

Editor Speak

Dear Readers,

NOTHING VENTURED, NOTHING GAINED

Research is one of the top priority components in the National Education Policy, 2020. The policy envisions establishing the National Research Foundation to catalyse quality academic research in all the disciplines and enable a culture of research to permeate through the universities. It is expected to fund research in all disciplines across the universities.

India has been spending merely 0.69% of its GDP on research and innovations which is lagging far behind when we compare the figure with the other developed and developing countries. Adequate funding in research is essential to make the education need based and futuristic.

The Department of Medical Research under Ministry of Health & Family Welfare recently notified the draft National Health Research Policy- 2021, seeking public opinion. The policy calls to produce documents with evidence-based medicine, which helps in better understanding of the subject and conservation of resources and resource sharing. Though AYUSH Ministry looks after six health systems, the draft does not mention the concepts and approaches of any of these systems or their strength in health care.

Department of Health Research, Department of Science and Technology, Department of Bio-Technology, Department of Atomic Energy, Council of Scientific & Industrial Research, Indian Council of Medical Research, National Institutes, Autonomous Research Institutes, University Grant Commission, Universities and other Academic Institutions and variety of private organisations, including the Pharmaceutical Industry support health research. Under AYUSH, there are separate research councils for each of the component systems.

Research in Homoeopathy is in its nascent stage. Public funding is only source for research initiatives in Homeopathy. The apex research body, Central Council for Research in Homeopathy (CCRH), continue to be poorly funded. There are about 383 drug manufacturing units, 3 lakh practitioners and about 260 teaching institutions. Being one of the safest and sought health care option, investment in fundamental and applied research is essential to sustain its development. This being the fact, there should be efforts to create a corpus fund for encouraging independent research. The professional bodies may take up this urgently. Also the CCRH may prevail on other research bodies engaged in fundamental research to initiate investigation on the Homeopathic concepts and principles to make it contemporary on a collaborative basis. What we need is to create a research culture in our teaching institutions through Research Governance by formation of Institutional Ethics Committee, Institutional Research Committee, etc.

Creation of research man power is essential to innovate the system. Training PG and PhD scholars in Homeopathy and instituting scholarships to the scholars undertaking research in institute of higher learning will help this to some extent. The National Commission for Homeopathy may direct the Homeopathy colleges conducting PG and PhD programme to establish a separate Department of Medical Research with trained manpower from human genomics, biophysics, molecular biology, quantum physics etc. This Department may be linked with the centres of fundamental studies under CCRH and collaborate with the institute of higher leanings. The Ministry of AYUSH may pro-

vide reasonable budgetary support to CCRH as well the Departments of Medical Research of teaching institutes.

Good clinical research methods lead to good clinical outcome. Homeopathy has got both core and supportive principles. Validation of core principles comes through fundamental research. Any clinical outcome not supported on contemporary scientific paradigm shall be perceived to be unscientific. To overcome this the core principles of Homeopathy, need to be validated. The real success of research lies in the quality publication. There is very limited number of Indexed publications in Homeopathy. Indian Journal for Research in Homoeopathy published by CCRH and Journal of Homeopathy published by Thiemeare the only two exclusively homoeopathic journals which are indexed in Scopus. Even though Homoeopathy has more than 100 journals published, only the above two journals are Indexed. The need of the hour is a greater number of Indexed publications in Homoeopathy by improving their publication standards.

Health care being a dynamic system, involving multiple socio-economic and geo-political variables, face challenges every time. Public is concerned with the increasing cost of treatment. Homeopathy is not only safe and economical, but could effectively treat may diseases for which there is less or not much options in other systems. These are the major strengths in the system. This should be nurtured and refined to keep the position of Homeopathy relevant to the time. Dedicated research manpower, reasonable resources and policies to encourage need-based research are the requirements in Homeopathy. At the same time, the research outcome should be rigorously scrutinised and published in standard indexed journals to get adequate acceptance. This will equip Homeopathy as a strong and relevant health system now and all the time to come.

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