

Chapter 2

About ICMR

2.0 Preamble

Medical and health care technology has undergone rapid transformation in the past two decades. A series of technological inventions revolutionized the preventive, diagnostic, rehabilitative, therapeutic (life-supporting or life sustaining devices) capabilities of medical sciences. Many individuals, who might have been labeled as "disabled" or even "poor longevity", move and work amongst us with a prosthetic hip or heart valve or a battery, operated pacemaker. This has resulted from the welcome synthesis of modern medicine and modern technology. If the mid-twentieth century belonged to antibiotics, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the glory of end-twentieth century was cornered by vaccines and bio-medical facilities.

Biomedical technology as well as medical and health sciences in India had their moments in this revolution. Several biomedical technologies are being imported and successfully deployed in diagnostic and therapeutic services in the country. Similarly, various academic and research organizations as well as private entrepreneurs are taking active interest in the development of medical facilities. Successes in this field, if they could be sustained, are impressive.

All those countries which have medical policies and regulatory processes or mechanisms in place have already moved a step further and are attempting to harmonize the medical facilities. It is obvious, therefore, that India also needs a policy and a regulatory mechanism in order to promote medical facilities and to safe guard the users.

It is, therefore, necessary to review a fresh, the regulatory mechanisms in other countries (to the extent they are accessible) and to conceive a framework for

regulation of various medical facilities in our country by Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), New Delhi was established in the year 1911. It is the apex body in India for the formulation, coordination and promotion of biomedical research and is one of the oldest medical research bodies in the world.

The Council's research priorities coincide with the 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).

At present ICMR has 21 Research Laboratories which are mission-oriented and are located in different parts of India and address themselves to research on specific areas such as tuberculosis, leprosy, cholera and diarrhoeal diseases, viral diseases including AIDS, malaria, kala-azar, vector control, nutrition, food & drug toxicology, reproduction, immunohaematology, oncology, medical statistics. Besides these laboratories ICMR also has 6 Regional Medical Research Centers which address regional health problems, and also aim to strengthen or generate research capabilities in different geographic areas of the country.

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 has been 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.

Over the past nine decades, scientists of ICMR have been carrying out high quality research to achieve the objectives. Any new information/data generated in the laboratory used to be immediately published for its widest dissemination and application for public good.

Of late, scientists of ICMR are becoming increasingly conscious of the need and importance of protecting such new knowledge generated through appropriate IPR systems before publication. Such awareness has largely been triggered by changes like liberalization and globalization of economy and the encouraging participation of industry in the increasingly technology-driven medical research, and health care. In addition, the realization that in the present context, public-private partnership could well be an important means of achieving the goal of providing affordable health care to the needy has reinforced the thinking that such joint ventures could help health care products reach the needy public more efficiently and quickly. For such partnerships to be viable and successful, it is essential that the Council has appropriate policies in place for technology transfer, licensing and providing R&D services within the country as well as abroad.

To provide a valuable opportunity to gauge ICMR progress and for stepping up the Council's activities the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has approved the budget, a total of Rs. 204 cores during 2004-05. According to ICMR, nearly 30 % of it was spent on extramural research programmes of the Council; 28% on capital works; 20% on consumables; and 10% on equipments. Pay and allowances (including pensions) formed 17% of the expenditure.

2.1 New initiatives taken by ICMR

1. To make scientists aware of the need and responsibility to protect new knowledge generated through IP rights, ownership of biological and other materials and data generated using ICMR funds and facilities.
2. To develop procedures at ICMR institutions to capture, assess and protect new intellectual property generated.
3. To provide ICMR scientists information on demand relating to patents in their areas of interest by maintaining appropriate national and international databases.
4. To provide appropriate technological, professional and legal expertise and services to assist ICMR scientists to file patents in India and abroad.
5. To encourage and provide all support to universities and other institutions for protecting and commercializing new knowledge generated with ICMR support.
6. To develop a licensing policy that ensures the maximal public health benefit and a fair return on investment from ICMR research.
7. To develop and implement a royalty policy at ICMR institutions that encourages innovative scientists and technology generators through a system of royalty sharing, and reward system.
8. To serve in an advisory capacity to the Indian government on IP related issues concerning public health.
9. To forge appropriate strategic alliances with national and international S&T agencies and industry to market its new inventions and develop professional knowledge networks for ICMR's technology management professionals.

Steps to achieve these initiatives are as follows:

1. Appropriate internal and external systems to be set up at various ICMR Institutes/Centers for the identification of new IP before publication.
2. Innovation-driven research to be encouraged through a IPR-friendly climate. Scientists to be made aware of need for prompt IP protection before public disclosure, through personal contacts, regular training workshops, seminars, etc.

3. To help promote a sound IPR system, some basic and essential practices like record keeping, appropriate recording of data, maintenance of laboratory handbooks etc. be encouraged at various ICMR Institutes.
4. The IPR Unit would be engaged in regular monitoring of the Indian and global patent scenario to keep track of innovations made the world over.
5. The advice of experts to be sought for furthering the initiatives.

2.2 ICMR Policy

To meet its objectives of improving public health through research, the ICMR is pursuing an active policy of ensuring the most rapid and efficient development of new medical technologies developed by its scientists through seeking IP rights in India and abroad. The Council, as an agency of the Indian government, ensures that its basic mission is not compromised by its efforts to commercialize new technologies. Further, where research and development is not necessary to realize the technology's primary use and future therapeutic, diagnostic or preventive uses, IP protection is not sought and instead those technologies are commercialized through non-patent licensing.

The Intellectual Property Rights Unit in the ICMR Headquarters Office helps scientists in their efforts to identify, protect and commercially exploit all new knowledge generated with ICMR support. The IPR Unit provides technical, legal and other support needed for IP protection, technology transfer, licensing and commercialization issues.

2.3 ICMR Institutional Network

The figure 2.1 and table 2.1 shows the Location / Address of the 21 Permanent Institutes and 6 Regional Medical Research Centres. These Institutions are located in various cities all over the India.

Figure 2.1
ICMR Institutional Network



Table 2.1**Location of ICMR Permanent Institute/ Centres**

ICMR Permanent Institute		
Name of the ICMR Permanent Institute	Address of the Institute	City
National JALMA Institute for Leprosy & Other Mycobacterial Diseases	P.B.No.101,Taj Ganj Agra 282001	Agra
National Institute of Occupational Health	Meghani Nagar Ahmedabad 380016	Ahmedabad
National Institute of Epidemiology	1, Sathyamurthi Road Chetput, Chennai 600031	Chennai
Tuberculosis Research Centre	Mayor V.R.Ramanathan Road (Spurtank Road) Chetput Chennai 600031	Chennai
National Institute of Malaria Research	22, Sham Nath Marg Delhi 110054	Delhi
Food and Drug Toxicology Research Centre	National Institute of Nutrition Jamai Osmania Hyderabad 500007	Hyderabad
National Centre for Laboratory Animal Science	National Institute of Nutrition Jamai Osmania Hyderabad 500007	Hyderabad
National Institute of Nutrition	Jamai Osmania Hyderabad 500007	Hyderabad
National Institute of Cholera and Enteric Diseases	P-33, CIT Road Scheme XM P.O. Box 177 Beliaghata Kolkata 700010	Kolkata
Centre for Research in Medical Entomology	4, Sarojini Street Chinna Chokkikulam Post Box No. 11 Madurai 625002	Madurai
Enterovirus Research Centre	Haffkine Institute Campus Acharya Donde Marg Parel, Mumbai 400012	Mumbai
National Institute for Research in Reproductive Health	Jehangir Merwanji Street Parel, Mumbai 400012	Mumbai
ICMR Genetic Research Centre	B.J.Wadia Hospital for Children Acharya Donde Marg Parel, Mumbai 400012	Mumbai
Institute of Immunohaematology	13th Floor, New Multistoreyed Building K.E.M. Hospital Campus Parel, Mumbai 400012	Mumbai

ICMR Permanent Institute		
Name of the ICMR Permanent Institute	Address of the Institute	City
Institute for Research in Medical Statistics	ICMR Head Quarters Campus Ansari Nagar New Delhi 110029	New Delhi
Institute of Pathology	Safdarjang Hospital Campus Post Box No. 4909 New Delhi 110029	New Delhi
Institute of Cytology and Preventive Oncology	I-7, Sector – 39 NOIDA 201301	NOIDA
Rajendra Memorial Research Institute of Medical Sciences	Agam kuan Patna 800007	Patna
Vector Control Research Centre	Medical Complex Indira Nagar Pondicherry 605006	Pondicherry
National AIDS Research Institute	Plot No. 73, Block G, P.B.No.1895 Bhosari Industrial Estate Pune 411026	Pune
National Institute of Virology	20-A, Dr.Ambedkar Road P.B. No.11 Pune 411001	Pune

ICMR Regional Medical Research Centres		
Name of the ICMR Centre	Address of the Institute	City
Regional Medical Research Centre	Nandankanan Road P.O. Chandrasekharpur Bhubaneswar 751016	Bhubaneswar
Regional Medical Research Centre	N.E.Region, East- Chowkidinghee Post Box No. 105 Dibrugarh 786001	Dibrugarh
Regional Medical Research Centre	Centre for Tribals Medical College Campus Nagpur Road, P.O.Garha Jabalpur 482003	Jabalpur
Desert Medicine Research Centre	P.O.Box No. 122 New Pali Road Jodhpur 342005	Jodhpur
Regional Medical Research Centre	Post Bag No.13 Port Blair 744101	Port Blair
Regional Medical Research Centre	National Highway No.4 Belgaum 590010	Belgaum