



## GOVERNMENT OF KERALA

### Abstract

Health & Family Welfare Department - Health Systems Research in the Health Department - State Research Advisory Committee (SRAC) - Constituted - Orders issued.

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### HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (F) DEPARTMENT

G.O.(Rt)No.2954/2022/H&FWD Dated,Thiruvananthapuram, 15-12-2022

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Read 1. G.O.(Rt)No. 367/2020/H&FWD dated, 22/02/2020.  
2. Note No. SHSRC/77/ADMIN1/2022 dated 10-10-2022 from the Executive Director, State Health System Resource Centre.

### ORDER

Health Systems Research is the foundation of an evidence based approach to health policy making and implementation. The Health & Family Welfare Department of Kerala envisages a scenario where system changes and health related policies are guided by evidence. Even though there is a wealth of information, extensive data and qualified human resource, it is observed that, there is a lack of institutional mechanism to use this and do need based specific impact assessments, situational analysis etc. in the Directorate of Health Services.

2. The State Health Systems Resource Centre - Kerala (SHSRC-K), under State Mission Director National Health Mission, is the nodal Agency, constituted for conducting & guiding health systems research in Kerala. Their primary mandate is to do health system research, health policy and planning, strategy development, innovation and knowledge management. As per the Government Order read as 1<sup>st</sup> paper above, Government have constituted State Level Research & Development Committee and Resource Group for Research studies and other studies in Directorate of Health Services.

3. The Executive Director, SHSRC as per the note read as 2<sup>nd</sup> paper above, reported that there is considerable overlap between aforesaid committees in terms of composition and roles. Permission from the two committees alone is not sufficient to conduct studies, since Ethical Committee approval is mandatory for any study involving human participants. State Health Systems Resource Centre has an Institutional Research Committee (IRC) and registered Institutional Ethics Committee (IEC).

4. Government have examined the matter in detail. Accordingly in supercession of Government Order read as 1<sup>st</sup> paper above, the following orders

are issued in order to streamline health systems research, including operational research, situational analysis, impact assessments studies, etc. :

***I) Objective:***

The overall objective is to ensure involvement of all in the meaningful and relevant research studies/ operational research to improve the outcomes of schemes, programs and service delivery.

The other objectives are :-

1. To improve skills to do research
2. To inculcate the evidence-based approach
3. To take up operational research in the FHCJPHC/ other health institutions through outcome focused interventions.

***II) State Research Advisory Committee (SRAC)***

At the state level there will be a State Research Advisory Committee (SRAC). The composition of the SRAC is as follows:

Principal Secretary, Health & Family Welfare Department	- Chairperson
State Mission Director, National Health Mission	- Co- Chairperson
Director of Health Services	-Vice - Chairperson
Executive Director, SHSRC	-Convener
Designated District Medical Officer	-Member
Designated District Programme Manager	-Member
Designated District Surveillance Officer	-Member
Five nominated public health/research experts from the department	-5 Members

DMO, DPM & DSO shall preferably have qualification/expertise in public health/research. The SRAC shall meet at least twice a year / more frequently if needed.

***The roles and responsibilities of the SRAC are as follows :***

1. Identify and prioritise research areas and topics.
2. Identify and arrange collaborations with other premier research institutions, Medical Colleges, Universities and line departments.
3. Engage in research collaborations with national & international agencies, NGOs and institutes.
4. Take effort to build capacity and mentor a group of researchers from staff of the department at all levels.

***III) The roles and responsibilities of State Health Systems Resource Centre-Kerala (SHSRC-K) are as follows:***

1. SHSRC-K will be the nodal agency for research within the department.
2. Coordinate and guide research activities at all levels in the health department.
3. Give technical guidance to and mentor staff interested in taking up relevant studies/ operational research.
4. Build research capacity of staff at all levels.
5. Encourage all field level functionaries as well as programme officers at district and state level to take up operational researches relevant to their area of work.

***IV) The Role of Programme Officers***

The Programme Officers in charge of various programmes at State and district level will liaison with the SRAC & SHSRC to take up research projects in their area of activity. They will also encourage staff at all levels to take up operational research activities in their respective programmes. All such researches will be conducted through SHSRC.

5) The following will be the mechanisms to streamline the process of scrutiny and approval for research proposals.

- i. The overall policy decisions and prioritisation with respect to research will rest with the SRAC.
- ii. SHSRC being the research and technical support arm of the Department of Health & Family Welfare, shall set up a procedure to review, guide, approve and monitor research proposals from within the department.
- iii. SHSRC will be the nodal agency to approve study proposals by researchers from the Health Department. The Institutional Research Committee (IRC) of SHSRC shall scrutinise the technical aspects of the proposal. Following the technical approval from the IRC, the Institutional Ethics Committee (IEC) of SHSRC shall scrutinise the ethical aspects of the proposal and approve as it deems fit. Studies that have approval of the IEC of SHSRC shall be deemed to have the approval of the Health & Family Welfare Department.
- iv. Only proposals in which the Principal Investigator (PI) or Co Principal Investigator (Co-PI) is a staff under Health & Family Welfare Department

shall be considered for approval by SHSRC.

- v. In cases where policy decisions are needed or when SHSRC is of the opinion that a higher level scrutiny is needed, the same will be referred to the SRAC for opinion. The SRAC will scrutinise the proposal in its meeting and either accord sanction or refer the same to Government for decision. Once approved by the SRAC or Government, SHSRC shall take up the proposal in its IRC & IEC for required approvals.
- vi. All approved studies shall be strictly monitored by a team from SHSRC under the guidance of its IRC & IEC. Permission granted shall liable to be withdrawn or suspended if it is found at any stage that there are technical / ethical issues during the course of the research. Suspended permissions can only be revoked after the IRC & IEC are convinced that the issues have been corrected to their satisfaction.

(By order of the Governor)  
TINKU BISWAL  
PRINCIPAL SECRETARY

To:

The State Mission Director, National Health Mission, Thiruvananthapuram.

The Director of Health Services, Thiruvananthapuram.

The Director of Medical Education, Thiruvananthapuram.

The Executive Director, State Health System Resource Centre.

All District Medical Officers.

All District Programme Managers.

Health & Family Welfare (FW) Department.

The Principal Accountant General (Audit/A&E) Thiruvananthapuram

Information and Public Relations (Web & New Media) Department.

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Forwarded /By order

Section Officer

Copy to:

PS to Minister (H&FW)

PA to Principal Secretary (Health)