



REPORT OF FERCICON 2022

Name of the event: 9th NATIONAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF FORUM FOR ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEES OF INDIA (FERCI) : FERCICON 2022

Dates: 10, 11, 12 Nov, 2022

Organising Institution: International Unit in Bioethics [WMA Cooperation Centre]

P.S.medical College, Bhaikaka University

Karamsad, Gujarat 388325

Theme of the conference: *“Quality assurance and improvement in Biomedical and Health research : The way forward”*

Mode of Conference: Online

Registration: Total number: 115 from different places of India

Summary of Preconference Workshop (10.11.2022)

At the outset, it was started with prayer of the institution and inaugural speech by Dr. Himanshu Pandya, Dean, P.S.Medical College, Karamsad followed by sharing videos of FERCICON and Bhaikaka University. The scientific program started at 9.30 am.

As it was a national level conference, the preconference workshop, was designed to sensitize Institutional Ethics Committee [IEC] members, Research Scholars and Investigators about key areas like roles and responsibilities of different stake holders, improving quality of research activities in view of emerging issues in biomedical and health research in India. The resource persons were from different areas eg, clinician, academician, investigator, trainer etc. No session was cancelled. At the end of every session, 10 minutes were allotted for posting questions or comments. At the end there was an open session for all the registered participants for discussion in presence of all the resource persons. Majority of the questions and queries were addressed and answered. The whole program ended on scheduled time with vote of thanks and feedback of the participants.

Summary of Conference Day 1 & Day2 (11, 12 Nov 2022)

The conference was started on 11 Nov, 2022 at 9.00am with inaugural program comprising of prayer of the institution, videos of FERCICON and Bhaikaka University, welcome address by Dr. Utpala Kharod, Provost, Bhaikaka University, Presidential address by Dr. Vasantha Muthuswami, President of FERCICON and vote of thanks.

The scientific program started at 9.40 am with keynote address of Dr. Juntra Karbwang-Laothavorn M.D., Ph.D. from Mahidol University, Thailand. In context to Global quality assurance and improvement, she emphasized on importance of accreditation of ethics committees.

Scientific sessions comprised of discussion of various topics on status of device trials, stem cell research, artificial intelligence, vulnerable population, authorship issues. The participants had opportunity to discuss their queries on each topics with respective speakers. There was another important session Global Clinical Trials involving Healthy Volunteers, taken by Dr. Francois Bompert from DNDi, Switzerland. A lot of issues and queries on healthy volunteers involved in clinical trials and their scenario in different countries including India have been discussed.

At the end, there was paper presentation session, 12 papers were presented by Investigators from different regions of India. Out of them three papers were selected for awards as Best paper and runners up.

Day 2 (12.11.2022) of the conference started at 9 am with paper and rapporteur's report. Following this the scientific sessions on decentralization of clinical trials and their issues were conducted by reputed speakers from pharmaceutical companies. Following this, sessions on ethical issues in research related to AYUSH were conducted by speakers from Bureau of India Standards, New Delhi, Advisory Board of AYUSH, Ministry of Health, AYUSH Pharmaceuticals etc. At the end the valedictory speech was given by Dr. Saumitra Dutta, consultant Psychiatrist, on management of emotional stress of research governance .

Valedictory session was conducted by Dr. Barna Ganguly, Organising Secretary and graced by Dr. H Pandya , Dean of P.S.Medical College, Karamsad, Dr Nandini Kumar, Retired Deputy Director General of ICMR. Dr. Ganguly announced the winners of paper presentations, proposal of next conference and offered vote of thanks. The timely feedbacks from the participants are very constructive and encouraging.

Concluding remarks: Finally the conference as a whole addressed the theme thoroughly with all the scientific sessions and presentations, along with the conduct of the sessions.