In October 2017, the Indian Council of Medical Research released the “National Ethical Guidelines for Biomedical and Health Research Involving Human Participants”. Since then these guidelines have been widely disseminated to sensitize researchers as well as ethics committees about the updated ethical requirements. Under the direction of Dr Balram Bhargava, DG ICMR and Secretary DHR an initiative was taken to draft a handbook for the National Ethical Guidelines for Biomedical and Health Research Involving Human Participants.

The aim of this handbook is to serve as an easy and quick reference to the detailed guidance summarizing the 12 sections of the main ethical guidelines, which includes guidance on Ethical Principles, General Ethical Issues, Responsible Conduct of Research, Ethics Committees, Informed Consent, dealing with Vulnerable persons, Clinical Trials, Genetics Testing and Research, Biobanking and Datasets, Public Health Research, Socio behavioral research for health, Research during Disasters or Emergencies.

The handbook was prepared in a very simple language that captures the essence of the source document and was released by Dr Shekhar C Mande, Secretary DSIR and DG, CSIR during the 2nd day of the Symposium on Gandhi & Health @150 at ICMR Headquarters on 26th March, 2019.

It is hoped that this handbook will strengthen the ethical conduct of biomedical and health research and, thereby improve the dignity, rights, safety and well-being of research participants.