

MINUTES WITH Dr. SAURABH CHAWLA

“To help our readers understand the journey of a Doctor better, MINUTES is back with a very interesting dialogue.”

A skilled doctor and an incredible entrepreneur Dr. Saurabh Chawla, CEO of online consultation platform Docterz.com speak to Kirti Gautam , Editor, MEDILENS.



**Kirti Gautam, Final Year BDS,
Editor, MEDILENS**

1) How would you like to describe yourself?

I am a Doctor and an Entrepreneur, aiding doctors and their patients by the digitization of healthcare services through my start-up **DOCTERZ.COM**. I am a simple man trying to maintain a dynamic equilibrium of life.

2) What inspired you to want to be a doctor? Was there some kind of a pressure on you or were you more inclined towards the health sector?

In India, once a child enters the 10th standard he has to make a choice. If he is good in Math or Science he would be aspiring to be a doctor or an engineer. My parents believed that an individual should be happy with the career they pursue. My family speculated me to be a man of numbers and advised me to indulge in business. It was my choice to pursue medicine.

I wasn't pressured. It was the charm of the medical profession that made me want to be a doctor. The medical profession needs a lot of hard work,

dedication and patience. To be specific this profession is more about patience than hard work.

3) What's the one thing you are really good at and nobody could compete with you in?

I am good at solving problems. Give me a problem and I will give you a roadmap to be out of it.

4) Being a doctor and an entrepreneur what has been your strategy to excel at both?

Gaining knowledge and upgrading my skills has been my strategy. In medical school, I used to read a lot. The more somebody reads the more knowledge they gain, the broader is their perspective gets and that increases their chances of success.



Dr. Saurabh Chawla

As technology is advancing at an exponential rate, we are required to upgrade our skills. Even today if some new technology comes into healthcare I will be exploring all related resources. This will help me to gain in depth knowledge. Knowledge gives you access to any system and that comes by reading.

5) What keeps you motivated as an entrepreneur and doctor?

I compete with myself. I really don't support comparison. I have to make my today better than it was yesterday. The medical industry has many lacunae and I want to contribute to fill them as a doctor and entrepreneur. For that, I need to work. This keeps me going all way.

- 6) **There is an ancient proverb ‘Necessity is the mother of invention’. We would like to know how ‘telehealth’ got conceptualized.**

I was in a PHC (Primary Health Care). A patient came to me with a very serious skin condition back in 2016. Upon examination, it was found to be a non-treatable fungal lesion. Excessive usage of corticosteroids had deteriorated the condition. The quacks were responsible for this. Then I realized we need a platform that can provide consultation without any geographic barrier. The idea of helping someone is solely responsible for the advent of docterz.com.

- 7) **Where do you see Doctorz.com five years from now?**

In the next four to five years the scope for online consultation will rise exponentially. Docterz.com is aiming to have a network of 50,000 doctors providing online consultation across India. Docterz.com was intended for tele-consultation but now is into clinical management and medicine delivery as well. We are also planning to dive into investigations and diagnostics in the coming years.

- 8) **What is the one thing that is a big challenge in Tele-medicine?**

The ‘touch’ element is very crucial in doctor- patient interaction. Percussion is still a great challenge in Tele medicine.

- 9) **How will you define the present Healthcare system in terms of research, development, and investment?**

We are lagging behind developed economies due to 'comparatively low' investment in research and development in terms of infrastructure and facilities. Although, we aren't able to research as much but we are utilizing what we have researched very well. The doctors in India are better available than in western countries. In this aspect India is really doing great. We are able to serve our people better.

- 10) **Please comment on the public and private sector.**

The public and private sectors are doing very well in the Indian healthcare system. They have their individual roles and importance in our society. The public sector refers to the

institutions where Government of India and its constituents look after the health of public. The services of Public sector are easily accessible and affordable. If we talk about public sector, it is very organized and follows SOP very religiously. However if these SOP aren't followed then, the patients are troubled. Institutions such as AIIMS and PGI are very well equipped with latest technology. They are able to provide best healthcare facilities at a very affordable rate. The facilities and treatment they provide is surely unmatched.

11) You have been in the medical field for a quite long time. What is the change that you feel needs to be incorporated?

I have been in the medical field for at least 17 years which includes my graduation too. As per my experience, there is a necessity for organization in our field. There should be ways by which new advancement can be incorporated into practice easily. Sometimes we aren't able to provide healthcare facilities to our patients. Once a doctor is in practice he should make his availability hours fixed. This will smoothen his personal and professional life. Another way of

organizing is implementation of HR policies, insurance schemes and employment contract uniformly from nursing homes to hospitals. Every procedure should be followed religiously. Every SOP should be taken very seriously in hospitals and nursing homes.

12) How do you plan and spend your day on daily basis?

I have multiple ventures. So I decide my priority and plan my day accordingly. By 5, I wind up my work and spend time with my family.

13) Please comment on Doctor's journey.

We live in a society that is constantly becoming more and more competitive. Being in medicine is a challenging task these days. A lot of courage, patience and persistence is the key to success. Healthcare demands an incubation period of 10 to 15 years. If you are really interested, be mentally prepared that it will take you 15 years to become a fully-fledged Doctor and set up your practice. If you want to stay in medicine you need to stay passionate about your subjects. You should attend your internship on a regular

basis. This will help you understand your interests. Internship is just as important as preparation Post Graduate Examinations. There are many students who leave non-clinical branches for the sake of clinical domain. There is scope in every branch. The branch should be considered on the basis of interest and not financial aspects. Even hospital management and civil services are great options to pursue.

- 14) **Being a medico where do you think today's generation should spend time and energy?** Life is not a race

but a journey. If you drop a year to understand your interests it is absolutely fine. Having thoughts like I will get a good rank this year will make you anxious. Take it as a journey. You can achieve any milestone that you desire. The focus should be on getting things done. No amount of anxiety can help anyone. One should never chase money. Money will itself come to you if you're passionate about your to-do list. When you don't know what you want, focus on what is in your hands with great devotion and dedication.