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A stride toward global clinical research excellence

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Dear Editor,

I am writing with reference to the news read in the daily newspaper "The News - International"¹ regarding a new initiative taken by the University of Health Sciences (UHS), Lahore, in positioning itself at the forefront of global clinical research standards.¹ UHS has charted a new course for research supervisors and postgraduate students alike, promising a brighter future for medical research. Revealed during the 193rd meeting of the UHS Advanced Studies and Research Board on September 14, 2023, chaired by the Vice-Chancellor Professor Ahsan Wahid Rathore, the institution is set to implement the International Conference on Harmonization - Good Clinical Practice (ICH-GCP) course as a mandatory requirement for all post-graduate clinical researchers. This progressive decision underscores UHS's commitment to fostering excellence in research methodologies and ethical standards.

The ICH-GCP course is recognized globally as a gold standard for ensuring the design, conduct, and reporting of clinical trials, aligning with the best international ethical and scientific standards to ensure participants' safety and data integrity. The short course imparts essential GCP principles and their practical application, catering to all involved in the clinical research.²

The implementation of ICH-GCP as a mandatory requirement reflects UHS's proactive approach to staying abreast of advancements in clinical research and aligning its educational programs with global best practices. This will not only benefit the research supervisors and postgraduate students at UHS but will also contribute to the overall credibility of research conducted at UHS.

As a transformative measure, UHS mandates online GCP knowledge tests for supervisors overseeing programs such

as Master of Surgery (MS), Doctor of Medicine (MD), Master of Dental Surgery (MDS), Master of Philosophy (MPhil), and Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD). This step ensures that supervisors possess the requisite knowledge and skills for conducting clinical research at the highest standards. Furthermore, this decision is likely to attract more aspiring researchers to UHS in the future.

It has also been read in the newspaper that the ICH-GCP course, expertly crafted by distinguished British scientist Dr. Isaac John, promises to elevate UHS's clinical research standards. We are very hopeful that Dr. John, with extensive experience and affiliations with international institutions, will bring invaluable expertise to the initiative.

Moreover, the university's initiative to bear expenses for existing supervisors within a 6-month window appears to be a commendable and generous effort facilitating a smooth transition to the elevated standards. Prospective registrants from the faculty and current supervisors have been urged to prepare for the registration process initiation. It sets a precedent for other institutions, emphasizing the importance of upholding global standards in clinical research. As UHS paves the way for a new era in medical research, it stands poised to produce graduates who will make lasting contributions to the advancement of healthcare on an international scale.

List of Abbreviations

ICH-GCP	International Conference on Harmonization - Good Clinical Practice
UHS	University of Health Sciences

Conflict of interest

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About the Author

The author is currently employed as the Director of Media and Publications with an additional charge of Director Students' Affairs at the UHS Lahore, Pakistan. With a Masters and specialization in mass communication and journalism, Mr. Atif has administrative experience of more than two decades in academia.