

## **1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Medical education in Sri Lanka commenced in 1870 with the establishment of the Ceylon Medical College, which became the Faculty of Medicine in 1942 when the University of Ceylon was established. No postgraduate medical examinations were conducted by the University of Ceylon until 1952 when examinations for the degrees of MD and MOG commenced, followed by the degree of MS the next year.

At that time, there was no structured or organized postgraduate training. Postgraduate medical training was obtained in the United Kingdom and qualifications such as MRCP, FRCS, FFARCS, MRCOG, FRCR, MRCPATH, MRCPsych, FDSRCS etc awarded by the professional colleges in the UK were recognized for consultant appointments by the Ministry of Health and universities. In 1973, the Advisory Committee on Postgraduate Medical Education recommended to the Government that a supervised in-service training period of 3 years followed by an examination should replace training abroad. Accordingly, the Institute of Postgraduate Medicine (IPGM) was established in 1976 under provisions of the University of Ceylon Act No. 1 of 1972, and was attached to the University of Colombo. It was formally inaugurated on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 1976 by Dr. Halfdan Mahler, Director General of the WHO. Professor K.N. Seneviratne was appointed as its first Director.

From 1980 the government decided to stop the UK professional colleges from conducting foreign postgraduate medical examinations in Sri Lanka and to grant full recognition and preference to postgraduate medical degrees of the institute.

In order to achieve the objectives of the institute, it was re-established in 1979 under the provisions of the Universities Act No. 16 of 1978, and renamed the Postgraduate Institute of Medicine (PGIM). Dr. S.A. Cabraal was appointed as its first Director. Accordingly, PGIM Ordinance No: 1 of 1980 made under the provisions of the Universities Act referred to above came into force on the 10<sup>th</sup> of April, 1980. Boards of Study for various specialties were re-organized and courses of instruction and examinations were arranged for different specialties. Professor R.G. Panabokke was appointed Director in 1990 followed by Dr. J.B. Peiris 1995, Professor Lalitha Mendis in 2002, Professor Rezvi Sheriff in 2006, Professor Jayantha Jayawardana in 2012 and Professor H. Janaka de Silva in 2014. The post of Deputy Director was established in 2011, and this post has been held by Professor Jayantha Jayawardana, followed by Professor Prashantha Wijesinghe, Professor Chrishantha Abeysena and Professor Senaka Rajapakse. Amendments to the PGIM Ordinance No. 1 of 1980 took effect on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2014 and 23<sup>rd</sup> of February 2018. New By - Laws for the PGIM were enacted with effect from 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2016.