



**Round Table of Research group on
“Integrative Health Policy”
Coordinated by Dr. V Prakash**

Brief Introduction:

Integrative health policy focus is to look at a Holistic approach of a combination of knowledge from different systems that exist in India over centuries such as Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and homeopathy of late along with the accepted practice of medicine and procedures of Allopathy, especially after the World War II. These have to be looked at from the point of view of what can be achieved by synergizing the knowledge base rather than looking at them in isolation. The ultimate beneficiary is the patient to take the Indian practiced Knowledge system in this Holistic approach. In other words, the approach should be Integrative Health CARE policy which itself indicates that CARE is affection, love, compassion, and sharing and caring what the patient-centric treatment is with a focus on affordability on the one side and generation after generation knowledge of plant-based medicine established on the other side. All this with a focus on health inclusive of preventive, palliative, and curative as well as the management of certain chronic diseases encompassing the whole population from pediatrics to geriatrics is of utmost importance.

Terms of References for Education group:

1. To analyze the present state of integrative medicine research in the country.
2. To diagnose major barriers to high impact research in integrative medicine
3. To suggest steps for building a world-class capacity in research methods and in basic translational clinical and population-based research in integrative medicine
4. To identify high priorities in Integrative Research with the potential to impact health, Wellness, and clinical outcomes on a scale and how to take these priorities forward in a time-bound mission mode.
5. To suggest how to strengthen and expand institutional and human resources base, collaborative networks and doctoral and post-doctoral programs for research in integrative medicine in Academia and industry, aimed at impact in clinical practice and public health and developing health products/solutions for the country and the world
6. To suggest how to generate optimum and sustainable resources to support quality research in integrative research through existing government organization as well as by developing a novel funding mechanism in public and Nongovernment space and
7. To suggest policies regulatory and other enabling steps to Unleash transformative and far-reaching Research and innovation and enterprises in integrative medicine to make India a global leader in about 5 years.

The Importance of Research on WELLNESS and its Quantification: Must be India's Flagship Research

There are many different ways to approach this problem of integration of research as it is not very simple like mixing and saying it is integrated but it requires a very high level of research with a focus on patient-centric areas of research and the concept of not only health but also Wellness is very important. One can do large in-depth research in several areas by adopting modern medical tools as well as analytical tools and the chemistry of it. Many scientific groups in many parts of the world look at this agenda of WELLNESS clearly referring to India's approach as unique and not only of integrating the mechanism of how a preventive, palliative and the curative system works very differently with the WELLNESS factor inclusive. In this context perhaps what is important for India is to follow through and establish itself as a world leader by World-class transboundary research in the area of

WELLNESS. WELLNESS is to the name India book from the point of view of spirituality on the one side and then on the medical approach of physical exercises well established over several thousands of years such as yoga, pranayama, and meditation and alike on the other side. This addresses both the fusion of systems of medicine which of course has been termed as AYUSH in the knowledge fore but the focus has to be very high-intensity Research on Wellness with proper epidemiology of use in India over several thousands of years. That becomes a very important phenomenon for the world to understand in-depth and India's leadership is well recognized but perhaps we are losing the leadership as we are diverted into mundane point-to-point research and proving on some other turf is a permanent uphill task. Without Wellness health becomes secondary and is the major research component in the integrative health policy. The focus impact and the first priority has to be Wellness Research that can encompass the study of Wellness in depth. It can range anywhere from the modern tools of study of mind and psychology and allied subjects. The understanding of the mind itself is a very elaborate process and more is needed to do in this area. The mere vibrations of a song or of a particular word or of any other matter can interact with the body and the mind with a clear pathway of not only changing the physiology and the mechanism but also making it available for practical use in the treatment of such mental illnesses on the one side which is related to Physical illness on the other side. *Therefore the focus of Wellness research must be one of the top priorities for this integrative health care policy.*

Global Scenario of Integrative Medicinal Research.

If one looks at many Countries and the many approaches that have been taken in integrated medicine such as the UK, Germany, Latin America, Brazil, and the US the recognition of traditional and complementary medicine by the World Health Organisation in its report of 2019 are just a few examples which need to be taken note of. The message of this is not that India would like to follow that and do a similar approach but to take its own path of a national Framework for integrative health policy research keeping in mind the practices, the advantage of merging with nature and looking at the system of the regulatory process itself when these are put together as one system to make it simpler rather than make it more complicated. This is not conventional pharmaceuticals versus herbal medicine but this is with the knowledge of Indigenous & traditional Indian system of medicine and its component of complementary medicine and other physical forms of approach such as yoga put together into a system of operation which this document must address from the point of view of research. Topping all these is the Rajyasabha proceedings in report number 115 of the department related parliamentary standing committee on Health and Family Welfare when it passed a bill of the National Commission for Indian system of medicine Exhaustively addresses the system of not only integration of Indian system of medicine but also how to move forward in the area of trans boundary pathways and the with a focus of bringing in harmony in the System of Medicine prevalent in India and its role between systems of medicines. Homeopathy is highlighted in this report number 115 of the Parliament of India Rajya Sabha and does recognize the importance of it in the Indian system of medicine integration and gives leads to a Focused approach for integrative health policy emanating vibrant areas of research.

The Way Forward:

The way forward to make this document was to adopt a consultative mechanism for getting inputs from a large consultative procedure and to take the distilled knowledge of the subject experts in the area who could give inputs from the point of view of not only their expertise but also in the area where vibrations of such integrative policy Research have resulted in large dividends in its initial approaches

such as turmeric, ginger, and pepper to name a few. The virtual platform discussions were platformed by Mr. Dangayach under the chairmanship of Shri Ramesh Gautamji. The Chair focused on the level to which this document needs to be driven since research is not for research's sake but for the sake of the benefit of the public good with a focus on Health and Wellness inclusive of a Holistic approach. The focus on the integration of views of several experts in the Virtual meeting and the expert's list may not be exhaustive but consisted of the following: Dr. Ramesh Gautamji, Dr. Ashok Varshney, Mr. Dangayach, Dr. Swaminarayan, Dr. Manchanda, Dr. Sanjiv Acharya, Dr. Abhay Chaudhari, Dr. Sunil Joshi, Dr. Dugal, Dr. Rastogi, Dr. Mahesh Chabria, Dr. Rakesh Rawal, Dr. Lal Hingorani, Dr. Narendra Bhat, Dr. Rakesh Pandey, Dr. Narahari, Dr. Narendra Mehrotra, Dr. Swain Prabodh, Dr. Nirmal Gupta, Dr. Srinivas Sarle, Dr. Rajesh Shah, Dr. Shiv Prabhu Ratna, Dr. Maruti Sarma, Dr. Sanjay Gupta and Dr. Shailendra Saxena along with a host of others who could through dialogues at different levels have given inputs from the point of view of Indian R and D organizations, Academia, industry, research houses, Nongovernmental and Nonprofit organizations. This covered the areas of not only allopathy but also Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, and homeopathy especially with a focus on integrative research areas with the epicenter of bringing and converging the knowledge together. These are summarised below in the context of the terms of reference of seven in number as already delineated above.

1. Present State of Integrative Medicine research is Poor:

The need for Integrative Research is the Origin. Many fragmented approaches are on in the Country. However, when one sees an aerial picture, a concerted national effort of high science integration is the need of the hour initially to address under points 2 to 7 as below:

2. Barriers:

How do we move the positive funding by corporations for the large funding required? Demonstration of Industry Viable Research as priority areas as the research objectives are to be focused. That's one way out. Further research done together does not end up in a stalemate of regulations and that needs assurance. Also, the barriers of education policy and not equal space in Clinical practice and Administrating on equal opportunity footing is being addressed in the other three sectors separately.

3. Steps for world-class capacity building:

It is important that India shows the best forward way of IHP by converging the streams of knowledge with the freedom of independently thinking while shunning imitation and looking at Health Sciences as 'one health and one Nation' which is inherently well-documented. Translating into actions is very crucial in the framework of affordability and reachability is vital in the Integrative research approach. Of urgent need is to train and retrain the researchers and orient them towards the interdisciplinary mindset rather than hierarchial mindset that exists so that the merit in each system is seen as a point of getting the right experiment done to synergies the transboundary knowledge and reach out quickly its benefit to people. This requires a Pan India approach.

4. Priorities for research:

In this area the solutions that are already existing in different systems of medicine with a focus on about 8 to 10 areas of research and establish with cross translational attempt safety dosage and help the regulator to bring about an understanding of the mechanism is important This may be true for repurposed drugs, its efficacy, and dosage part as well as new drugs at different

stages of efficacy related and dosage work. This is more so of combinatorial drugs clinical trial rules and it should be independent for the track of Homeo,Ayur, Siddha, and Unani using modern tools of analysis and Chemistry knowledge. The backward integration of Herbal Gardens all the way to authentic Primary processing centers is of utmost importance in the chain. (more related points are covered under generic areas as we move down the document).

5. Institutional and human resources base improvement:

Making the testing and Research passage facilities not only in implementation in dosages but also in the realization of infrastructure not to forget existing infrastructure and its optimal use rather than every time a policy paper is put on the table money spent on huge buildings which can be avoided. Research can be done not only in the laboratory but also with like-minded people sitting together finding the existing information and literature using the existing infrastructural facilities as well as virtually of instrumentation as well as the foundation for such integrated approach in the area which is urgently needed as adaptable to ayur, Unani, Siddha, and especially homeopathy which is today coming out as a supplementary and complementary medicine along with Ayurveda as documented by AYUSH.

6. Funding:

There is a need for Mega funding for research groups that can establish project deliveries in about a Thousand days of not just asking money but towards quick validation of AYUSH formulations by top-level analytical techniques to ensure validation in a very short time by benchmarking with global standards. This will help us recalibrate and understand the AYUSH approach into a much more evidence-based system of India centric health system and may already have solutions in the traditional system of medicine inclusive of Homeopathy. This would attract investment by startups as also by Mega research houses to take up this integrative health research as an important agenda for research, regulatory and policy steps based firmly on Integrative research.

7. Regulatory and other Enabling steps:

It is important to revisit the especially from an ayur angle, homeopathy angle, Siddha and Unani angle as in some of them these systems of medicine we need to identify the low hanging fruits of research areas and convince oneself with hardcore data with an evidence-based approach for a regulatory systems approach. It need not be all the way from scratch but from a higher level to reach a higher Orbital to ensure that the results of hypotheses are established unequivocally. That will help the Regulatory also to have a better framework. This has been addressed in Point 2 also.

Other Points that Emerged during the discussions: (not covered from 1 to 7 above)

- In today's approach to research usage of artificial intelligence in this process is a step of polo vault beyond leapfrogging and science-based and evidence-based documentation which is the need of the hour. These are needed since the approach is entirely different for homeopathy which is entirely different from that of Ayurveda and which is different from that of allopathy. These can be only resolved if a common ailment with these three for four different systems establishes the data with one approach through Research giving a space for each of the freedom of the system to prove what it wants using the advancement of the other system. That is the essence of the Integrative Approach of research.

- Lifestyle disorders of health issues with no satisfactory cure to be addressed by this integrative approach and the need of the hour is the convergence of all this knowledge by open access investment for integrative research in the private sector and from the Hospital Sector.
- The role of physics and thermodynamics expertise added with hardcore organic chemists, immunologists is the need of the hour. For example in the preparation of nosodes in homeopathy which is indeed very high science by itself, which today works exceedingly well as shown by Phase I experiments, but are lying idle without moving forward due to regulatory bottlenecks and lack of transboundary research. It needs to be understood at a molecular level even though many of the top companies are already working around the globe but India can make a difference by the integrative approach of research to reap the benefit as early as possible.
- Certain diseases that are incurable by modern systems are another area to research to focus on and are indeed low-hanging fruit

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