

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

The ICMR-CIHR workshop on Childhood Obesity and Noncommunicable diseases held on 14-16th January 2009 in Delhi, India was the first initiative under the MoU of ICMR and CIHR, and addressed an agreed on area of interest- childhood obesity. The program of the workshop was developed to address the causes and prevention of childhood obesity. Experts from both countries discussed the agenda through working groups for each session: Epidemiologic transition & its consequences, early origins of obesity, the obesogenic environment during childhood and adolescence, public health interventions to tackle the obesity epidemic.

The outcome of each session was to identify research questions/areas wherein investigators from both countries could work together. The collaboration is open to any investigator from both countries, not limited to the participants. The ICMR and CHIR will facilitate and coordinate the proposals and investigators from the respective countries.

This report is intended to serve as resource for those investigators who desire to collaborate with their counterparts in either countries. The outcome was to promote collaboration between the scientists from India and Canada through the following Mechanisms:

1. Identification of research areas which can be done in both countries
2. Sharing of information, knowledge, expertise and resources
3. The outcomes should be applicable not only to national needs but also be meaningful for a wider, international audience.

Based on research needs identified by the key speakers in each session and the outcomes of the working group discussions, the following areas were identified for potential collaboration:

The collaboration should foster:

1. Sharing of methods, tools and research materials
2. Building investigator capacity in both countries
3. Exchange of scientists and students

Though the workshop addressed childhood obesity, but it was agreed that research proposals will include the all dimensions so that a holistic view is kept in mind. This will also allow aligning the research activities with other programs in both countries.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the discussions held during the workshop, the following areas of research collaboration were identified.

1. **Surveillance of overweight, obesity and the transition from undernutrition to overnutrition, and their related health outcomes**
 - It will include the transition from underweight to overweight and obesity, measurements, its determinants (social, economic, environmental, policy etc), ethnic heterogeneity, migration from rural to urban areas and outside countries, its health consequences, double burden of disease.
 - Assessment of growth parameters, trajectories and monitoring
2. **The early origins of obesity, including maternal attributes, prenatal influences, infant feeding and nutrition, genetics, epigenetics and animal model studies**
 - Assessment of nutrition during these periods of development
 - Use of animal models to understand pathogenesis, growth and development and interventions
 - Utilizing basic science tools and expertise
 - Translation of basic research to clinical and public health use
3. **The obesogenic environment and its drivers**
 - Overnutrition, nutrition transition and role of micronutrients
 - Physical inactivity and the built environment
 - Policy influences
4. **Behavioral, social and public health approaches for obesity prevention and control**
 - Working at school, community and societal levels
 - Advocacy
 - Inter-sectoral collaboration

Further details within each area have been presented in the concerned section.