Department of Health Research

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

Government of India

Expression of Interest

for

Establishing Technical Resource Hubs 2024

Centre for Evidence for Guidelines

Background:

The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, in collaboration with DoHFW, DGHS, NHSRC and DHR, is formulating a comprehensive set of evidence-based guidelines for the country using a rigorous scientific approach. This process involves compiling systematic reviews and meta-analyses on defined questions, with evidence quality assessed through the GRADE approach, guiding recommendations via the Evidence to Decision (EtD) framework.

The establishment of Technical Resource Hubs is critical to ensuring the quality and consistency of the evidence synthesis and guideline development process in healthcare. Currently, while the Technical Resource Centres (TRCs) provide valuable systematic reviews and evidence profiles, there is a pressing need for a robust review mechanism to ensure that the outputs meet the highest standards of rigor and transparency. The Technical Resource Hubs will be responsible for monitoring and mentoring the systematic review process of the TRCs, including but not limited to, search strategies, search output screening, study selection process, data extraction, data synthesis, quality appraisal; and reviewing the systematic review reports and evidence profiles submitted by the TRCs, thus ensuring the quality and accuracy of the evidence being considered for guidelines.

Another significant gap in the current system is the lack of proper training for members of the Guideline Development Groups (GDGs) in the interpretation of evidence profiles and the process of translating evidence into actionable recommendations. Many GDG members are not fully equipped to understand the nuances of evidence synthesis, and translation to actionable recommendations, which can adversely impact the quality of the guidelines being developed. The Technical Resource Hubs will address this gap by providing tailored training to GDG members on how to critically review evidence profiles, assess the strength of evidence, and participate effectively in the evidence-to-recommendation process. This will enhance the decision-making capacity of GDG members, leading to more robust and evidence-based guidelines.

Further, the Technical Resource Hubs will play a crucial role in building the capacity of the TRCs by conducting regular workshops and training sessions. These workshops will focus on the guideline development process, ensuring that the TRCs are aligned with global standards for evidence synthesis and guideline development, such as GRADE methodology. By equipping the TRCs with advanced skills and knowledge, the hubs will strengthen the overall framework for evidence-based guideline development.

Goal:

Establishing Technical Resource Hubs is to oversee and critically appraise systematic reviews and evidence profiles, provide training and capacity-building for GDG members, and support the development & implementation of high-quality evidence in the guideline development process, ultimately strengthening the adoption of evidence-based healthcare practices.

Eligibility Criteria for Technical Resource Hubs:

1. The primary applicant must have authored at least **two Cochrane systematic reviews** (not protocols) and meta-analyses, as well as **four systematic reviews** as the first or corresponding author in PubMed-indexed journals. Additionally, both the applicant and the team must demonstrate competency in conducting systematic reviews across various study types, including diagnostic, intervention, and observational studies, showcasing their ability to manage diverse forms of research evidence.

2. The Hub must consist of a **dedicated team of at least two faculty members from the same institution,** each having authored at least two systematic reviews as the first or corresponding author in PubMed-indexed journals. The team should include a biostatistician, subject experts in Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD), Reproductive and Child Health (RCH), and Communicable Disease s, as well as a methodologist. All team members must be fully committed to these activities.

3. The primary applicant should have **organized or conducted at least three workshops** or training programs on both systematic reviews and GRADE methodology, with at least one of these workshops at the national or international level.

4. **Involvement in International Guideline Development Panels**: The primary applicant or a team member should be actively involved in an international guideline development panel (Eg. WHO, NICE UK, etc) bringing global perspectives and experience to the Hub.

5. **Faculty for International Training Programs:** The primary applicant should have experience as faculty for international training programs focused on guideline development, underscoring their expertise and commitment to advancing evidence-based practices globally.

6. The primary applicant should have **experience in developing evidence-based guidelines** using the GRADE methodology and must include members who have actively participated in national or international guideline development organizations.

Application Process:

- Interested Researchers/ faculty/scientists having regular employment in Medical Institutes/ Research Institutes/ Universities/ Colleges with required capability, experience and resources (preferably database access) to undertake the assignment may submit their application through google link.
- The application received will go through a review process by an expert committee constituted by competent authority
- The selected participants will be notified of their selection via email and through the DHR website in third week of January 2025

Funding: Financial Support up to Rs. 70 Lacs per year will be provided per Technical Resource Hub.

Duration of the funding for TRHs:

The initial term is set for three years, subject to performance reviews, and renewable every year.

Terms and Conditions

- An annual report, along with a statement of expenditure and utilization certificate in the prescribed format, is to be submitted for review and approval. The budget for the subsequent year will be contingent upon the review and approval of the annual report.
- Regular monitoring visits will be conducted, with corrective actions implemented as needed
- Training programs are to be conducted at least thrice a year, and professional development plans are to be updated annually.

Deliverables:

The Technical Resource Hubs established for evidence synthesis in the development of evidence-based guidelines should ensure clarity and accountability; specific deliverables with stringent deadlines should be established:

1. Monitoring and mentoring the systematic review and evidence synthesis process undertaken by TRCs, to ensure methodological rigor and quality.
2. Critically reviewing evidence profiles generated by TRCs to ensure accuracy, completeness, and adherence to rigorous methodological standards.
3. Conducting workshops on guideline development, including the Evidence to Decision (EtD) framework, to train GDG members on interpreting and applying evidence.

4. Training GDG members on evidence appraisal, interpretation, and translating evidence into actionable recommendations.
5. Collaborating with systematic review teams to develop and refine comprehensive search strategies.
6. Providing continuous guidance and support to systematic review teams throughout all stages of the systematic review and meta-analysis process.
7. Conducting systematic reviews for complex research questions with large volumes of evidence.

Link to submit online applications: https://forms.gle/ab6AKVayoLtvCN4W9

For any queries related to the EoI, please contact

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Tentative Timeline

Activities	Date
Release of Call	17-December-2024
Last date for submission of proposal	12- January -2025 (17:00hrs)
Review and selection	Third week of January 2025