

Indian Council of Medical Research

Indian Council of Medical Research	
Abbreviation	ICMR
Type	Professional Organization
Headquarters	New Delhi
Region served	India
Secretary & Director General	Dr. Vishwa Mohan Katoch
Website	www.icmr.nic.in ^[1]

The **Indian Council of Medical Research** (ICMR), New Delhi, the apex body in India for the formulation, coordination and promotion of biomedical research, is one of the oldest and largest medical research bodies in the world.^{[2][3]}

History

In 1911, the Government of India set up the Indian Research Fund Association (IRFA) with the specific objective of sponsoring and coordinating medical research in the country. After independence, several important changes were made in the organisation and the activities of the IRFA. It was redesignated the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) in 1949, with considerably expanded scope of functions. The ICMR is funded by the Government of India through the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

The Council's research priorities coincide with National health priorities such as control and management of communicable diseases, fertility control, maternal and child health, control of nutritional disorders, developing alternative strategies for health care delivery, containment within safety limits of environmental and occupational health problems; research on major non-communicable diseases like cancer, cardiovascular diseases, blindness, diabetes and other metabolic and haematological disorders; mental health research and drug research (including traditional remedies). These efforts are undertaken with a view to reduce the total burden of disease and to promote health and well-being of the population.

Governing body

The Governing Body of the Council is presided over by the Union Health Minister. It is assisted in scientific and technical matters by a Scientific Advisory Board comprising eminent experts in different biomedical disciplines. The Board, in its turn, is assisted by a series of Scientific Advisory Groups, Scientific Advisory Committees, Expert Groups, Task Forces, Steering Committees etc. which evaluate and monitor different research activities of the Council.

The Council promotes biomedical research in the country through intramural as well as extramural research. Over the decades, the base of extramural research and also its strategies have been expanded by the Council.

Intramural research is carried out currently through the Council's 30 Permanent Research Institutes/Centres which are mission-oriented national institutes located in different parts of India. The institutes pursue specific areas of research such as tuberculosis, leprosy, cholera and diarrhoeal diseases, viral diseases including AIDS, malaria, kala-azar, vector control, nutrition, food & drug toxicology, reproduction, immunohaematology, oncology, and medical statistics. Six Regional Medical Research Centres address regional health problems, and also aim to strengthen or generate research capabilities in different geographic areas of the country. It has also been involved in research related to rare diseases like Handigodu Syndrome.

Dr. Katoch is the present Director General of Indian Council of Medical Research.

Activities

Extramural research is promoted by ICMR by establishing Centres for Advanced Research in different research areas around existing expertise and infrastructure in selected departments of Medical Colleges, Universities and other non-ICMR Research Institutes. The ICMR also funds task force studies which emphasise a time-bound, goal-oriented approach with clearly defined targets, specific time frames, standardized and uniform methodologies, and often a multicentric structure. Open-ended research is conducted on the basis of applications for grants-in-aid received from scientists in non-ICMR Research Institutes, Medical colleges and Universities located in different parts of the country. Collaborative research projects with other institutes such as that between Institute of Pathology, Delhi and NCRM are also undertaken.^[4]

In addition to research activities, the ICMR encourages human resource development in biomedical research through Research Fellowships, Short-Term Visiting Fellowships, Short-Term Research Studentships, and various training programmes and workshops conducted by ICMR institutes and headquarters.

For retired medical scientists and teachers, the Council offers the position of Emeritus Scientist to enable them to continue or take up research on specific biomedical topics. The Council also awards prizes to Indian scientists, in recognition of significant contributions to biomedical research. At present, the Council offers 38 awards, of which 11 are meant exclusively for young scientists (below 40 years).

Evaluation of work

In the context of the changing public health scene, the balancing of research efforts between different competing fields, especially when resources are severely limited, is a typical problem encountered in the management of medical research, particularly in developing countries. Infectious diseases and excessive population growth have continued to constitute the major priorities to be addressed in medical research throughout the past several decades. In addition to tackling these issues, in recent years, research has been intensified progressively on emerging health problems such as Cardiovascular diseases, Metabolic disorders (including diabetes mellitus), Mental health problems, Neurological disorders, Blindness, Liver diseases, Hearing impairment, Cancer, Drug abuse, Accidents, Disabilities etc.. Research on Traditional Medicine/Herbal Remedies was revived with a disease-oriented approach. Attempts have been made to strengthen and streamline Medical Informatics and Communication to meet the growing demands and needs of the biomedical community. The Council is alert to new diseases and new dimensions of existing diseases, as exemplified by the rapid organization of a network of Surveillance Centres for AIDS in different states of India in 1986.

ICMR Centers

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad (NIN), • National Centre for Laboratory Animal Science, (NCLAS) Hyderabad • Food and Drug Toxicology Research Centre, (FDTRC) Hyderabad • National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune • National Animal Resource Facility for Biomedical Research. Hyderabad • National Institute of Malaria Research (NIMR), Delhi ^[5] • Rajendra Memorial Research Institute of Medical Sciences, Patna • National Institute for Research in Reproductive Health (NIRRH), Mumbai • National JALMA institute for Leprosy & Other Mycobacterial Diseases (NCJILOMD), Agra • National Institute of Occupational Health (NIOH), Ahmedabad • Tuberculosis Research Centre (TRC), Chennai • National Institute of Epidemiology (NIE), Chennai ^[7] • Desert Medicine Research Centre (DMRC), Jodhpur • Institute of Pathology (IOP), Delhi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Institute of Medical Statistics (NIMS), Delhi • National Institute of Cholera and Enteric Diseases (NICED), Kolkata • Centre for Research in Medical Entomology (CRME), Madurai • National Institute of Immunohaematology (NIIH), Mumbai • Enterovirus Research Centre (ERC), Mumbai • Genetic Research Centre, Mumbai • Institute of Cytology and Preventive Oncology (ICPO), Noida • Vector Control Research Centre (VCRC), Pondicherry • Microbial Containment Complex (MCC), Pune • National AIDS Research Institute (NARI), Pune ^[6]
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References

- [1] <http://www.icmr.nic.in/>
- [2] <http://www.thehindu.com/health/medicine-and-research/article2071344.ece>
- [3] <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/open-page/article2622214.ece>
- [4] "ICMR has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Nichi-In Centre for Regenerative Medicine - The Hindu News article" (<http://www.hindu.com/2007/12/03/stories/2007120359651100.htm>). .
- [5] National Institute of Malaria Research (NIMR) (<http://www.mrcindia.org/>)
- [6] ICMR Permanent Institutes and Centres ([http://icmr.nic.in/institute.htm#Permanent Institutes/Centres](http://icmr.nic.in/institute.htm#Permanent%20Institutes/Centres))
- [7] ICMR Permanent institutes and Centres ([http://icmr.nic.in/institute.htm#Permanent Institutes/Centres](http://icmr.nic.in/institute.htm#Permanent%20Institutes/Centres))

External links

- Indian Council of Medical Research, Official website (<http://icmr.nic.in/>)

Article Sources and Contributors

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