



College of Medicine & Dentistry at the Hills, Abbottabad

Research Cell Policy

FOR THE YEAR 2025-26



Section 1: Overview

Rationale

The Research Cell at CMDH has been established to align with the standards set by the Pakistan Medical Commission (PMC) and affiliated university research regulations. It serves as a structured platform to guide, promote, and regulate research activities among faculty, students, and postgraduate trainees.

Anticipated Benefits

- **Enhancement of Research Quality:** Establishing rigorous standards and peer-review mechanisms to improve the credibility and impact of research conducted at CMDH.
- **Capacity Building:** Training faculty and students in research methodology, ethical conduct, data analysis, and publication writing.
- **Research Funding:** Facilitating access to internal and external research grants and financial support.
- **Proposal Evaluation & Ethical Oversight:** Ensuring all research projects undergo thorough scientific and ethical scrutiny before implementation.

Section 2: Research Committees

A. Institutional Research and Ethical Review Board (IREB)

Purpose

To evaluate research proposals for ethical soundness and scientific merit, ensuring the protection of human subjects, animal welfare, and environmental considerations.

Composition

- **Chairperson** (appointed by the Dean)
- **Secretary**
- A diverse panel of experts including medical professionals, a statistician, legal expert, and members representing the community and social sectors.

Key Guidelines

- Meetings will be held **monthly** or as needed.

- A **minimum quorum** must be present for official decisions (e.g., half of active members).
- Proposals are **approved by consensus** (at least a majority agreement; usually 70%).
- Investigators may be requested to **defend their proposals** before the board.
- A **review fee** of PKR 500 is applicable per proposal; this may be **waived for undergraduate students**.

B. CMDH Faculty Research Committee

Role & Responsibilities

- Enhance faculty engagement in research by offering **workshops, training sessions**, and mentorship programs.
- Review initial research proposals and forward eligible proposals to the IREB for ethical approval.
- Guide faculty in identifying **grant opportunities** and navigating the publication process.
- Serve as a bridge between institutional leadership and faculty researchers.

Structure

- Led by a **Chairperson** (senior faculty or researcher) with a core team of faculty members with research experience.
- Meetings are conducted **monthly** or as per institutional needs.

C. Undergraduate and Postgraduate Research Committees

Undergraduate Research Committee

- Encourages and supports **student-led research**.
- Organizes **research fairs, competitions, and training sessions**.
- Facilitates **mentorship** by linking students with experienced faculty.
- Includes a **faculty advisor** and selected student representatives with designated roles (e.g., President, Media Coordinator, Class Year Leads).

Postgraduate Research Committee

- Reviews research proposals submitted by postgraduate trainees and ensures alignment with curriculum and institutional ethics.
- Tracks progress of **MPhil, FCPS, and other training-related research projects**.
- Organizes seminars and journal clubs to promote scholarly engagement among trainees.
- Led by a **faculty coordinator** and composed of experienced supervisors and researchers.

Section 3: Research Advisory Board & Leadership

Research Advisory Board (RAB)

Mandate

- Approves **research grants**, funding for **conference presentations**, and **publication costs**.
- Provides strategic oversight and direction to all CMDH research committees.
- Fosters **national and international research collaborations**.
- Ensures the integrity, transparency, and quality of research conducted under CMDH's banner.

Structure

- Headed by a **Chairperson** (appointed by the Dean).
- Includes **senior researchers and academicians** with terminal degrees (e.g., PhD, MHPE, or equivalent).
- Proposals seeking grant approval require **unanimous agreement** among present members and are then forwarded to the Dean for final approval.
- Meetings are held at least **once every quarter**, or more frequently if needed.

Head of Research / Secretariat

The **Associate Dean of Research** serves as the **Head of the Research Cell** and:

- Coordinates all research activities and committee functions.
- Acts as the **liaison between the research cell and the Dean**.
- Manages documentation, conflict resolution, and annual policy reviews.
- The **Office of the Associate Dean** functions as the **secretariat** for the Research Advisory Board.

Section 4: Research Facilities at CMDH

CMDH is equipped with **basic laboratory infrastructure** to support clinical and public health research. The institution is currently expanding its research capabilities through:

- Collaboration with its **affiliated teaching hospital** for access to clinical data and biostatistical support.
- Plans to establish a **central research laboratory** with specialized equipment to facilitate translational and experimental studies.
- Provision of software tools and platforms for **qualitative and quantitative analysis**, including SPSS, NVivo, and Atlas.ti.

Section 5: Governance and Review

- **Tenure of Members:** All committee members (faculty or external experts) serve a **3-year term**, which may be renewed upon performance review and Dean's approval. Student representatives serve for a **2-year term**.
- **Conflict Resolution:** Any conflicts, ethical concerns, or procedural errors are resolved by the Associate Dean Research in consultation with relevant committee members.
- **Annual Review:** The Research Cell policy is reviewed **annually** by the Associate Dean Research and the Director of Medical Education, with final approval by the Dean CMDH.
- **Documentation:** All meeting minutes, decisions, and proposals are recorded and archived by the Research Secretariat.

Conclusion

This Research Cell Policy provides a clear, structured, and responsive framework for research governance at CMDH. Through a combination of dedicated committees, ethical oversight, and leadership support, the institution aims to cultivate a robust research environment that meets national and international standards.

Director/Dean
Research Cell, CMDH Abbottabad