INSTITUTIONAL CODE OF ETHICS

Introduction

Every profession that contracts with human rights and freedom ultimately develops a professional code of ethics to direct the responsible behavior of its members. Code of ethics can be defined as the moral boundaries within which professional services may be ethically delivered. The concept of dental ethics includes ethics in dental practice as well in research. Ethics in practice includes duties and obligations of the dentist towards his patients, professional colleagues and to the society whereas ethics in research include the code of conduct that should be followed while conducting a research, analysing the data and publication of the report. The college instructs its staff and students to stand by the highest standards of integrity in their conduct of academic research.

Code of ethics

Research conducted at our institution is purely adherent to the principles of veracity, accountability and professionalism. Regarding the code of ethics, IGIDS ethics committee has adopted the core principles put forward by Dental Council of India (DCI), Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), World Medical Association International Code of Medical Ethics, The Nuremberg Code (1947) and Helsinki Declaration (1964).

This code applies to all researches conducted by our faculty, students, interns, visiting researchers of the institute and other individuals who conduct research within or on behalf of the institution.

1. Purpose of Code of Ethics

The prime purpose of development of code of ethics is to enable the researcher related to our institution to keep professional standards in research, guided by ethical and legal policies.

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The researchers are independently accountable to guarantee that their work is steered in accordance with the institutional values and policies as well as the terms and conditions of service or study.

2) Responsibilities of Ethics committee

2.1 From the submitted proposals, identify and promote novel research activities with social values

2.2 Analyse the risk-benefit ratio involved in the study and approve only those studies where benefits overweigh the risks

2.3 Cross-check with the assistance of Institutional Review Committee, the quality and internal validity of the study including feasibility, sample size estimation, sampling and methodology followed

2.4 Assess the ethical concerns of the conduct of the study counting the matters related to informed consent. Careful assessment of the ethical issues related to reporting the results (eg: falsification, fabrication, plagiarism) should also be taken care of. The authenticity of the report should be checked using plagiarism soft wares. In case of alleged research misconduct, an enquiry committee (2-3 members with one external) should be appointed to enquire the situation and disciplinary action should be taken against the culprit.

Plagiarism Check Softwares used by the institution includes

1. Queten (https://www.quetext.com/)
2. Duplichecker (https://www.duolichecker.com/)
3. Edubirdie (https://edubirdie.com/free-plagiarism-checker)

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4. Grammarly (https://www.grammarly.com/plagiarism-checker)

2.5 Ensure that the investigator has informed the participants about their right to withdraw at any point of time, research benefits and risks and maintenance of confidentiality

2.6 Give respect to the enrolled participants

2.7 Attend to the complaints related to research ethics and publication ethics

2.8 Record keeping: Committee has to maintain the details of clinical trial for minimum 5 years after its completion

2.9 Periodic trainings and continued education should be provided for the researchers for a better appraisal of research integrity.

3) Terms and conditions of Ethics Committee

3.1 Generally ethics committee meets once in a year. However, meetings will be scheduled as and when the research proposals are received.

3.2 Once a study proposal is submitted, considering the report of Research Committee as well as ethical and legal aspects of the study, the Ethics Committee decides whether approval should be given or not.

3.3 The approved proposals will carry a validity time of 2 years.

3.4 The investigators have to take re-approval after the end of term if necessary.

3.5 The investigators are generally requested to submit the progress report after 1 year to IEC for review.

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3.6 Any change, modification or deviation in the protocol, or any adverse event should be informed to ethics committee. Any protocol modification or amendment must receive IEC approval.

3.7 The premature cessation of study or the appearance of any adverse events occurring during the process of trials should be informed to the committee at the earliest.

3.8 Investigator once receives the approval, should conduct the study as per the recommended Good Clinical Practice guidelines.

3.9 Regarding decision making, to attain consensus of the members, extensive discussions are entertained. In case of failure to reach consensus, decision will be taken considering the opinion/voting of the majority present.

4) Proposal submission

4.1 The research proposals can be submitted to the ethics committee through iecigids@gmail.com

4.2 At the time of submission, following documents should be uploaded

- Research protocol
- Patient information sheet
- Informed consent sheet (in both English and local language)
- Copy of questionnaire and tools
- Curriculum vitae of principal investigator
- Statutory permissions if needed
- Official authentication by the investigator, guide, Head of the institution and/or Head of the Department

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- Documents ensuring compensation to the participant in case if required

5) Review policies

5.1 All the reviewers should take seriously their commitment to the research community by participating in refereeing, reviewing and evaluation.

5.2 Primary and secondary reviews should be done based on the review policies of the institution in a justifiable and time bound manner.

5.3 Reviewer board or ethics committee members with a conflict of interest should withdraw from involvement in decisions on approval, publication, funding and reward.

5.4 Under no circumstance, copying of ideas, data or interpretations presented are allowed to be publicised to others. Strict confidentiality should be maintained unless there is prior approval for disclosure.

5.5 Due respect should be given to the authors and their intellectual properties.

6) Responsibilities of the researcher

6.1 Conduct of research

6.1.1 Investigator follow the principles of non-maleficence, doing good to the participants, truthfulness and justice throughout the research.

6.1.2 Research should be carried out by qualified, proficient persons with adequate training and experience in data collection, analysis and interpretation.

6.1.3 The health research undertaken should follow ICMR National Ethical guidelines

6.1.4 Depending upon the type of study, prior to its initiation, approvals must be obtained from Institutional Research/ Scientific Committee (lRc), lnstitutional Human Ethics committee (lHEc), central Drug standard control organization (CDSCO) and Animal

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ethics committee. In case of clinical trials, registration with Clinical Trial Registry-India (CTRt) is obligatory.

6.1.5 Only quality and fruitful research works where benefits outweigh risks should be undertaken

6.1.6 At every step of the study from the very beginning, confidentiality should be maintained

6.1.7 Researchers, guides and EC must declare any Conflict of Interest (COI) if present.

6.1.8 Biasness in experimental design, data interpretation, peer review, grant writing and other aspects of research should be avoided.

6.2 Report writing, submission and publication

6.2.1 Researchers should follow the guidelines put forward by International committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) on publication

6.2.2 Authenticity of the work should be ensured by the researcher prior to submission

6.2.3 Research misconducts in any form- falsification, fabrication or plagiarism should never be encouraged. Redundant publications and salami slicing should be avoided.

6.2.4 Authorship should be awarded only to those deserving candidates who have substantially contributed to the research. The practice of adopting ghost/guest/gift author should not be encouraged.

6.2.5 Finished research works should be published at the earliest. Extra care must be exercised to avoid publishing in predatory journals.

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