



**The 4th National Conference & International Colloquium
Forum for Ethics Review Committees in India
Theme: Research Collaboration and Special Ethical Issues
November 3-5, 2016**



Organised by:

Department of Clinical & Experimental Pharmacology,
Calcutta School of Tropical Medicine, Kolkata

In Collaboration with

Bioequivalence Centre, Jadavpur University, Kolkata
Society of Topical Medicine & Infectious Diseases in India, Kolkata

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FERCICon2016 – A Brief Report

The 4th Annual National Conference of Forum for Ethics Review Committees in India & International Colloquium – FERCICon2016 - was held in Kolkata during November 4-5, 2016. The theme of the Conference was **“International Collaboration and Special Ethical Issues in Clinical Research”**. The Conference was inaugurated by the Director of Medical Education and ex-officio Secretary, Govt of West Bengal. More than 150 delegates from all over India participated in the conference. They comprised of members of clinical research ethics committees, expert clinicians, clinical trial investigators, pharmacologists, pharmacists, industry representatives and other stakeholders of clinical research.

A host of learned experts hailing from different parts of India and also from abroad, graced the occasion with their august presence. Their deep insight coupled with their vast experience in the critical areas of ethics in clinical research made the proceedings and deliberations in different sessions, a rich academic feast. The sessions put emphasis on ethical dimensions in international collaborations, and also the special ethical issues in diverse areas like genomic research, bio-banking and data sets, tribal health research, public health research and qualitative research. A separate session was dedicated for the discussion in analysing and defining the role of the different categories of members in the ethics committee – namely, the basic scientist, the clinician, the legal expert, the lay person, and the NGO representative/ social scientist. Emphasis was also laid on the operational issues in regard to the functioning of the ethics committees, particularly exploring the feasibility of implementing e-governance.

Besides the invited lectures and panel discussions, there were oral and poster free paper sessions. The poster session was competitive, and the two best posters were awarded. A Quiz session was also conducted that generated lot of interest and enthusiasm among the participants.

Another noteworthy feature was that a bunch of pre-conference symposia were held in different hospitals in Kolkata on the 3rd November – in fact, five satellite ones – namely ethical perspectives of clinical research in oncology, dermatology and aesthetic medicine, diabetes, pediatrics, besides the one co-hosted with UNESCO, “Teaching Clinical Research Ethics to Medical, Dental and Nursing Students”. The summary of the proceedings of these five symposia were presented in a separate session in the conference on the 5th November.

All the sessions were highly appreciated by the audience and discussions and interactions were of a high order.

The delegates also had the opportunity to relax and enjoy in the entertainment function on the 4th November evening, with a dance performance by a professional cultural group.

The closing ceremony was presided over by Dr Vasantha Muthuswamy, the Founder-President of FERCI, who welcomed all to the International Conference to be held in 2017 at New Delhi. The Organising Secretary, Professor Santanu K Tripathi, profusely thanked all delegates and faculty for making the event a success.

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