

India-UK **Cancer** **Research** Initiative



DEPARTMENT OF BIOTECHNOLOGY
Ministry of Science & Technology

Concept Note

India-UK Cancer Research Initiative Summit,

— Nov 14th -16th, 2018 —

The Lalit, Barakhamba Rd, Fire Brigade Lane,
Connaught Place, New Delhi, 110001

Introduction

The **India-UK Cancer Research Initiative** is a collaborative 5-year bilateral research initiative by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Ministry of Science & Technology, India and Cancer Research UK (CRUK) that will focus on affordable approaches to cancer. Both CRUK and the DBT will invest £5m each in this initiative.

The **India-UK Cancer Research Initiative** has grown out of the mounting global challenges related to affordability of cancer prevention and care, and the potential to make significant progress against cancer outcomes. The initiative will bring together leading Indian and UK experts to identify a core set of research challenges under the theme affordable approaches to cancer, and provide funding to both develop new research alliances and undertake impactful research.

The initiative will be launched at the **India-UK Cancer Research Initiative Summit**, to be held in New Delhi, India, from **November 14th to November 16th, 2018**. The three-day Inaugural Researchers' Summit will bring together experts to identify the key questions that will drive the 5-year initiative. The Summit will facilitate knowledge sharing and communication among scientists, technologists, epidemiologists, clinicians and public health professionals.

Background

In the UK, cancer accounts for more than a quarter of all deaths at 1,64,000 deaths each year; and in 2016 lung, bowel, breast and prostate cancers together accounted for almost half of all cancer related deaths.¹ In India, every year, 7,00,000 new

cancer patients are registered and four cancers—breast and cervical cancer in females and oral cavity and lung cancer in males - account for more than 50% of all cancer deaths.² Cancer mortality in India is approximately 5,56,400 per year.³ Late detection, lack of awareness about preventive measures, lack of access to adequate treatment facilities and the massive financial burden of treatment are among the key challenges that affect cancer patients across the globe. It is estimated that worldwide cancer incidence will rise by 63% and deaths due to cancer by 71% by 2040.⁴

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41,000
deaths each year



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Despite the surge in technological, biomedical, clinical, and pharmaceutical innovations aimed at improving cancer outcomes, the overburdened healthcare systems across the globe remain ill-equipped to meet the massive burden of escalating cancer care costs.

¹ Cancer Research UK, <https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/health-professional/cancer-statistics/mortality#heading-Zero>,

² <http://cancerindia.org.in/statistics/>

³ Chakrabarty, Jyothi. (2017). Economic Burden of Cancer in India. *Indian Journal of Public Health Research and Development*. 8. 137-141. 10.5958/0976-5506.2017.00175.9

⁴ Ferlay J, Ervik M, Lam F, Colombet M, Mery L, Piñeros M, Znaor A, Soerjomataram I, Bray F (2018). *Global Cancer Observatory: Cancer Tomorrow*. Lyon, France: International Agency for Research on Cancer. Available from: <https://gco.iarc.fr/tomorrow>, accessed 28.09.19

The India-UK Cancer Research Initiative sets forth a roadmap for catalysing collaborations that align the best researchers, scientists, healthcare organizations and institutions to a multi-disciplinary research platform leading to high value, low cost outcomes for cancer care. This joint investment in research represents a unique opportunity to leverage the strengths of evolving cancer care approaches in India and the UK to co-create knowledge that benefits stakeholders around the globe.

Approach

To ensure that the **India-UK Cancer Research Initiative's** focus and approach reflects the research contexts and priorities of DBT and CRUK, an advisory board of leading experts from both countries will oversee this initiative in three phases.

Phase One: 'Identifying Core Challenges.' In this phase a broad set of research challenges will be articulated such as innovative approaches to identifying risk factors, early detection and diagnosis,

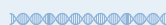
and re-purposing of drugs. Funding partners will host a series of facilitated workshops across various locations.

Phase Two: 'Establishing New Research Partnerships.' Small-scale, collaborative awards will be given to Indian and UK researchers for the first 12-18 months of the initiative, establishing new bilateral research partnerships. These awards would be made following an open call and review; and enable partners to travel between India and UK to develop an understanding of research contexts, leading to the preparation of joint proposals.

Phase Three: 'Programme Awards.' Building upon earlier phases, funding would provide support for small and large-scale studies over 3 years which have the potential to deliver translatable research outputs and make significant progress against the core set of challenges identified in the first phase. Awards would be made following open calls and review, with the majority of the £10m funding being invested in this final phase.

Conclusion

The India-UK Cancer Research Initiative provides an opportunity to tackle the global epidemic of cancer by opening new pathways for international knowledge exchange and research base. The research outcomes of this initiative will aid cancer prevention, control and management in the long term. The joint investment by both countries in this initiative is a testament to the emerging consensus that solutions to affordable cancer care lie in building strategic and evidence-based research partnerships that benefit the global cancer community.



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