

ETHICS IN MEDICAL RESEARCH

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In law a man is guilty when he violates the rights of others. In ethics he is guilty if he only thinks of doing. Ethics are more important than law. Ethics is rooted in the ancient Greek philosophical inquiry of moral life. It refers to a system of principles which can critically change previous considerations about choices and actions. It is said that ethics is the branch of philosophy which deals with the dynamics of decision making concerning what is right and wrong.

History of ethics in medical research

Concern over the treatment of research subjects arose after the revelation of gross violations of basic human rights in the name of science. Following facts are the milestone of Ethical consideration in medical research:

- i. Nuremberg Code 1947
- ii. Tuskegee Syphilis Study

From the time immediately after World War II, there was a gradually developing consensus about the key ethical principles that should underlie the research endeavor. Two markers events stand out (among many others) as symbolic of this consensus. The Nuremberg War Crimes Trial following World War II brought to public view the ways German scientists conducted a series of perverse medical experiments on imprisoned and interned Jews. For example, people were placed in freezing water to see how long it took them to die, people were purposefully starved to death, and limbs were severed from children and transplanted onto other individuals. In the 1950s and 1960s, the Tuskegee Syphilis Study involved the withholding of known effective treatment for syphilis from African-American participants who were infected. Events like these forced the reexamination of ethical standards and the

gradual development of a consensus that potential human subjects needed to be protected from being used as 'guinea pigs' in scientific research. In 1964, World Medical Association (WMA) first made the guideline for human as research subject and this is called "Declaration of Helsinki" which was amended time to time and the last amendment was on 64th WMA General Assembly, Fortaleza, Brazil, October 2013

"Declaration of Helsinki"

In last declaration there are 37 guidelines among them declaration 1 & 2 is the preamble, 3 to 15 general Principles, 16 to 18 Risks, Burdens and Benefits, 19 to 22 Vulnerable Groups and Individuals, 23 is Research Ethics Committees, 24 is Privacy and Confidentiality, 25 to 32 Informed Consent. 33 is about use of Placebo, 34 Post-Trial Provisions, 35 – 36 Research Registration and Publication and Dissemination of results and lastly 37 is Unproven Interventions in Clinical Practice

Medical ethics in Bangladesh perspective

Health research in Bangladesh is increasing and hence there is a need to consider the ethical issues with regard such research. Bangladesh Medical Research Council (BMRC) was established in 1972 by order of the President as an Autonomous Body under Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOH&FW). The objectives, rules & regulations of the Council were formulated by resolution of the MOH&FW in 1974 & 1976. As per resolution of the Government, BMRC is the focal point for Health Research. The objectives of BMRC are to identify problems and issues relating to medical and health sciences and to determine priority areas in research on the basis of health care needs, goals, policies and objectives.

Now a day, ethical issue is the main component of a research. Most of the institutes have no IRB those who have, they are not dedicated and before IRB every work should be sent to External Review Board (ERB). ICDDR and few others institute in Bangladesh usually sent their protocol to external reviewer in spite of their IRB. So it is the time to establish a strong ethical board in each medical institute or private.

References:

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