



## CODE OF ETHICS FOR RESEARCH

### Introduction

Research Cell is actively encouraged at our institution with the aim of fostering and instilling a strong research culture among both students and faculty members. To ensure the ethical conduct of research, we adhere to a set of guidelines established in alignment with the Indian Council for Medical Research. These guidelines serve as the foundation for our research projects, ensuring they conform to the highest ethical, legal, and professional standards. This code of ethics extends to all faculty and students within our institution, as well as visiting researchers and students from other institutions who utilize our research facilities.

### Ethical Research Principles

The principles outlined below serve as guidelines for researchers at the institute to adhere to during the research process. Failure to comply with these principles will be viewed as a violation and will result in strict disciplinary action, as determined by the committee appointed to oversee adherence to these guidelines.

#### Honesty

- Ensure integrity in all scientific communications.
- Accurately report data, results, methods, procedures, and publication status.
- Avoid fabricating, falsifying, or misrepresenting data.
- Do not engage in deception towards colleagues, research sponsors, or the public.

#### Objectivity

- Make conscious efforts to eliminate bias in experimental design, data analysis, data interpretation, peer review, personnel decisions, grant writing, expert testimony, and other research areas where objectivity is necessary or expected.
- Avoid or minimize bias or self-deception.
- Disclose personal or financial interests that may affect research.

#### Integrity

- Uphold your commitments and agreements with integrity.
- Demonstrate sincerity in your actions.
- Maintain consistency in both thought and action.
- Steer clear of careless errors and negligence.
- Thoroughly evaluate your own work and that of your peers.
- Maintain accurate records of research activities, including data collection, research design, and communication with agencies or journals.

#### Openness & Transparency:

- Collaborate by sharing data, results, ideas, tools, and resources.
- Embrace criticism and remain receptive to new ideas.

- Transparently disclose methods, materials, assumptions, analyses, and other essential information necessary for evaluating your research.

#### **Accountability**

- You are solely accountable for your actions; no one else bears responsibility.
- Acknowledge your role in the research process and take full responsibility.
- Be ready to provide a detailed account, explaining your actions and justifying your decisions made during a research project.

#### **Intellectual Property**

- Respect patents, copyrights, and intellectual property rights.
- Obtain permission before using unpublished data, methods, or results.
- Provide appropriate recognition for all contributions made to the research.
- Absolutely refrain from plagiarism in any form.

#### **Social Responsibility**

Work towards advancing societal welfare and mitigating social risks through research, public education, and advocacy efforts.

#### **Non-Discrimination**

- Prevent discrimination against colleagues or students based on factors such as sex, race, ethnicity, or other criteria unrelated to scientific competence and integrity.

#### **Safeguarding Human Subjects**

- When conducting research involving human subjects, aim to minimize potential harms and risks while maximizing benefits.
- Respect the dignity, privacy, and autonomy of individuals.
- Exercise extra care when dealing with vulnerable populations.
- Endeavor to ensure the fair distribution of both the advantages and responsibilities arising from the research.

#### **Ensuring Safety Protocols**

Researchers are obligated to adhere to codes and regulations pertinent to their field. They must treat research subjects, whether human, animal, cultural, biological, environmental, or physical, with respect and consideration, following legal and ethical guidelines. Researchers are responsible for the well-being of volunteers, communities, collaborators, and other individuals involved in their projects, prioritizing their health and safety.

Research protocols should be mindful of differences in age, gender, culture, religion, ethnic background, and social status. Researchers must identify and mitigate potential harms and risks associated with their research endeavors.

#### **Guidelines for Publication**

Authors bear complete responsibility for the publication's content, unless stated otherwise. Agreement on authorship sequence should reflect significant contributions to research design, data collection, analysis, and result interpretation. Early discussions among researchers regarding authorship are essential.

#### **During the research project's initial phase, it is crucial to determine:**

- The individuals to be credited as authors in potential research outputs
- The sequence in which authors will be listed

- The specific responsibilities assigned to each author

Authors must guarantee the timely, open, transparent, and accurate accessibility of their work to colleagues, unless otherwise agreed, while maintaining honesty in their communication with the general public and various media outlets. They should duly acknowledge the significant contributions of collaborators, assistants, funding agencies, and other individuals who have impacted the reported research. Full disclosure of conflicts of interest and financial or other forms of support for the research.

Authors have the option to issue corrections or retract their work if necessary, with clearly stated reasons. Both authors and publishers should regard negative results as equally valid as positive findings for publication and dissemination. Researchers must uphold these standards, whether publishing in subscription journals, open-access journals, or any other alternative publication formats.

### **Addressing Research Misconduct and Ethical Violations**

Research misconduct refers to the act of fabricating, falsifying, or plagiarizing during the proposal, execution, or review of research, as well as in the reporting of research findings.

- Fabrication involves inventing outcomes and presenting them as genuine.
- Falsification entails tampering with research materials, equipment, or procedures, or altering, excluding, or concealing data or results without valid reasons.
- Plagiarism is the act of using someone else's work and concepts without acknowledging the original source.

In addition to direct breaches of the good research practices outlined in this Code of Conduct, there are additional transgressions that can compromise the integrity of the research process or the reputation of researchers. Examples of these other unacceptable practices encompass, but are not limited to

- Changing the agreed-upon authorship criteria established at the study's outset.
- Suppressing, altering, or disproportionately emphasizing research findings unfairly.
- Allowing funders or sponsors to compromise research independence or manipulate results to introduce bias.
- Impeding or delaying the progress of fellow researchers' work.

### **Possible types of Ethical violations:**

- **Conflict of Interest:** Full disclosure is mandatory for any action that could lead to a conflict of interest. If objectivity and effectiveness cannot be assured, the activity must be either avoided or terminated.
- **Authorship Disputes:** Resolution of authorship issues is primarily the responsibility of the involved parties.
- **Duplicate Submission and Fragmentation:** Duplicate submission is unprofessional and unacceptable, utilizing the valuable time of journal editors, reviewers, and staff, thus depleting essential resources.
- **Fabrication or Misrepresentation of Data:** Fabrication or misrepresentation of data is a grave violation of professional conduct, carrying severe ethical and legal consequences.

### **Prevention of Plagiarism**

Engaging in plagiarism is unethical in scientific practice and is never permissible. It is imperative to appropriately credit the work of others incorporated into research. Additionally, every author bears the responsibility to promptly issue retractions or corrections for errors in published works.

### **Managing Violations and Misconduct**

If any infractions aligning with the aforementioned criteria are observed, it is the responsibility of the head of the institute and the Research Cell to initiate appropriate actions. The Research Cell will assess matters concerning misconduct and/or violations. The head of the institute and the Research Cell retain the authority to make decisions regarding these violations and to implement requisite disciplinary measures if any violations and/or misconduct are identified. Transparency must be upheld while addressing allegations of misconduct during the research process.

  
PRINCIPAL

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