Faculty of Medicine Oration

Research for Health

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Health research deals with two inseparable aspects of heath development: generating scientifically valid information for solving priority health problems and influence the improvement of the functioning of the health system. Thus, research for health include a broad range research activities .from basic research to clinical / epidemiological research to health policy research using a wide range of methodologies – from sophisticated laboratory techniques to randomised clinical trials, community based studies to analysis of secondary data.

Globally, concerns have been expressed regarding the inequities in the availability of funding for health research (10 /90 gap) and in the availability of resources. At the regional level too, wide variations are seen in the organization for conduct of research with some countries having a well organized health research system and others with limited resources and organizational structures. We need to consider the status in Sri Lanka too.

There are several key issues relevant to health research per se. Some of the key issues are discussed   in this presentation. Availability of resources   -   human resources, infrastructure facilities and finances is a key factor that influence conduct of research in many developing countries. A research environment conducive to conduct of research is another important consideration.

Capacity building is required in many areas such as knowledge generation, knowledge assessment, knowledge transfer, research ethics and in research management.

One area of concern in many developing countries is the application of research findings. Several approaches have been suggested to improve research utilization among which are : client oriented research programmes, programme based research, preparation of policy briefs and sensitization of the public through media.