

ICMR-FERCAP Standard Operating Procedures training course for Ethics Committee Members

National Institute for Research in Tuberculosis organized and conducted the “**ICMR-FERCAP Standard Operating Procedures training course for Ethics Committee Members**” between 3rd and 5th June 2013 at National Institute for Research in Tuberculosis, Chennai.

The **FERCAP (Forum for Ethical review Committees in the Asian & Western Pacific Region)** is a project of the **World Health Organization (WHO) Special Training and Research Programme in Tropical Diseases (TDR)** and is a regional forum under the umbrella of the **Strategic Initiative for Developing Capacity in Ethical Review (SIDCER)**.

This training is a step towards the process of obtaining SIDCER Recognition programme for Ethics Committees, the purpose of which is to assist the ethics committees (ECs) in improving their review processes and functioning towards overall quality improvement by a 3 step training process that includes (i) Human Subject Protection Course - 3 day training on general ethical issues handled by the ethics committee, (ii) Standard Operating Procedures Training (SOP) - 3 day training during which the detailed SOPs are discussed and is helpful for the EC to develop or to improve its SOPs and functioning, and (iii) Survey Training - once the first 2 steps are completed, the EC completes the SIDCER self assessment checklist and is ready for a survey.

The FERCAP Coordinator ***Dr Cristina E Torres*** was the key trainer, along with ***Dr Vasantha Muthuswamy***, President, FERCI (Forum for Ethical review Committees in India), FERCAP Member, and Retd Sr Deputy Director General, ICMR, ***Dr Nandini K Kumar***, FERCI and FERCAP Member, and Retd Deputy Director General (Sr Gr), ***Dr Roli Mathur***, Steering Committee Member, FERCAP and Scientist C, ICMR, ***Dr Sangeetha Desai***, and ***Dr Medha V Joshi***, both from Tata Memorial Hospital, Mumbai.

The ‘**SOP training course**’ was introduced by Dr Cristina E Torres and the ‘**SIDCER self-assessment tool**’ was introduced and explained by Dr Roli Mathur, which was followed by deliberations on the ‘**Indian guidelines and regulations**’ with increased thrust for the current revisions of the Schedule Y, ‘**constitution of ECs**’, ‘**review procedures and study reports**’, ‘**study monitoring and evaluation**’ including serious adverse events (SAE) reporting, and ‘**documentation and achieving**’ processes and procedures.

Sixteen EC members of National Institute for Research in Tuberculosis (ICMR), 15 EC members of National Institute of Epidemiology (ICMR), 12 EC members of Madras Diabetes Research Foundation, 7 EC members of Y R Gaitonde Centre for AIDS Research and Education (YRG Care), 4 EC members of Sri Ramachandra University, and 3 EC members from Dr K M Cherian’s Frontier Lifeline Heart Foundation and Hospital attended the training course; a total of **fifty seven** EC members from **six** institutions ECs benefited out of this training.