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National Medical Commission (NMC)

Every doctor in India starts the same way. First a seat in a medical college, then a licence to practise. Who decides which colleges may open? Who checks how well they teach? Who removes a doctor from the register?

1 What the NMC Is

What is the National Medical Commission?



रजिस्ट्री सं॰ डी॰ एल॰—(एन)04/0007/2003—19 REGISTERED NO. DL—(N)04/0007/2003—19

भारत का राजपत्र
The Gazette of India

असाधारण
EXTRAORDINARY
भाग II — खण्ड 1
PART II — Section 1
प्राधिकार से प्रकाशित
PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY

सं॰ 49] नई दिल्ली, बृहस्पतिवार, अगस्त 8, 2019/ श्रावण 17, 1941 (शक)
No. 49] NEW DELHI, THURSDAY, AUGUST 8, 2019/SHRAVANA 17, 1941 (SAKA)

इस भाग में भिन्न पृष्ठ संख्या दी जाती है जिससे कि यह अलग संकलन के रूप में रखा जा सके।
Separate paging is given to this Part in order that it may be filed as a separate compilation.

MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE
(Legislative Department)

New Delhi, the 8*th August,* 2019/*Shravana* 17, 1941 (*Saka*)

The following Act of Parliament received the assent of the President on the 8th August, 2019, and is hereby published for general information:—

THE NATIONAL MEDICAL COMMISSION ACT, 2019

No. 30 OF 2019

[8*th August*, 2019.]

An Act to provide for a medical education system that improves access to quality and affordable medical education, ensures availability of adequate and high quality medical professionals in all parts of the country; that promotes equitable and universal healthcare that encourages community health perspective and makes services of medical professionals accessible to all the citizens; that promotes national health goals; that encourages medical professionals to adopt latest medical research in their work and to contribute to research; that has an objective periodic and transparent assessment of medical institutions and facilitates maintenance of a medical register for India and enforces high ethical standards in all aspects of medical services; that is flexible to adapt to changing needs and has an effective grievance redressal mechanism and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

BE it enacted by Parliament in the Seventieth Year of the Republic of India as follows:—

CHAPTER I

PRELIMINARY

1. (*1*) This Act may be called the National Medical Commission Act, 2019. Short title, extent and commencement.

(2) It extends to the whole of India.

The National Medical Commission Act, 2019. Photo: Gazette of India, public domain.

The **NMC** is a **statutory body** under the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**. Statutory means a law created it. That law is the **National Medical Commission Act, 2019**.

The Act got the President's assent on **8 August 2019**. It came into force on **25 September 2020**. The Commission's head office is at **New Delhi**.

What is it meant to do?

The NMC's own site lists its aims. They include:

- Better access to quality and **affordable** medical education.
- Enough good medical professionals in every part of the country.
- Regular, **transparent** assessment of medical colleges.
- A **medical register** for India.
- High **ethical standards** and a way to handle grievances.

So it is the gatekeeper. It controls entry into medicine, checks the colleges and watches the doctors.

> **Quick check 1.** The National Medical Commission is a constitutional body. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Sources: nmc.org.in

2 Why the MCI Was Replaced

What did the NMC replace?

Before 2020, the **Medical Council of India (MCI)** ran medical regulation. It worked under the **Indian Medical Council Act, 1956**.

A **Board of Governors** had been set up in supersession of the MCI, under **section 3A** of that 1956 Act. When the NMC Act came into force, that Board stood **dissolved**.

What is the lesson for exams?

A long-standing body is not fixed forever. Parliament can replace it with a new law.

Remember two dates. The Act is **2019**. The NMC itself began on **25 September 2020**.

> **Quick check 2.** The NMC Act, 2019 dissolved the Medical Council of India's Board of Governors. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Sources: nmc.org.in

3 Who Sits on the NMC

How many members does it have?

Section 4 of the Act gives a total of **33 members**. They are:

- One **Chairperson**.
- Ten **ex-officio** members.
- **22** part-time members.

Ex-officio means the member sits because of another post. The presidents of the **four Autonomous Boards** are ex-officio members. So are the **Director General of Health Services** and the **Director General of the ICMR**.

Who is the Chairperson?

The Chairperson is a medical professional with a **postgraduate degree**. The Act asks for at least **20 years** in medical sciences. At least **10** of those years must be as a leader in medical education.

The **Central Government** appoints the Chairperson. A PIB release of September 2025 names **Dr Abhijat Chandrakant Sheth** as Chairman of the NMC.

How long is the term?

The Chairperson and most part-time members serve **up to four years**. They cannot get an extension or be re-appointed. They must leave office on reaching the age of **70**.

> **Quick check 3.** The NMC has 33 members, and the Chairperson may be re-appointed after four years. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Sources: nmc.org.in; pib.gov.in

4 The Four Boards

What are the Autonomous Boards?

Section 16 sets up four **Autonomous Boards** under the **overall supervision** of the Commission. Each handles one stage, so no single body is overloaded. Each has five members, including a **President**.

Board	Main job
Under-Graduate Medical Education Board	Sets standards and curriculum for **MBBS** courses

Board	Main job
Post-Graduate Medical Education Board	Sets standards for **postgraduate** training
Medical Assessment and Rating Board	Inspects and **rates** colleges; permits new colleges and seats
Ethics and Medical Registration Board	Keeps the **National Register**; handles ethics

Who allows a new medical college?

No one can open a new medical college, start a postgraduate course or add seats without prior permission. That permission comes from the **Medical Assessment and Rating Board**. It must approve or reject a scheme within **six months**.

Who keeps the register of doctors?

The **Ethics and Medical Registration Board** keeps the **National Register** of licensed doctors. The Register is a **public document**. It is placed on the internet for anyone to see.

Can a Board's decision be challenged?

Yes. A person unhappy with a Board's decision can **appeal to the Commission**. The appeal must come within **sixty days**.

The Commission holds appellate power over the Boards' decisions. The Boards are autonomous, yet they work under the overall supervision of the Commission. Each Board has a President, two whole-time Members and two part-time Members.

> **Quick check 4.** The Medical Assessment and Rating Board keeps the National Register of doctors. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Sources: nmc.org.in

5 Fees and Advice

How does the NMC keep medical fees in check?

Private medical colleges can charge very high fees. So the Act steps in. Under **section 10(1)(i)**, the NMC frames guidelines for fees in **50% of seats** in private medical institutions and deemed universities.

The rule aims to keep half the seats affordable. It tries to make merit, not money, decide who trains as a doctor.

What else does the Commission do?

Section 10 also gives the Commission these tasks:

- Lay down **policies and codes** on professional ethics.
- Make **regulations** for itself, the Boards and State Medical Councils.
- Hear **appeals** against decisions of the Boards.
- Plan for the country's **health workforce** and infrastructure.

Who advises it?

The **Medical Advisory Council** is an advisory body. The Commission's Chairperson heads it. Its members include every Commission member and one Vice-Chancellor of a health university from each State.

This is how States get a voice in the Commission's work.

> **Quick check 5.** The NMC frames fee guidelines for 50% of seats in private medical colleges. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Sources: nmc.org.in

6 NEET and the Exit Test

What does the Act say about entrance exams?

Section 14 creates one **National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET)**. It covers **undergraduate** and **postgraduate super-speciality** admission. The Commission conducts it in English and other languages.

What is the National Exit Test?

Section 15 describes a **National Exit Test (NExT)**. It is a **common final-year MBBS exam**. It would give the **licence to practise** and enrol the doctor in the register.

It would also be the basis for **postgraduate broad-speciality** admission. A person with a **foreign** medical degree would also have to pass it.

So one exam would replace several. That was the idea behind it.

> **Quick check 6.** Under the Act, the National Exit Test would also decide admission to postgraduate broad-speciality seats. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Sources: nmc.org.in

7 Exam Recall

What should you remember?

- **Law:** National Medical Commission Act, **2019**.
- **Start: 25 September 2020**.
- **Replaced:** the Medical Council of India's Board of Governors.
- **Members: 33**: one Chairperson, ten ex-officio, 22 part-time.
- **Boards:** four Autonomous Boards.
- **Fees:** guidelines for **50%** of private-college seats.
- **Ministry:** Health and Family Welfare.

Which traps come up?

The NMC is a statutory body, not a constitutional one. One board rates colleges. Another keeps the register.

> **Quick check 7.** The Ethics and Medical Registration Board inspects medical colleges. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Practice MCQs

1. Under which Act did the National Medical Commission (NMC) replace the Medical Council of India (MCI)?

A. National Medical Commission Act, 2019

B. Indian Medical Council Act, 1933

C. Indian Medical Council Act, 1956

D. Medical Education Reform Act, 2020

See answer ↓

2. When did the NMC Act, 2019 take effect, and which body did it dissolve?

A. 15 August 2019; the Indian Medical Association

B. 25 September 2020; the National Board of Examinations

C. 1 January 2020; the Medical Council of India

D. 25 September 2020; the Medical Council of India

See answer ↓

3. How many autonomous boards did the NMC Act create, under the Commission's overall supervision?

A. Six

B. Four

C. Three

D. Two

See answer ↓

4. Under Section 10(1)(i) of the NMC Act, what share of seats in private medical colleges must have fees on par with government colleges?

A. 27%

B. 50%

C. 10%

D. 15%

See answer ↓

5. Under the National Medical Commission Act, 2019, which Autonomous Board must give prior permission before a new medical college is started?

A. Medical Assessment and Rating Board

B. Ethics and Medical Registration Board

C. Post-Graduate Medical Education Board

D. Under-Graduate Medical Education Board

See answer ↓

6. Under the National Medical Commission Act, 2019, which examination is the basis for admission to postgraduate broad-speciality medical education?

A. National Exit Test (NExT)

B. Foreign Medical Graduate Examination

C. Common University Entrance Test (CUET)

D. National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET)

See answer ↓

Answer Key

1. **A.** The National Medical Commission Act, 2019 dissolved the MCI and created the NMC in its place. ↑ Q1
2. **D.** The Act took effect on 25 September 2020, dissolving the Medical Council of India and creating the NMC. ↑ Q2
3. **B.** The Act created four boards: Under-Graduate, Post-Graduate, Medical Assessment and Rating, and Ethics and Medical Registration. ↑ Q3
4. **B.** The NMC sets fee guidelines for 50% of seats in private medical colleges and deemed universities, matching government-college fees. ↑ Q4
5. **A.** The correct answer is **Medical Assessment and Rating Board**. No person may start a new medical college, begin a postgraduate course or add seats without its prior permission. The Under-Graduate and Post-Graduate Boards set standards. The Ethics and Medical Registration Board keeps the National Register. Memory hook: rating board gives the permit. ↑ Q5
6. **A.** The correct answer is the **National Exit Test (NExT)**. The Act makes it a common final-year examination that also grants the licence to practise. It also applies to anyone with a foreign medical qualification. NEET is the uniform entrance test for undergraduate and postgraduate super-speciality courses. Memory hook: exit test opens the PG door. ↑ Q6

Quick-check answers

1. **False.** A law created it, so it is statutory. ↑ 1
2. **True.** That Board stood dissolved when the Act came into force. ↑ 2
3. **False.** There is no extension or re-appointment. ↑ 3
4. **False.** The Ethics and Medical Registration Board keeps it. ↑ 4
5. **True.** Section 10(1)(i) says so. ↑ 5
6. **True.** Section 15 makes it the basis for that admission. ↑ 6
7. **False.** The Medical Assessment and Rating Board inspects them. ↑ 7

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