



भारतीय आयुर्विज्ञान अनुसंधान परिषद
स्वास्थ्य अनुसंधान विभाग, स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार
कल्याण मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार

Indian Council of Medical Research
Department of Health Research, Ministry of Health
and Family Welfare, Government of India

File no: 56/1/2024/SSD-brainstorm/NCD

Date: 17/12/2024

Request for Expression of Interest (EOI)

Implementation Research Study to develop an optimal model for Sickle Cell Disease screening, diagnosis, treatment, and care

Overview

To address the significant burden of SCD in India, the National Sickle Cell Elimination Mission (NSCEM) has been initiated by the government with a vision to eliminate SCD as a public health problem in India before 2047. The mission's objectives are to provide affordable and accessible care to all SCD patients, ensure quality of care, and reduce the prevalence of SCD in India.

In line with the NSCEM's objectives and with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) National Health Research Policy, which emphasizes the need for research to be aligned with national health priorities and address unmet health needs, this EOI aims to identify researchers from across India to develop an optimal model for SCD screening, diagnosis, treatment, and care.

The research priorities were selected through a Delphi framework. In a brainstorming session held in September 2024 with 52 experts chaired by the DG-ICMR, 163 research questions were initially listed. Through an iterative process, ensuring that the questions identified were comprehensive and non-overlapping, 16 key questions were identified, and these were circulated to subject experts and stakeholders across various levels of the healthcare system for feedback. Based on this input, the top research priorities for SCD in India over the next 5 years were finalized.

The selected researchers shall be invited to collaborate with ICMR to develop a comprehensive research proposal and implement research projects. An independent committee will review the protocol development and research project implementation plan. The goal is to provide universal health access related to SCD, improve SCD outcomes, and reduce the burden of SCD in India.

Objectives

- To encourage the implementation of evidence-based approaches to develop an optimal model for SCD screening, diagnosis, treatment, and care considering community perceptions and preferences addressing stigma.
- Prioritize the development and evaluation of practical, scalable, and sustainable solutions focusing on the integration of local knowledge and expertise in the design and implementation of research projects.
- Foster collaboration and partnerships between government agencies (health and non-health sectors), non-governmental organizations, and community-based /Faith-based organizations to address the burden of SCD in the country.

Priority Research Question

Implementation research to develop an optimal model for Sickle Cell Disease screening, diagnosis, treatment, and care considering community perceptions and preferences addressing stigma.

Expected Outcomes

The following outcomes are expected from the research project that shall be developed and implemented by the team under the guidance of ICMR Hqrs:

- Development of a culturally sensitive and community-informed model for SCD screening, diagnosis, treatment, and care that addresses stigma and community perceptions.
- Improved access to comprehensive SCD care at all levels of healthcare in India.
- Enhanced understanding of the social, cultural, and economic factors that influence SCD care and management in India.
- Strengthened collaboration between researchers, healthcare providers, policymakers, and SCD patients and families to inform policy and practice.
- Development of scalable and sustainable strategies to integrate SCD care into existing national health programs in India.

Target Population:

Researchers and stakeholders (CBOs, NGOs, and policymakers) involved in SCD care and management in India.

Research design:

A range of research designs, including qualitative and quantitative approaches (mixed methods design), and different implementation research frameworks.

Format of Expression of Interest (EOI) to be submitted online.

A. EOI application (max. three pages in pdf format)

1. *Title of the proposal:*
2. *Name of the Principal Investigator (PI):*
3. *Address with Email ID and phone number of PI:*
4. *Name of the institute:*
5. *Type of Organization: Government/ Private/ Non-Government Organization:*
6. *Rationale of proposed study (include the choice of sites: states and districts):*
The proposal should clearly state the rationale for the study, the recommended sites (states and districts), and the likelihood of utilization of the model by stakeholders in the future. A mix of rural and urban settings will be preferred.
7. *Implementation Strategy:*
Provide a clear and detailed description of the proposed intervention(s) to be implemented,

including:

- The target population: specify the inclusion and exclusion criteria.
- The intervention components: describe the key elements of the intervention and outline the steps for implementing the intervention. You may include preparatory activities, mapping, and a timeline (Gantt Chart).
- Implementation strategies: include appropriateness, relevance, feasibility, and sustainability of the proposed intervention.
- Measures of outcome: specify the indicators to measure the success of the intervention
- Deliverables: list the expected outcomes of the intervention

8. *Research Team:*

Summarize and justify the composition of the research team based on the expertise of the individual team members in designing and implementing the project. Also, highlight the skill set and expertise the members shall bring to the research team that shall be constituted by the ICMR Hqrs for the development of the final protocol and research project implementation.

9. *Established relationships with state and district health systems:*

Operational feasibility would be key for this implementation research study. Include the collaborations that have been established with the potential stakeholders and participants including state and district health systems.

10. *Illustrative Budget outline:*

The final site budgets for the proposal will be developed by the selected research team(s) under the guidance of ICMR. In this EOI, provide an estimated budget outline (no budget justification required at this stage) under the following headings: staff, recurring contingency, data management, travel, and equipment.

B. Single file CV of PI and team members (with each CV limited to a max of one page)

Please provide a single file CV of the PI and other key investigators from each identified area. Each CV should include:

- Academic and professional qualifications
- Current position and affiliation
- Up to five most relevant previous research grants
- Up to five most relevant previous publications

C. Endorsement letter from the head of the Organization (Preferably to be submitted at the time of initial submission)

Review process:

The EOI documents for the Implementation Research Project on Sickle Cell Disease will be evaluated and shortlisted by the ICMR. The ICMR team will screen the applications for technical accuracy and eligibility. The shortlisted teams will be invited to collaborate and develop a detailed proposal under the guidance of ICMR Hqrs, which will then be reviewed by an independent Committee. The proposal will be evaluated based on factors such as implementation strategy (appropriateness, relevance, feasibility, sustainability), prior experience with health systems/state/central governments, and expertise of the research team.

Who can submit the EOI?

The EOI can be submitted through **ONLINE MODE ONLY** by scientists/ professionals who have

regular employment in Medical Institutes/ Research Institutes/ Universities/ Colleges/ Government and semi-government organizations and NGOs (documentary evidence of their recognition including a DSIR certificate should be available.

Points to be kept in mind while submitting the EOI

1. The EOI must address the specific research question that is mentioned in the call text.
2. Collaborative, multi-centric, interdisciplinary, innovative research initiatives from the applicant will be encouraged.
3. Descriptive studies, systematic reviews, and secondary data analysis will not be considered
4. Should focus on outcomes that are translatable into policy.
5. Evaluation of the development of Indigenous technologies and solutions relevant to the Indian context may be prioritized
6. Foreign collaboration is not allowed under the call.

Interested parties should fill out the Google form at the below link and submit an **Expression of Interest (EOI)** as per the Format given above. Only shortlisted PIs will be contacted via e-mail.

Link- <https://forms.gle/6zYLLjmAequUJGdb7>

Timeline

Activities	Date
Release of Call	17 th December 2024
Last date for submission of EOI	2 nd February 2025
Shortlisting of EOIs	5 th March 2025
Proposal Development Workshop	9 th April 2025
Submission of a full proposal	23 rd April 2025

For any queries related to the call, please contact

Dr Heena Tabassum, PhD

AcSIR Faculty,

Program Officer & Scientist

Division of Non-Communicable Diseases

Indian Council of Medical Research Ansari Nagar,

New Delhi – 110029

Email: scdicmrhq@gmail.com

Phone No.: +919582150416