

EDITORIAL

TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH IN PAKISTAN: TIME FOR TRANSITION

Welcome to the internationally indexed edition (IMEMR) of the PJMD. Since the initiation of the journal in 2012 we have striven to maintain high quality research publications, and involve the local scientific community in sharing and collaborating with the clinicians and healthcare sector.

We passionately believe in the theory that the driving force in the progress of a valuable healthcare system is the confluence between multiple disciplines. The academic research activities organized at a national level at various points in time is a sincere reflection of such efforts.

In our latest International conference extensive coverage was given to one such effort, that is, translational research. Ziauddin University was fortunate to host a conference on translational medicine and its worth globally and specifically for a country like ours. Health care system in Pakistan is beset by a number of issues most predominant amongst these are those of cost, accessibility and availability.

The translational medicine conference had clearly highlighted the impact the collaboration of scientific community, industry and clinical discipline can have on the meaningful health outcome of a community. From the inception of translational medicine in 2002 the progress of translational research has been in leaps and bounds. It has been proven beyond doubt that such collaborative effort that insights generated from translational medicine research on patient data has led to improved health care.

A core advantage of clinical translational medicine is collaborative work, resulting in cost effective ways of converting discoveries from bench to clinical application and to go a step further translating clinical findings into molecular mechanism. The promotion of multidirectional and multidisciplinary integration of scientific research, patient oriented research and drug industry, leads to highly practical applications with long term cost effective results. Rapid advancement in translational research has been made in Europe and America, the concept is still in its infancy in Pakistan. We were fortunate to gain exposure from outstanding global researchers on grounds that have been gained in translational medicine, in one of the kind milestone conference held in Pakistan. It is high time that clinical translation medicine driven innovation assumes strategic importance for our local scientific community.

Achieving such aims need to restructure biomedical research road map, which is a daunting task in itself. It requires bridging gaps and developing confidence at national level between basic scientists, clinicians, universities, industry, society and health system. The representative bodies of Higher education should make it their priority to create a new strategy for the transformation and transition of biomedical research in order to establish fresh perspectives in the era ahead of us.

Translation transition, being a continuum between basic and clinical approach through the intermediary of translational research, demands that people cross the divide between research and clinical practice and to build an integrated system that is far more effective, than current approaches and goes far beyond coordination of research; it has to deal with health care policies and health economics-management. The great challenge for the medical community is to adapt to the new challenges and this calls for reorganization of academic human resources to lead this era of translational medicine, particularly in clinical specialties. There could be many possible explanations for the relatively low transition rate of translational research in Pakistan, as the understanding for the importance of integration in medical enquiry plays a key role. Although, the change of research culture in enormous health systems requires systematic and systemic educational interventions which do not come about easily. Nevertheless, the balance must change and more emphasis should be put on clinical and translational medicine with national and international partnerships, with independent and other research institutions.

We welcome submission of publications from researchers involved in transition from basic to translational research on studies that pertained scientific discoveries to disease prevention and treatment in humans.

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