

**Department of Health Research**

**Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**

**New Delhi**



**“DHR Policy on Publications”**

**March 2024**

## **DHR Policy on Research Publications**

Scientific journals play an important role in knowledge dissemination. Publishing study findings in relevant, peer reviewed, indexed academic journal provides a much wider visibility to the work done. Publishing an article, therefore, has a significant bearing on the responsibilities of the authors.

### **1. Scope:**

This policy outlines the procedures for research publications by the scientific and technical staff, both regular and contractual, at the Department of Health Research (DHR), its autonomous body Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and including post graduate, PhD programs, post-doctoral programs and fellowship programs at ICMR institutes and its attached office, HTAIn. This policy is also applicable for publications resulting from research conducted through the extramural funds of DHR/ICMR. This policy should be read in conjunction with the ICMR policy on [Research integrity and publication ethics](#).

### **2. Good publication practice:**

2.1. All researchers publishing manuscripts from intramural/extramural grants of DHR/ICMR shall adhere to good publication practices outlined in annex 1.

### **3. Prior approvals:**

3.1. Researchers from ICMR institutes shall obtain prior approval from the Publication Committees of the respective ICMR institutes before submitting the manuscript for publication. In absence of such committees, approval of competent authority (Secretary/Director-General/Joint Secretary/Director/Head of Divisions at ICMR Headquarters as applicable) is required.

3.2. Researchers receiving extramural funds from DHR/ICMR must adhere to their institute's procedures for manuscript submission. Additionally, they are required to share the final version of the manuscript at least two weeks prior to the planned submission with DHR/ICMR.

3.3. Manuscripts from taskforce/mission mode projects and national health research programs require approval from the Secretary DHR and DG ICMR before submission.

#### **4. Funder acknowledgement**

4.1. All research publication research supported by or funded by DHR/ICMR funding should acknowledge the funding source, specifying the grant number.

#### **5. Data sharing:**

5.1. DHR/ICMR may ask the research project scientist for sharing the data in the data repository once it is developed and link is uploaded in the website.

6. **Conference Paper Policies:** An approval for DHR/ICMR institutes/Extramural projects shall be sought from the competent authority of DHR/ICMR (Secretary/Director-General/Joint Secretary/Director/Head of Divisions as applicable) prior to the submission of abstract to any notified conference for intramural projects. It should present new knowledge or experience that has not been published previously. It should not be commercial in nature and will not promote specific companies, products or services. A proper review of abstract requires that it contain adequate information on which a judgement can be made.

#### **7. Sharing results with media:**

7.1. DHR/ICMR acknowledges the importance of disseminating research findings through media. However, it is imperative to share accurate information.

7.2. Researchers from DHR/ICMR and its institutes should share their findings with media only after the manuscript has undergone a peer-review process and is accepted for publication. ICMR institutes should adhere to the ICMR Media policy for the dissemination of research findings with media.

7.3. All researchers must abide by the embargo laid by the journal publishing house before dissemination.

7.4. Researchers funded by ICMR extramural grants should share the findings of ICMR funded research with media only after the manuscript is published in a peer-reviewed journal. They may follow their respective institute's media policy. They shall share the media briefing document with ICMR atleast two weeks prior to media briefing.

#### **8. Copyright:**

**8.1.** All research articles originating from DHR/ICMR funds shall be published under creative commons attribution licence (CC-BY) Copyright

**9. Article processing charges:**

9.1. Publications originating from DHR, ICMR scientists and students including post graduate, PhD programs, post-doctoral programs and fellowship programs at ICMR institutes accepted for publication as original article in high impact factor journals are eligible for financial support to cover Article Processing Charges for open access journals, if no other project funds or publication charges are available. The final decision shall rest with DG ICMR.

9.2. Publications originating from extramural projects may be allowed to use the funds available in the relevant budget line for publication in open access journals.

9.3. Publications originating from projects funded by other Scientific Departments (DST/DBT/CSIR etc) /Institutes may be funded by the relevant budget line for publication in open access journals.

**10. After Publication:**

10.1. All articles from intramural/extramural funding from DHR/ICMR should be uploaded on the DHR/ICMR website, with a link to the article. ICMR will include the list of these publications in its annual report for wider publicity and transparency.

**11. AI-generated Content in Publications**

The proliferation and increasing sophistication of AI-assisted language tools (such as Chat GPT) have opened new avenues for research; but the ethics and the best practices for their use are still evolving. These tools may generate useful information and content but are also prone to errors and inconsistencies. AI-generated content can be used for publications under the following conditions only:

- AI language tools may not be listed as an author. The AI tool cannot sign publishing agreements or transfers of copyright.
- Any AI-generated content that is used within a manuscript shall be thoroughly vetted, fact checked and disclosed.
- If AI language tools are used within a manuscript, their use and requirement shall be clearly explained within the methodology or acknowledgement section of the paper and should meet all ethical requirements. The authors of the manuscript shall be held responsible

for any errors, inconsistencies, incorrect references, plagiarism or misleading content included from the AI tool.

**12. Researchers not complying to the publication policy:**

12.1. Researchers not complying with the publication policy of DHR/ICMR may face appropriate sanctions, including non-acceptance of future grant applications and suspension of funding for ongoing projects.

**13. Disputes redressal:**

13.1. Any dispute regarding non-adherence to the publication policy may be referred to the Secretary, DHR, or Director General, ICMR.

**The following table summarized the key points of DHR/ICMR publication policy:**

SNo	Criteria	DHR/ICMR Scientists	Non-DHR/ICMR-Extramural Projects/Investigators in non-ICMR/DHR Institutes
1	Policy to be followed for seeking Permission to publish*	Y (also for pre-print)	No
3	Approval of Competent Authorities of the DHR/ICMR institutes	Y	No
4	Sharing the publication with DHR/ICMR through mail, two weeks prior to publishing.	Y	Y
5	Approval required for Conference Abstract/Oral Presentation**	Y	No
6	Sharing of Conference abstracts accepted through mail with DHR/ICMR	Y	Y
7	AI generated contents	Y	Y
8	Data sharing***	Y	Y

9	Sharing results in media**** through mail with DHR/ICMR (Atleast two weeks prior to media briefing)	Only after publication of manuscript/ acceptance of report	Only after publication of peer reviewed manuscript and or acceptance of report to ICMR
10	Article processing charges	Y (Refer to the specific policy)	No, unless provisioned in the sanctioned budget

**Policy Review-**This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure that it remains relevant and effective in the face of changing technologies and emerging concerns. Changes to the policy will be communicated in a timely and transparent manner.

#### **References:**

1. <http://www.wame.org/about/policy-statements>
2. <https://publicationethics.org/>
3. <http://icmje.org/recommendations/browse/>
4. <http://www.equator-network.org/>
5. <http://www.ijmr.org.in/contributors.asp>
6. National ethical guidelines for biomedical and health research involving human participants, ICMR, New Delhi.
7. <https://www.elsevier.com/authors/policies-and-guidelines>
8. ICMR policy on research integrity and publication ethics 2019

#### **Disclaimer:**

This document is the first version of “DHR Policy on Publications” prepared on December 2023. The document might be updated in future, as and when the rules and regulation of the organization changes.

## **Annexure-I**

### **Essential Principles prior to publications-**

#### **1. Ethics:**

- i. Authors shall ensure highest professional and ethical standards for biomedical and health research at all stages since inception.
- ii. They are expected to follow the National ethical guidelines for biomedical and health research involving human and animal participants, ICMR, New Delhi.
- iii. The expectations include honesty in the conduct of research, obtaining relevant approvals, efficiency, judicious use of resources, ensuring accountability, transparency, declaration and management of Conflict of interest, justice, reliable data collection, and integrity in analysis, reporting and publication

**2. Approval Process:** Corresponding Author shall ensure obtaining necessary approvals like Institutional Ethics Committees, Technical/Scientific Committees, HMSC clearance (for foreign funded studies and collaborations), funding agency etc as applicable are obtained for the research projects.

**3.** They shall obtain approval of the appropriate Competent Authorities of DHR/ICMR as applicable prior to publication for all intramural and extramural projects.

**4. General Guidelines and Reporting Standards:** Authors shall follow the guidelines and reporting standards provided as “instruction to authors” in reputed journal they want to publish.

**5. International guidelines:** Authors shall strictly follow guidelines on editorial independence produced by [the World Association of Medical Editors](#)<sup>1</sup> and the code on good publication practice formulated by the [Committee on Publication Ethics](#)<sup>2</sup>, the recommendations of the [International Committee of Medical Journal Editors](#)<sup>3</sup>, and checklists and advice for good research reporting available at the [EQUATOR network](#)<sup>4</sup>, Office of Research Integrity (ORI) on publication ethics, research integrity and authorship and ensure substantial intellectual role of all authors in publication or presentation. The articles should not be submitted to any predatory journal for publication. The articles should be published only in peer reviewed, indexed Journal.

## **Good Publication Practice**

**a. Responsibility and Duties of authors:**

- i Authors shall follow National Ethical Guidelines.
- ii Authors shall ensure that all required approvals like HMSC, CDSCO etc are obtained prior to undertaking research.
- iii Ghost authorship /gifted authorship are not allowed and contributions of all authors must be clearly identified, collaborations if any, should be declared at the time of project initiation, with the name and details of all collaborators stated. Any change in the co-authors and collaborators may be informed during publications with required justifications.
- iv Article should clearly indicate the source of funding/project no./grant number wherever applicable.
- v Article should duly acknowledge if study has been funded/ sponsored/ commissioned/ conducted by Department of Health Research or ICMR falling which the paper should not be communicated.

**b. Authorship of the Paper:** Authorship shall be limited to those who have made a significant contribution to the conception, design, development, execution, or interpretation of the reported study and drafting and reviewing manuscripts(IJCME Guidelines). All those who have made significant contributions should be listed as co-authors. Where there are others who have participated in certain substantive aspects of the research project, they shall be acknowledged or listed as contributors or co-authors. The corresponding author shall ensure that all appropriate co-authors and no inappropriate co-authors are included on the paper, and that all co-authors have seen and approved the final version of the paper and have agreed to its submission for publication.

**c. Reporting standards:** Authors of reports of original research shall present an accurate account of the work performed as well as an objective discussion of its significance. Underlying data should be represented accurately in the paper with no plagiarism and no image manipulation. A paper shall contain sufficient detail and references to permit others to replicate the work. Fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements constitute unethical behaviour and are unacceptable. Authors are advised to go through the international standards available at <https://www.equator-network.org/reporting-guidelines/> or <https://www.nature.com/nature-portfolio/editorial-policies>

- d. **Originality and Plagiarism:** The authors shall ensure that they have written entirely original works, and if the authors have used the work and/or words of others that this has been appropriately cited or quoted (the plagiarism check software to run through the proposal before submission).The issue of plagiarism shall be regulated as per the RIPE policy ICMR 2019.
- e. **Multiple, Redundant or Concurrent Publication and abstracts for conference:** An author shall not publish manuscripts describing essentially the same research in more than one journal or primary publication. Submitting the same manuscript to more than one journal concurrently constitutes unethical publishing behaviour and is unacceptable.This also applies to abstracts submitted for conferences unless it is an invited talk or an oration. **It is often noted that** abstracts based on already published papers are submitted as abstracts for open papers/ award papers. This is not to be done unless explicitly allowed by the conference organisers. Similarly same abstracts should not be submitted to more than one conference once accepted at one place.
- f. **Acknowledgement of Sources:** Proper acknowledgment of the work of others must always be given. Authors shall cite publications that have been influential in determining the nature of the reported work.
- g. **Authorship Changes:** Authors are advised to ensure the correct author group, the Corresponding Author, and the order of authors at submission. Changes of authorship by adding or deleting authors, and/or changes in Corresponding Author, and/or changes in the sequence of authors shall not be accepted after acceptance of a manuscript.
- h. **Disclosure and Conflicts of Interest:** All authors shall disclose in their manuscript any financial or other substantive conflict of interest that might be construed to influence the results or interpretation of their manuscript. All sources of financial/funding support for the project shall be disclosed.
- i. **Fundamental errors in published works:** When an author discovers a significant error or inaccuracy in his/her own published work, it is the author's obligation to promptly notify the journal editor or publisher and cooperate with the editor to retract or correct the paper.
- j. **Peer Reviewed Journals articles publication Policies-**Authors are encouraged to publish their articles in peer reviewed journals. Peer review is the system used to assess the quality of a manuscript before it is published. Independent researchers in the relevant research area assess submitted manuscripts for originality, validity and significance to help editors to

determine whether the manuscript should be published in their journal. Research shall undergo a peer review in a time bound manner following fairness, honesty and confidentiality by competent reviewers.