

Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Objectives, Functions

April 13, 2026 • vajiramandravi.com



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INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) is India's apex body for the formulation, coordination, and promotion of biomedical research. It plays a crucial role in improving public health through scientific research, innovation, and evidence-based policy support.

About Indian Council of Medical Research

The Indian Council of Medical Research was established in **1911** as the *Indian Research Fund Association (IRFA)* and was later renamed in **1949**. It functions under the **Department of Health Research**, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.

ICMR is responsible for conducting, coordinating, and funding medical research across the country. It focuses on addressing major health challenges such as infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases, nutrition, reproductive health, and emerging health threats.

Objectives of ICMR

ICMR works with a clear vision to improve the health standards of the Indian population. Its major objectives include:

- Conducting advanced biomedical and health research
- Developing strategies to prevent and control diseases
- Supporting research in emerging health issues
- Promoting innovation in diagnostics, vaccines, and drugs
- Providing scientific evidence for policy-making

Indian Council of Medical Research Functions

The Indian Council of Medical Research performs a wide range of functions to improve public health and advance medical science in India. It focuses on research, disease control, policy support, and innovation to address national health challenges.

- Conducts biomedical research on major diseases like tuberculosis, cancer, malaria, and viral infections
- Develops vaccines, drugs, and diagnostic tools for prevention and treatment of diseases
- Coordinates and funds research activities across medical colleges, universities, and institutes
- Provides scientific data and evidence to support government health policies and programs
- Plays a key role in controlling epidemics such as COVID-19 through testing, guidelines, and research
- Promotes innovation in healthcare technologies and affordable medical solutions
- Organizes training programs, workshops, and fellowships for researchers and healthcare professionals
- Collaborates with international organizations like **WHO** for global health research initiatives
- Conducts clinical trials and population-based health studies across India
- Works on improving nutrition, maternal health, and child health outcomes
- Establishes and manages a network of national research institutes and laboratories
- Monitors emerging health threats and provides early warning and response strategies

Major Institutes Under ICMR

The Indian Council of Medical Research manages a wide network of specialized institutes across India that focus on different areas of biomedical and public health research. These institutes play a key role in disease control, healthcare innovation, and policy support.

- **National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune:** Focuses on research related to viruses and viral diseases such as dengue, influenza, and COVID-19.
- **National Institute for Research in Tuberculosis (NIRT), Chennai:** Specializes in research, prevention, and treatment strategies for tuberculosis.
- **National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), Hyderabad:** Works on nutrition research, dietary guidelines, and public health nutrition programs.
- **National Institute of Epidemiology (NIE), Chennai:** Conducts studies on disease patterns, outbreaks, and public health surveillance.
- **National Institute of Malaria Research (NIMR), New Delhi:** Focuses on malaria control, prevention, and vector research.

- **National Institute of Cholera and Enteric Diseases (NICED), Kolkata:** Deals with research on diarrheal diseases, cholera, and gut infections.
- **National Institute for Research in Reproductive and Child Health (NIRRCH), Mumbai:** Works on maternal health, child health, and reproductive biology.
- **National Institute of Cancer Prevention and Research (NICPR), Noida:** Focuses on cancer prevention, screening, and early detection.
- **Vector Control Research Centre (VCRC), Puducherry:** Specializes in controlling vector-borne diseases like dengue and filaria.
- **Regional Medical Research Centres (RMRCs):** Located in different parts of India, these centers address region-specific health issues and diseases.

Role of ICMR in Public Health

The Indian Council of Medical Research plays a vital role in strengthening India's public health system by providing scientific research, data, and policy support.

- Leads research and response during health emergencies like **COVID-19**, including testing strategies and treatment guidelines
- Provides scientific evidence for national health policies and programs
- Conducts large-scale health surveys to understand disease patterns and risk factors
- Supports prevention and control of infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, malaria, and HIV/**AIDS**
- Promotes research on non-communicable diseases like **cancer**, diabetes, and cardiovascular disorders
- Develops and standardizes diagnostic methods for accurate disease detection
- Plays a key role in vaccine research, development, and implementation strategies
- Improves maternal and child health through targeted research and interventions
- Works on nutrition and public health awareness to reduce malnutrition
- Monitors emerging and re-emerging diseases and provides early warning systems
- Collaborates with global organizations like WHO for international public health initiatives

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/indian-council-of-medical-research-icmr/>

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