

FMES activities: some highlights

In January, some of us attended a workshop at the Sri Chitra Tirunal Institute of Medical Sciences and Technology, on research ethics in South Asia. Over five days, a variety of subjects related to research ethics were covered through lectures and case study discussions. Discussions were lively, reflecting the level of interest in the subject for a small but significant group of professionals.

At this meeting we also made contact with doctors at the Aga Khan University in Karachi, who are actively involved in running a number of ethics-related programmes in the hospital. In July one of us attended a workshop in Karachi on research ethics. The visit was an eye-opener in terms of the extent of discussion on ethics within Aga Khan University. It was also a wonderful experience to be welcomed with such overwhelming hospitality. There are so many strong bonds between the two countries. As a result of these two meetings, we hope to develop a sustained dialogue on medical ethics in South Asia.

On July 1, we participated in a workshop where representatives of the government, medical associations, consumer groups, insurance companies and health activists discussed proposed amendments to the Bombay Nursing Home Registration Act, 1949, one of the oldest Acts to regulate nursing homes. The revised Act, to be called the Maharashtra Clinical Establishments Act, will cover all private and public hospitals, diagnostic centres, laboratories and medical practitioners of all systems, in the state.

Members also helped organise and speak at two workshops, and came to recognise how effective these programmes are to reach out to the medical community. A two-day workshop under the auspices of the Academy for Medical Sciences in Nagpur, was received with enthusiasm by participants. A one-day workshop for students of the health and development course at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences was equally lively, with heated discussions. Doctors and students were willing to give up their Sundays to sit through lectures on ethics. We hope to hold more such programmes in the future.

Finally, the latest on the labour of love: a CD ROM with eight volumes of Issues in Medical Ethics is available at an introductory price of Rs 300 - a steal, considering the amount of valuable information and comment from eight years of the journal. You can send your money order or cheque (with appropriate additions for out-station cheques) to our office for a copy of the CD. You can also look at the journal at

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[Back to index](#)

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