ANNOOR DENTAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL
Affiliated to Mahatma Gandhi University & Kerala University of Health Sciences
Recognised by Dental Council of India and Govt of India)
Muvattupuzha-686673, Ernakulam Dist, Kerala, India
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INSTITUTIONAL CODE OF ETHICS FOR RESEARCH

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Institutional Code of Ethics for Research/ Research Policy

Research and scientific knowledge has an impact on the economic and societal development. Science and innovation is initiated and promoted at the institution and forms the mission of Annoor Dental College & Research Center. Research is the foundation of knowledge, promotes innovative ambience among faculties and students. The Research Center aims to do impart quality research and share the benefits of the research for the betterment of the society.

The quality and credibility of research is dependent on the integrity of the researchers who have a significant social responsibility to abide by the standards prescribed by the profession and by the institution.

The Code of Ethics for Institutional Research is developed to set the ethical principles and standards that will guide the work of institutional researchers. All research must follow appropriate ethical, legal and professional frameworks. The Code-of Ethics for Research Practice have been composed at par with the principles laid out in relevant policies, guidelines and codes of conduct.

Responsible Conduct of Research involves planning and conducting research, reviewing and reporting research, responsible authorship and publication of the research work. The research teams are expected to maintain highest standards to uphold the fundamental values of research.

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1. PURPOSE:

To ensure highest professional and ethical standards for research at all stages from its commencement, maintaining honesty and accuracy in conduct of research, judicious use of resources, ensuring accountability, transparency, declaration and management of Conflict of Interest, reliable data acquisition, handling, integrity in analysis, reporting, publication and translation for the benefit of society.

The policy is also intended to provide procedures to manage allegations of research misconduct to be processed fairly, confidentially and rapidly.

All members of the Institution are individually responsible to ensure their work is conducted in accordance with the institutional values and policies that form the part of the terms and conditions of the project. Disregard to this policy may lead to failure of assessed work, suspension of research projects, and/or funding from research sponsors and consent to publish.

2. SCOPE:

This policy applies to all the faculty, students, interns and visiting researchers of the Institution, who engages in research activities within or on behalf of the institution. It provides a guideline to overcome/eliminate any sort of misconduct which may happen at any stage and improve the quality of research for better outcomes.

3. RESPONSIBILITY:

All stakeholders involved in the conduct, review or reporting of research (institution, researchers, Guides, scientific review committee and ethics committee) must ensure research integrity and quality thereby upholding the trust of research participants and meaningful translation of research findings for benefit of the community while ensuring astute use of resources.

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4. **RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH (RCR):**

4.1. All biomedical and health research must follow ICMR National Ethical Guidelines, other guidelines and maintain research integrity in the conduct of research while ensuring safety of research participants.

4.2. All researchers should obtain approval from Institutional Research/ Scientific Committee (IRC), Institutional Human Ethics Committee (IHEC), Central Drug Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) and Animal ethics committee before initiating any research as per the norms. Registration with Clinical Trial Registry-India (CTRI) is mandatory for clinical trials.

4.3. Research should be undertaken by qualified, competent persons, having relevant experience / training to collect reliable data, undertake accurate analysis, interpretation and publication.

4.4. Researchers should undertake only meaningful and quality research, be accountable to outcomes and take needful steps to protect participants from risks, respecting the autonomy of participants

4.5. Researchers, guides and EC must declare COI, if any. Conflict of Interest (COI) both academic and financial may have serious implications and threaten quality of research and its outcomes.

4.6. All raw data should be securely stored by the investigator. Confidentiality should be maintained all levels of research. The research records should be maintained for 3 years in case of biomedical and health research and 5 years for clinical trials as per regulatory requirements.

4.7. Investigations are carried out with due process and in fairness to all parties. Transparency and uniformity should be maintained.

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4.8. Researchers are also required to submit continuing review/ annual report and final report to ethics committee for review.

4.9. Mentors should devote sufficient time to guide and ensure that their trainees conduct research honestly and should hold the responsibility to undertake proper conduct of research.

4.10. For collaborative research there may be requirement for having appropriate memorandums of understanding (MoU) and material transfer agreements (MTA) in place.

5. **REPORTING AND PUBLICATION:**

5.1. Completed research irrespective of results must be published and shared on public databases, institute websites and other available relevant platforms.

5.2. Any form Plagiarism/ self-plagiarism or research misconduct (fabrication, falsification), misrepresenting other peoples work as one's own etc will not be accepted. Researchers must ensure authenticity of research results before publishing or disseminating information out of the Institution.

5.3. Any manuscript must be checked for plagiarism using the tool available as an open source and the report of the validated manuscript should be produced before submission.

5.4. Researchers should follow guidelines of International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) on publication ethics.

5.5. Contributions of all authors should be clearly identified/justified may be declared at the time of project initiation. Authorship should be duly given to all those who have substantially and scientifically contributed to the research and may include permanent as well as contractual/ temporary staff. Ghost authorship and gifted authorship are not allowed.

5.6. The articles should not be submitted to any predatory journal for publication.

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6. **REPORTING AND REVIEW OF RESEARCH MISCONDUCT AND ALLEGATIONS:**

It is of crucial importance that researchers master the knowledge, methodologies and ethical practices associated with the field. Failing to practice good research practices violates professional responsibilities, damages the research culture and undermines the credibility of research.

6.1. The allegations regarding research misconduct can be reported directly to IHEC or the Research Committee Chairman with proper evidence and justification. Complainant can provide description of misconduct along with supporting documents. If misconduct has happened, the level of misconduct and level of plagiarism will be determined.

6.2. In case of suspected research misconduct or allegation, a 2-3 member enquiry committee (one external) will be appointed to evaluate misconduct and to suggest the further course of action, including punitive/ disciplinary action will be levied against persons for whom an allegation of misconduct is upheld. The enquiry should be time bound and completed within a period of 3 months from date of receiving the complaint. The enquiry committee would take final decision through broad consensus or majority vote.

6.3. The investigation should be kept confidential to safeguard the rights of concerned parties. Every effort should be made to safeguard interests of the complainant and respondent. It would suggest needful action based on seriousness of research misconduct such as issue warning, suspend research, and suggest penalty or other action.

6.4. If misconduct has not happened, complaint will be closed.

7. TRAINING:

Needful trainings/workshops should be held periodically for newly recruited/appointed scientific/ research/technical staff as an orientation and induction practice to create awareness

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towards research integrity. Continued education and training is also necessary to keep researchers apprised of contemporary issues related to research integrity and publication ethics.

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