

IndiaCLEN Marches Towards Regionalization

IndiaCLEN leads the march towards regionalization in its various research and teaching activities. The IndiaCLEN Infectious Disease Initiative, on its third year of operation, has upgraded the microbiology laboratories of 6 participating CEUs. The Department of Microbiology of the Christian Medical College and Hospital in Vellore is the reference laboratory.

IndiaCLEN has completed a number of nationwide program evaluations. Dr. Narendra Arora has coordinated the evaluation of the Pulse Polio Program (PPP) and the Family Health Awareness Week Program (FHAWP). PPP is a health program initiated by the government of India to combat polio. The FHAWP is another government program that aims to scale up the public's awareness of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and reproductive tract infections (RTIs).

The IndiaSAFE (Survey of Abuse in the Family Environment) project was another major endeavor. This project did not only provide opportunity for multi-disciplinary collaboration but also was able to confirm the problem of abuse in the family environment in India. It also showed the need to develop sustainable and culturally acceptable intervention strategies.

IndiaCLEN continues to offer training in clinical epidemiology and bio-statistics. Among its graduate programs are the M. Phil. in Clinical Epidemiology at the Medical College in Trivandrum and the M.Sc. Epidemiology at the Christian Medical College (CMC) in Vellore. CMC, through the Biostatistics Resource and Training Centre, also offers M.Sc and PhD courses in biostatistics.

IndiaCLEN holds office in Chennai-Madras Medical University. Inaugurated on July 29, 2000, this office serves as the nodal point of the activities of the network. Dr. Shuba Kumar is the IndiaCLEN office manager. Another milestone is the creation of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) in 1999. Dr. Ravi Korula, Dean of CMC, is the chairperson of the IRB which has representatives from all the CEUs and from the public sector. The IRB is responsible for technical and ethical review of all research proposals. Still another major regional accomplishment of the network was the establishment of the Indian Journal of Clinical Epidemiology. Launched in 1999, the journal is the official publication of the network. It is available online at this website: <http://education.vsnl.com/certc/Journal.htm>.

IndiaCLEN welcomes contributions from INCLIN members.

IndiaCLEN has also formed three sub-committees for research, capacity building and public relations. The chairpersons are Kurien Thomas, Shally Awasthi, and Narendra Arora respectively.

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