



Virtual Mode – Is It a Way for All Future Conferences?

On 6,7 and 8th of November, Karnataka Medico Legal Society (KAMLS) successfully conducted its 28th State Conference “KAMLSCON 2020” at Yenepoya Medical College, Mangaluru, South India on a virtual platform. Though there are many organizations conducting virtual conferences, it is first of its kind for KAMLS to have been conducted a virtual conference. This was done in a view to curb the spread of COVID-19 pandemic as per the government guidelines.

During the conference all the deliberations by eminent international and national speakers as well as the presentations from delegates were very well organized with utmost care in an available time frame. As it was virtual, no deliberations were overlapping, hence there was no division in the audience attending the sessions. Though there are many best practices for virtual conferences like using social media for advertising, web based live streaming, selection of worldwide speakers with available limited resources, easy recording of all the sessions, maintaining e attendance of every session, abiding by ‘Go Green’ campaign by digital documents, motivating junior faculty members to present their research especially who have stage fear; they have their own drawbacks in the form of technical glitches, adjusting time frame according to the international speakers, limited interaction between the speakers and delegates, maintaining the concentration throughout the program, loneliness of attending the conference sitting in a place, lack of excitement, number of distractions while attending the sessions, lack of face to face interactions, lack of social interaction and catching up with colleagues and ineffective sponsorships.

With all these limitations, the KAMLSCON 2020 was a successful event which prompted the members to think about future conferences in virtual mode. At the end it is accepted that virtual is virtual. It cannot replace the conventional physical mode of conference. Though it saves time and money for the delegates because of travel to the venue and restricted registration fee, but it lacks the aura of the conference wherein likeminded subject experts gather together to exchange ideas in a conducive environment. Junior faculty members get a chance to meet experts and learn from them by listening to their life time experiences over a cup of tea or a lunch plate.

So conventional physical conferences should continue to be conducted if the environment of favorable to have a feeling of fairness of learning new things, exchanging knowledge and expanding our world of wisdom.....!

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