

Recommendations

1. Major Recommendations

Policy

- The HPC strongly recommends that ICMR should be equated with other sister organizations like CSIR-DSIR, ICAR-DARE, etc since the Department of Health Research (DHR) is now in place.

Strategic Research

- **Target for elimination of specific infectious diseases towards National Health Agenda:** HPC recommends that ICMR should direct and focus its research towards eradication of leishmaniasis, filariasis, paragonimiasis (lung fluke) and leprosy having already demonstrated the feasibility to achieve this goal.
- **Operational Research for managing health emergencies such as natural disasters and Epidemics:** HPC recommends that efforts may be accelerated for setting up of laboratories and field units across the country including remote areas to promptly and effectively respond to above emergencies.
- **Translational research towards affordable technologies:** HPC recommended that ICMR should further strengthen its programme to provide cost effective and affordable tools for societal benefit by taking to logical conclusions the leads emanating from its intramural and extramural researches.
- **Outreach programmes to strengthen Health Research:** HPC noted that ICMR has initiated commendable work in providing support for establishment of research infrastructure and creating research atmosphere in Medical colleges especially in periphery. This should be strengthened and further expanded specially with active involvement of its Institutes for this purpose.

2. Scientific and Technical

HPC recommended the following:

- Continuation of various core and spill-over activities subject to implementation of its recommendations for consolidation, modification and dropping of a number of activities as detailed (Table 21) .
- Initiation of new activities in emerging areas such as regenerative medicine, biomedical engineering, bio-security, bio-safety, tissue engineering, emerging environmental health hazards, gender and adolescent health, dental health, transplant immunology, allergy, geriatric health, impact of climate change on human health, etc.
- Creation of “Harvest Group” to identify leads from extramural research towards making products, processes and other deliverable for the Indian public health system was endorsed.

- ICMR institutes should strengthen linkages with local institutions and make special efforts to develop collaborative research with medical colleges/research institutes/Universities in the region.
- Strengthening of various programmes towards creation of more short and long term fellowships for young scientists from SAARC and other developing countries with specific focus on South Asian and African countries.
- Public health linkages for surveillance and drug resistance with state governments, WHO may be strengthened.
- ICMR should further strengthen research on urban health, cognitive science, dementia, dental health, Policy & Health Economics, ageing, behavioral science, gender (women health) issues with specific focus on psychosocial aspects, environmental health issues (like those consequent to global warming, urbanisation etc.). Research on social inclusion and health systems should also be geared up.
- Strengthening the existing Clinical Trials Registry of India with focus on documenting and monitoring system of clinical trials.
- Further acceleration in the efforts to get its technologies/ leads independently validated for commercialization or introduction into public health programmes of the country.
- Intellectual Property Right (IPR) Unit at ICMR Hqrs may be further strengthened.
- Periodicity of publication of *Indian Journal of Medical Research* (IJMR) may be increased to fortnightly in view of the highest impact factor of IJMR among all biomedical journals in India. Outsourcing to commercial publishers could be explored as has been fruitfully done by several scientific organizations.
- Strategies to improve the use of mass-media may also be explored for better projection of ICMR's scientific activities to enhance public awareness.
- The need to focus on studies on disease dynamics and effective interventions to be undertaken in the area of vector borne disease.
- Strengthening the BSL-IV lab of the NIV, Pune, a national asset, through adequate staff and infrastructure development to make it fully functional.
- Strengthening of ICMR Hqrs in terms of physical infrastructure, human resource and modern practices to meet the ever increasing challenges posted by persistent and emerging diseases.
- Comprehensive document on the Achievements of ICMR may be brought out speedily for better awareness of public and policy makers.
- HPC noted that DHR has established a mechanism of intersectoral coordination and recommends the strengthening of mechanisms to avoid duplication of funding of research projects submitted to sister agencies.

3. Financial Recommendations

The HPC recommends that the Council needs to put in measures to improve its financial management and accounting systems:-

- Migrate towards electronic transfers in payment as per latest instructions of Ministry of Finance in order to improve transparency and efficiency in payments.

- Develop a robust system of e-governance by moving towards an ERP platform in accounting, administrative and technical wings, initially at Hqrs. and then Institutes so as to harness modern methods of technology to bring out improved governance.
- Develop a financial module for the online review system of extramural projects developed by C-DAC so as to monitor the expenditure incurred in extramural projects and to monitor its proper utilization.
- Develop adequate guidelines for staffing, transport and equipment in extramural projects.
- Develop adequate standards of internal controls and accounting to monitor the proper utilization of funds and by improving the internal audit system. It was pointed out that staffing of internal audit wing was inadequate. It is recommended that the internal audit wing is strengthened. As an interim measure, ICMR may explore avenues to hire professional Chartered Accounting firms to assist in internal auditing and advise in accounting.
- The Bhopal Memorial Research & Referral Hospital has been handed over to ICMR in January, 2012. As this hospital's mandate is to cater to the health needs of gas victims it must be ensured that the hospital must be provided with adequate funding to ensure drug supply and to keep equipments in good condition. While providing health care at tertiary level is not a function of ICMR, however, the opportunity should be utilized to use this facility to promote biomedical research related to NCDs, chemical injuries.