



# CLINICAL EPIDEMIOLOGY CHRONICLE

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## IndiaCLEN governing body meeting held at Chennai



The annual governing body meeting of India Clinical Epidemiology Network (IndiaCLEN) was held on 15th October 2016, at Green Meadows Resort, Chennai. The meeting was attended by Dr KR John (President), Dr G Ravi Varman (Secretary), Dr P Sivaprakasham (Treasurer), apart from other governing body members like Dr Sanjay Mehandale (Director of National Institute of Epidemiology, Chennai), Dr Sasikala (Director of CERTC, Thiruvananthapuram), Dr Philip Mathew (Secretary of Pushpagiri CEU, Thiruvalla) and Dr Melvin George (Member of SRM CEU, Chennai). The organisational aspects were taken care of by Mr Vinod Rao, Manager of IndiaCLEN Office at Chennai.

The governing body meeting discussed many issues in detail. The need for writing up more research proposals and collaboration between constituent Clinical Epidemiology Units were considered, and it was decided to inform this need to all members of IndiaCLEN. Lack of communication within the network was found to be a major impediment to the smooth functioning of the organisation

and the governing body decided to use the potential of social media in this regard. Also, it was decided to restart the quarterly newsletter and send it to all the constituent CEUs. Increasing the membership of the organisation was considered as a vital aspect to the future of IndiaCLEN, and it was decided to soften the membership criteria so that anybody with serious interest in health research can become a member. The governing body also understood the need to include the newer medical colleges under the umbrella of IndiaCLEN and delegated the responsibilities to two members of the body. The meeting also decided to formulate an IndiaCLEN academic calendar, which will engage all the members and will be open to participants from outside the organisation. To begin with, it was decided to have four such sessions in the next one calendar year, which will be on topics relevant to health research in India.

### PRESIDENT'S DESK



I am happy to see the official quarterly newsletter of IndiaCLEN again. This is a remarkable achievement, as the newsletter can serve as an effective channel of communication between the networking Clinical Epidemiology Units and other agencies. It will also improve the general visibility of the network, among those engaged in meaningful health research.

It's high time that IndiaCLEN shed its tag of exclusivity and open up to admit all interested participants. There should be a strong effort to include more medical colleges into the network by starting Clinical Epidemiology Units and enrolling new members. Also, we should be looking at independent public health and clinical researchers, to bolster our ranks.

There should be serious efforts to improve the number of research proposals being submitted through IndiaCLEN. An increase in the number of proposals will show that we are an active organisation with an extensive scientific depth. Also, the chances of funding will improve if the proposals are made on a collaborative basis by including more constituent CEUs in the proposal.

It's high time that there is a generational shift in the leadership of research organisations. For that, the next generation needs to be trained adequately in handling research projects and in the art of networking. I am happy to see that a number of young faces are taking an active part in the affairs of IndiaCLEN. If this trend continues, I see a bright future for the organisation.

**Dr KR John**  
President, IndiaCLEN



## New Clinical Epidemiology Unit at Saveetha Medical College, Chennai



A Clinical Epidemiology Unit (CEU) has been established at Saveetha Medical College, Chennai, under the able guidance of Dr Sivaprakasham (Treasurer of IndiaCLEN). The inaugural function was on 22nd July 2016, and was attended by dignitaries like Dr

Saveetha Rajan, Director of Saveetha Medical College, Dr Gunasagaran, Dean of Saveetha Medical College and Dr KR John, President of IndiaCLEN. Dr KR John delivered a lecture on "Epidemiology and Role of IndiaCLEN" at the inaugural function. The ceremony was attended

faculty and students from various institutions of Saveetha University. The Clinical Epidemiology Unit of Saveetha University is mandated to provide expert assistance to researchers and conduct regular training programmes for skills up gradation.

## Workshop on Statistical Tests of Significance held at Pushpagiri CEU



research papers. Basic concepts like these form the bed-rock of future research projects, as the researchers need a thorough understanding of methodologies in order to plan and implement projects. The workshop was led by Dr Arun Kumar, Consultant Biostatistician at Bioquest Solutions Ltd, Bangalore. Other sessions were taken by Dr Rajeev Aravindakshan, Professor of Community Medicine and Dr Philip Mathew, Secretary of Clinical Epidemiology Unit. The workshop was also accredited by Travancore Cochin Medical Council with two CME credit hours.

A one day workshop on 'Statistical tests of significance' was organized by the Pushpagiri Clinical Epidemiology Unit on 31st August 2016. The workshop was aimed at improving the awareness about the statistical principles behind significance testing, and basic concepts of confidence intervals, hypothesis

A one day workshop on 'Statistical tests of significance' was organized by the Pushpagiri Clinical Epidemiology Unit on 31st August 2016. The workshop was aimed at improving the awareness about the statistical principles behind significance testing, and basic concepts of confidence intervals, hypothesis testing and p values. One of the main goals of the programme was to make the participants self-sufficient in understanding and interpreting

Any news items or details of programmes/events can be send to The Secretary, Clinical Epidemiology Unit, Pushpagiri Medical College Hospital Campus, Thiruvalla, Kerala, India-689101  
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## Updates on Academic Programmes run by IndiaCLEN and its affiliates

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The Clinical Epidemiology Unit of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi runs a Part Time Fellowship in Clinical Research Methodology and Evidence Based

Medicine. This is a 1 year programme designed for the faculty members of the medical college, and equips the participants to undertake research projects on their own. The course, which

has been running successful over the past few years, has been designed and implemented by Dr Kameshwar Prasad, Director of the AIIMS CEU.



Clinical Epidemiology Resource and Training Centre (CERTC) of Government Medical College, Thiruvananthapuram, runs the M.Phil. (Clinical Epidemiology) course which is affiliated to the Kerala

University of Health Sciences, Thrissur. The course is high in demand among the faculty of various medical colleges in south India, and has trained scores of candidates. In 2015-16, four students

successfully completed the programme. The CERTC is planning to convert the course into a 1 year full time programme.





IndiaCLEN is an organisation which has a legacy in the field of health research in the country. It was able to provide a platform for experts from various fields to come together and plan path breaking research studies. Clinicians, Basic scientists, Statisticians, Sociologists and Epidemiologists were able to work together for a common goal, much before the concept of interdisciplinary research came into vogue. But living

on achievements from the past can be detrimental to the growth of any organisation, and it's time for IndiaCLEN to look forwards.

Communication forms the backbone of any research network. There should be channels of communication open between the members of the network and between partner institutions. The senior faculty and mature CEUs should be able to guide the juniors and fledgling units. The power of social networking tools like Facebook and Whatsapp can be used in this regard, but nothing can substitute the power of a printed medium. That's precisely the reason why this newsletter has been restarted.

The newsletter will be published every three months, and will carry news and updates on the activities of IndiaCLEN

and programmes by the constituent CEUs. It will also carry news on research projects and open funding opportunities. We hope to reach all members of IndiaCLEN, through the medium of this newsletter. The Clinical Epidemiology Unit of Pushpagiri Institute of Medical Sciences and Research Centre, Thiruvalla, Kerala, will be publishing this newsletter from its own internal revenues.

I hope that the newsletter will be catalyst in reopening channels of communication between various Clinical Epidemiology Units in the country.

**Dr Philip Mathew**

Secretary of Pushpagiri CEU

(Editor, Clinical Epidemiology Chronicle)

## IndiaCLEN annual meet held at SRM Medical College, Chennai



The annual meeting of IndiaCLEN was held on March 11th and 12 2016 at SRM Medical College Chennai. The meeting was organised by the Clinical Epidemiology Unit of SRM Medical College. The dignitaries for the inaugural function included Dr K Sridhar (Pro-Vice Chancellor of SRM University), Dr A Sundaram (Dean of SRM Medical College), Dr Rajamohan Pillai (President of IndiaCLEN) and

Dr NK Arora (President of INCLIN trust). "Clinical epidemiology: An interdisciplinary approach for Public Health practice and grand challenges" was the main theme of the workshop. The two day meet focussed on issues affecting areas of biomedical and health research in the country. The event also had two workshops for interested participants- one on Cochrane systematic reviews and another on

Clinical economics. The annual meet and the workshops provided a platform for researchers to come together and share their ideas.

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