



India Nodal Bioethics Centre of the UNESCO International Chair on Bioethics, at SRM University.

Report of Activities since Inception

The Mission statement

The SRM University had always been committed to excellence in the educational field. In this bio ethics field also, it will strive to meet the global standards of UNESCO and UNESCO International Chair on Bioethics.

Establishment

On 21 July 2013, the UNESCO International Chair on Bioethics, Hon. Dr. Amnon Carmi, communicated the decision to establish the India Nodal Bioethics Centre of the International Network of the UNESCO Chair in Bioethics, in SRM University. The Hon. Chancellor of SRM University, Dr T R Pachamuthu, inaugurated the India Nodal Bioethics Centre on 14 August 2013. The regional offices of the Unesco chair and the Asia Pacific Head were also established on that day. Prof P Thangaraju was installed as the Head of the Centre. Dr D Balakrishnan was installed as the Lead Head for India.



Since establishment, the India Nodal Centre had been very active. The executives of the Centre promoted the establishment of several units all over India.



The Steering Committee of the India Nodal Bioethics Centre

The steering committee has the following distinguished experts from several different disciplines including Medicine, Juristics and Law. It will be enlarged as and when necessary, in order to serve the lofty purpose of promoting bioethics.

Patron in chief	Dr T R Pachamuthu	Honourable Chancellor, SRM University
Patrons	Mr Ravi Pachamoothoo	Chairman, SRM Group
	Dr P Sathyanarayanan	President, SRM University
Head, Nodal Bioethics Centre, India, UNESCO	Prof. Dr. P. Thangaraju PhD	Secretary to the Chancellor
Lead Head of UNESCO Bioethics Network India	Prof. Dr. D Balakrishnan BSc MS DLO PhD	Prof of ENT& HOD Audiology, National Faculty for teaching <i>Vitum</i>
UNESCO Bioethics member	Prof. Dr. Russell F D'Souza MD, ABDA(USA), MRACMA(Australia).	Head, Asia Pacific Bioethics Network
Jurist Member	Hon. Justice A R Lakshmanan	Hon. Justice of Supreme Court of India (Retd.)& Chairman Law Commission of India
Member (Legal)	Mr V. Venkatesan MA BL	Advocate & Legal counsel
Member(External)	Prof Dr Vijayaraghavan MS Anatomy	Prof & HOD anatomy, Tagore Medical College, Tambaram.National Faculty for teaching <i>Vitum</i>
Member (External)	Prof Dr G Sumathi MD	Professor of Pharmacology, Muthukumaran Medical College, Chairman IEC, SRM Med. College
Members	Dr R Balasubramanian PhD	Director, Science & Humanities
	Prof. Dr Mrs. N Chandra Prabha MD	Director Health Sciences
	Prof Dr. A. Sundaram MD	Dean Medical, SRM MCH& RC
	Prof. Dr A Judie MSc (N) PhD	Dean SRM Nursing College

	Prof. Dr. S. Vinayakam MD	Medical Superintendent
	Prof Dr A Saravanan MD	Prof & HOD Physiology National National Faculty for Teaching <i>Vitum</i>
	Prof K Thangaraj MD	Prof & HOD of Forensic Medicine, SRM Medical College
	Prof Dr Mrs M Muthulakshmi MD DGO	Professor of Obstetrics & Gynaec
	Prof. Dr V Sundaravadivelu MD	Professor of General Medicine
	Prof Dr Mrs R Jamuna Rani MD	Professor of Pharmacology
	Prof Dr M Logaraj MD	Professor of Community Medicine, SRM Medical College

Activities within India

Within three years, the India Nodal Centre had organized 5 national and 3 international lectures and workshops. The topics of these workshops ranged from Bioethics of globalization, Legal perspectives, bioethics in research, Bioethics in fields like surgery, otolaryngology, and psychiatry and Introduction of Bio ethics teaching in the regular medical curriculum.

The workshops disseminated contemporary ethical issues to the younger generation. They were open to all the institutions. The focus subjects were (a) Informed consent in General practice and in Surgery (b) Informed consent in Special situations e.g. transplant donations, consent for treatment on behalf of vulnerable sections of the society namely, children, dependants, accident victims, comatose patients, mentally deranged persons, etc. (c) Emerging definitions of Death and Euthanasia (d) Research ethics (e) The role of Institutional Ethics committees (IEC, IRB) in approving and monitoring research studies (f) Misconduct during Research study: Plagiarism, mis-reporting, avoiding important negative results, etc.

On 16.3.2015, a meeting of the India Nodal Bioethics Centre was conducted with the SRM University Vice Chancellor, Pro Vice Chancellor, Registrar and the Dean of SRM Medical College. In this meeting, the Teaching of Bioethics to students was inaugurated.

Activities in the Asian region

Being the nodal centre for India, the executives of this centre visited sister units in other South Asian countries. Dr P. Thangaraju delivered a lecture in University of Philippines on

30 September 2014, on Conflict of interest between the researcher and the sponsoring institutions. On 23-24 January 2014, Dr D Balakrishnan delivered a guest lecture on his Model for teaching bioethics to medical undergraduates, in B P Koirala University, at the inaugural ceremony of the Nepal National Bioethics unit.

Honorary professorships

In order to promote in the Asian region, Honorary Professorship of Bioethics was conferred on the following distinguished teachers from abroad and from India.

1. Dr. S. Russel F. D'Souza, Director of Clinical Trials and Bipolar Programme, Northern Psychiatric Research, Melbourne, Australia.
2. Major General Prof. Dato Dr. Mohammed Zin Bidin, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Defence Health, National Defence University of Malaysia, Chair of Malaysia Bioethics unit.
3. Dr. Harischandra Gambheera, National Institute of Mental Health, Colombo, Srilanka, Prof of Bioethics and Psychiatry, Chair of Srilanka Bioethics unit.
4. Dr E. Mohandas, Sun Medical Research Centre, Trichur and Prof of Bioethics and Psychiatry, Fr. Muller Medical College, Mangalore.
5. Dr Mrs Princy Palatty, Prof of Bioethics and Pharmacology, Fr. Muller Medical College Mangalore, Chair, Bioethics Network, Southern India.
6. Prof Dr Mrs Mary Mathew Kasturba Medical College Manipal, Prof of Bioethics and Pathology.
7. Prof Dr. Anu Kant Mittal, Professor of Psychiatry and bioethics, Rajiv Gandhi Medical College Mumbai, Chair, Bioethics Network, Western India.
8. Prof. Dr. Mushtaq A. Margoob, Professor of Psychiatry, Govt. Medical College, Srinagar, Kashmir, Chair, Bioethics Network, Northern India.
9. Dr Anand Ramakrishnan BSc MBBS, MMedSc, MRCPsych, Member of the College council of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, UK.

This signal initiative has generated a great camaraderie and enthusiasm, in our region.

Honorary Faculty of Bioethics in SRM University



Activities in the International arena

- (i) The India Bioethics Nodal Centre was represented in the 10th World Conference on Bioethics, Medical Ethics & Health Law, and in the International Forum of Teachers held in Jerusalem in January 2015. Dr P Thangaraju delivered a presentation on Conflict of Interest in Medical and Scientific Research. Dr D Balakrishnan presented the *Vitum-Bioethics* teaching model.
- (ii) Dr P Thangaraju represented the India Nodal Bioethics Centre at the XI World conference on bioethics, medical Ethics and Health law in Naples Italy on 18 -22 October 2015. He delivered a lecture on 'Dilemmas in animal experimentation in Medical and Scientific Research – a boon or a bane'. Drawing from his personal experiences as the Vice chancellor of the largest veterinary university in Asia, he dealt in depth. He also chaired a session.
- (iii) The Ethical Teachers Training Course (ETTC) of the UNESCO is a prestigious course. By the leave of the Honourable Chancellor and the President of SRM University, the next ETTC is scheduled to be conducted in SRM university campus, in September / October 2015. We have obtained the confirmation from the Regional office of Unesco. Around 25 distinguished and senior medical teachers from the entire Asian region, will be trained with all the five modules of the Unesco ETTC programme. The SRM University India Nodal Bioethics Centre will defray the entire expenses of the teaching faculty as well as the Unesco officials. As an additional encouragement, SRM University has committed itself to foot the entire local hospitality to all the participants also. We are awaiting the announcement of the actual dates, from Bangkok.

The Stellar and Commendable activities of the India Nodal Bioethics Centre

- (i) Introducing a newer model for teaching bioethics: The two major impediments in teaching bioethics to medical students are (i) non availability of time, in the already overburdened medical syllabus and (ii) the lack of trained teachers. To effectively overcome these impediments, we propounded a new model, and christened it as Vertically Integrated model for teaching the undergraduate medical students (*Vitum-bioethics*). The Unesco Chair, Prof Carmi, encouragingly welcomed the same and also graciously lent his name to the same. Subsequently, this vitum model had been published in the premiere edition of Bioethics Enquiry journal.
- (ii) MS course in Bioethics: This curriculum is based on the core Bioethics curriculum of UNESCO. The approval to start this master level course had already been obtained from the University Academic Council. We are awaiting

the developments in our country, regarding the introduction of bioethics curriculum in medical course, so that the course content of this Masters course, can be designed with more relevance.

- (iii) National Conclave on Teaching Bioethics to medical students: in September 2014, we organized a two day long Conclave in Chennai. The unit heads from India and, also from Nepal attended this retreat and helped us to refine the *vitum-bioethics* curriculum. In addition, the National President and the Secretary General of the Indian Medical Association (IMA) had also been invited by us. This Conclave proceedings have now, germinated into a nationwide training of the entire membership of the IMA, comprising of Two hundred and Fifty thousand practising doctors, across the entire country.
- (iv) The India Nodal Bioethics Centre had been active in the National level training faculty in the training workshops for the Medical bioethics teachers. Dr P Thangaraju represented the India Nodal Bioethics Centre, in the inaugural of the 3T workshop in the Maharashtra University of Health Sciences (MUHS) in June 2015. With his erudition and previous expertise as the Vice Chancellor of the largest veterinary university in Asia, he helped in refining the training curriculum. Prof. D. Balakrishnan, Prof. A. Saravanan and Prof. Vijaya ragavan served as the National faculty heads in their respective fields of Surgery, Physiology and Anatomy and also trained the future trainers. They received the personal appreciation of the Vice Chancellor and Pro vice Chancellor of the MUHS. In addition, Dr D Balakrishnan took the initiative in the training workshop in the D. Y. Patil University in Pune.

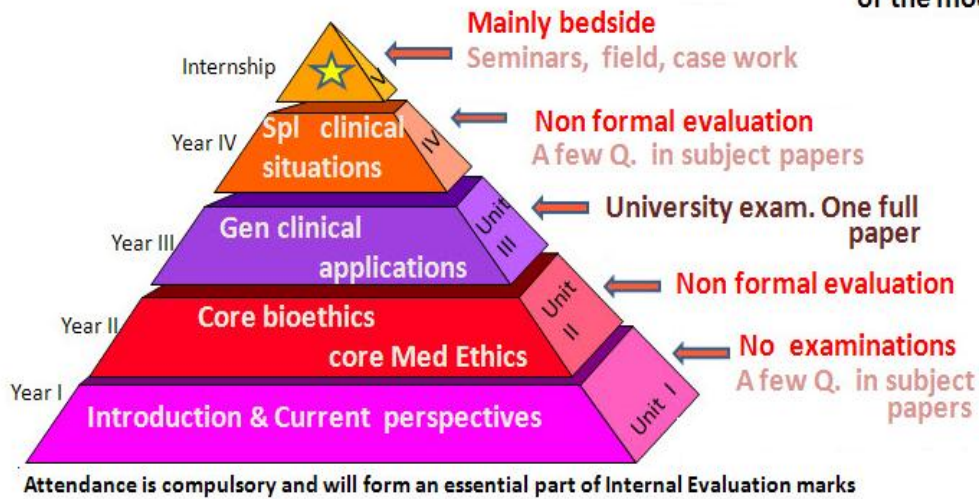
Upcoming programmes of the India Nodal Bioethics Centre

- (i) The Ethical Teachers Training Course (ETTC) of the UNESCO is a prestigious course, conducted by the Unesco. The Regional office of Unesco at Bangkok has scheduled the next ETTC in SRM university campus, in early 2016.
- (ii) In the next one year period, six workshops in specific subjects relating to Medical bioethics will be conducted by the SRM University. These workshops will be of the highest standard, with practical input, and will empower the practicing medical professionals.
- (iii) In order to catch them, young medical students will be targeted right from the day of admission, with interactive sessions.
- (iv) To derive the maximum benefit from the ETTC, follow up training courses (with the same content of ETTC, and collaboration with the Unesco Regional offices) will be organized by INBC, in SRM University, for this region.

Vertically Integrating Model for Teaching Bioethics to the Medical Undergraduates

Vitum Bioethics - India Nodal Bioethics Centre - Balakrishnan D & Thangaraju P

Summary of the model



Presentation of the Vitum model in Philippines

National Bioethics Conclave 20 Nov 2014

*Eminent experts from all over India congregated
and refined our Bioethic curriculum Model.*



Some distinguished attendees
Hon Justice of Supreme Court of India,
Former Chairman Law Commission,
Rectors from Nepal, & Sikkim,
Dr Deshpande of Delhi,
Dr K K Aggarwal of IMA, & several others.

UNESCO Chair in Bioethics



**India Nodal
Bioethics Centre**



**Inauguration of the
Nepal Bioethics unit**

**D. Balakrishnan gave a Guest
lecture on Vitum model**

