

## International Journal of Pharmacology and Clinical Sciences: a knowledge base for scientific enquiry and better patient care

The current health care system of the world is dependent on the modern medicine which focusses on curative rather than preventive aspects of medicine. The modern medicine has increased the life expectancy and quality of human life by delivering remedial measures for several diseases. This was possible because of advances in research and availability of evidences to practice medicine. However, in low-income and middle-income countries, drugs account for 20–60% of health-care costs.<sup>[1]</sup> The large proportion of these costs is paid out-of-pocket by patients which could be due to inadequate or no coverage by health insurance. To make the condition worse, a third of the world's population lack access to essential medicines.<sup>[2]</sup> Cost of drugs is one of the factors contributing to the problem of access to medicines. It is estimated that, in India, out-of-pocket health expenditure traps 2.2% of the population below the poverty line each year.<sup>[3]</sup> In addition, the Indian health system has to face many other challenges like inadequately controlled infections, emerging epidemic of chronic diseases associated with western lifestyle in the near future. Hence, reforming the health system focussing on both preventive and curative aspects of health care services to make it rationale, affordable and accessible is the need of the hour.

Well planned health research is one of the essential factors required for the improvement of health in all countries. Relevant health research, especially in modern medicine, has contributed to a doubling of life expectancy in India over the past 60 years since independence.<sup>[4]</sup> However, there is growing worldwide interest on traditional systems of medicine like Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and other complementary and integrative medicine in the management of noncommunicable diseases focussing on prevention, where the modern medicine has little to offer.

Despite of growing interest, current research in traditional health care system is centred on activities like standardization of drugs and formulations for obtaining licenses to market these products and screening herbs or traditional formulations to identify active principles. However, the concern regarding safety and efficacy of the therapeutics used and relevance of it in the public health care system is little addressed in scientific studies. Moreover, the practice and understanding of medicine is shifting from experience based to evidence based. Hence, there is a need to collect evidence regarding effectiveness of various traditional practices using validated research methodol-

ogies. Moreover, these research findings should be gathered in internationally peer-reviewed scientific journals which will be useful in making national and international policies and programs.

In addition, undergraduate as well as post graduate medical education needs to be reformed to meet the future health needs. Evolution of the field of medicine requires that medical educators constantly and systematically look at better ways to prepare future physicians. Medical education should encourage students to participate in research leading to better clinicians or physician scientists who will be able to create and apply new knowledge related to biomedicine. Moreover, training medical students on the principles of rational prescribing is required to prevent excess economic burden on patients in the future due to irrational prescribing.

International Journal of Pharmacology and Clinical Sciences (IJPCS) is the brain-child of the Indian Siddha Medicinal Graduates Association (ISGMA) which is born to provide a platform for Indian and international researchers to publish research and other articles from various health systems. This online journal which is freely accessed by all readers allows authors to publish articles free of charge. By doing this we feel that we will achieve wide dissemination of scientific knowledge which will provide directions to researchers, practitioners and educators. IJPCS also encourages the evidence generated by integrating knowledge of modern and traditional medicines in the treatment of diseases. We also welcome articles from students to encourage scientific enquiry in them.

The Editorial Board of IJPCS is supported by National and International Advisory Board members who are highly accomplished scientists from different health systems. Our dream is get articles cited and get IJPCS indexed in various databases, including, most importantly, PubMed. Hence, good quality of the article will be guaranteed by maintaining double blind peer review process.

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I would like to end this article by a quote from Michael J Fox "Medical science has proven time and again that when the resources are provided, great progress in the treatment, cure, and prevention of disease can occur." We hope that this journal contributes in the progress of health care by providing resource in the form of knowledge base for further scientific enquiry and better patient care.

On behalf of the editorial board, I am delighted to present to you the first issue of IJPCS.

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