

Reports of advisory bodies

Advisory Committee on Health Research

Report by the Secretariat

1. This document provides a summary of the deliberations of the Advisory Committee on Health Research (ACHR) at its fifty-first session (Geneva, 16–18 March 2009).
2. ACHR expressed its pleasure at the adoption of resolution EB124.R12 on WHO's role and responsibilities in health research by the Executive Board at its 124th session in January 2009. That resolution recommended that the Health Assembly endorse the WHO strategy on research for health.¹ The Advisory Committee recommended endorsement of the strategy and that emphasis be placed on its full implementation and the development of essential products, recognizing that that will require an optimal governance structure, management mechanisms, and adequate resources. Similar emphasis should be placed on implementation of the Bamako Call to Action on Research for Health, issued at the Global Ministerial Forum on Research for Health (Bamako, 17–19 November 2008).
3. ACHR commended the work of WHO's Guidelines Review Committee and recommended an in-house evaluation of the work as a means of further strengthening that Committee's role within WHO. ACHR also recommended that the Guidelines Review Committee continue to forge stronger links with WHO's regional offices in order to build capacity for guidelines development in the regions. Similarly, ACHR recommended that WHO continue to strengthen working relations with the Cochrane Collaboration as a means of further facilitating the use of evidence in WHO's work and improving the scope of the evidence base in order better to reflect health problems in low- and middle-income countries.
4. The Advisory Committee commended the excellent progress made by WHO's International Clinical Trials Registry Platform and urged continued encouragement of the development of legislation relating to trial registration as a means of ensuring improved compliance with the registration process.
5. ACHR also advised that WHO's Research Ethics Review Committee should give emphasis to helping to build capacity in ethics review in Member States, in collaboration with WHO regional offices, and that the Evidence-Informed Policy Network should continue to refine its costed strategic

¹ Although in resolution EB124.R12 the Board recommended that the Sixty-second World Health Assembly endorse the strategy, that Health Assembly decided, in adopting its agenda, to defer consideration of the matter until the subsequent Health Assembly in May 2010.

plan, promote more interregional collaboration, ensure the quality of its products, and balance extension of its reach with consolidation of the support it provides to existing partners.

6. ACHR will ensure that items on research agendas in the important areas of noncommunicable diseases and climate change, and other items of interest, such as better-informed decisions about public programmes, continue to be addressed at its future sessions.

7. ACHR proposed that, in order to commemorate its fiftieth anniversary, a one-day scientific symposium should be organized in 2009, to be followed by a joint session of the global and PAHO advisory committees on health research.

ACTION BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

8. The Board is invited to note the report.

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