

Regional Unified Health Research Agenda

The Philippine National Health Research System, with its goal to enhance health status through research, generates the National Unified Health Research Agenda (NUHRA) as one of its core areas, alongside ethics, utilization, resource mobilization, system monitoring and evaluation, and capacity building. While the NUHRA serves as the country's template for health research and development efforts, the Regional Unified Health Research Agenda (RUHRA) is more relevant to regional problems and gives direction at the regional level.

The RUHRA presents the identified health research priorities. It should guide researchers and funders alike in the development of more relevant health research in the region for the next six years.

Regional health researches primarily focused on environmental health, specifically about the effects of pollution or contamination due to industry-based sources. In the current RUHRA, projects of highest priority are improving maternal, neonatal and child health, and addressing infectious diseases, especially sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and dengue. Prioritized research areas also include food safety and nutrition, health system improvement, and environmental health among others.

REGIONAL UNIFIED HEALTH RESEARCH AGENDA 2017-2022

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Regional Consultation

The Regional Health Research and Development Consortium (RHRDC) of each region was included in the identification process of health research priorities through the conduct of a consultation. The regional consultation for Region IV-A was held at The Lake Front, Tagaytay City on 18-19 May 2017 facilitated by the Alliance for Improving Health Outcomes, Inc. A total of 19 stakeholders attended the regional consultation. Their input, together with technical papers and situationers defining the national and regional status of health research, was considered in the formulation of the NUHRA and RUHRA.

The research priorities and perceived needs of each representative were raised through small focus group discussions, with participants grouped according to two categories: academe and non-academe. Groups suggested research topics and a representative from each presented these to the plenary. Nineteen general themes were established. These themes were prioritized using criteria with designated scoring weights established by the stakeholders. The themes were ranked using the following criteria:

- health impact (40%)
- magnitude of the problem (30%)
- feasibility of study (20%), and
- innovation (10%).

Regional Health Research Priorities



Maternal, neonatal, and child health

Researches on maternal, neonatal and child health services and its utilization



Infectious diseases

Researches on prevalent infectious diseases in the region

HIV, AIDS, and sexually transmitted infections



Researches on factors that affect the spread of human immunodeficiency virus, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, and STIs, including monitoring & evaluation of programs



Reproductive health

Researches on factors leading to early pregnancy and contraception and immunization in men and women



Dengue

Researches on causes of continued high prevalence of dengue in the region, including treatment and monitoring & evaluation of programs



Multidrug resistance

Researches on multidrug resistance of environmental and clinical isolates



Tuberculosis

Researches on case finding, screening, and diagnosis of tuberculosis, including multi- and extremely-drug resistant tuberculosis



Lifestyle-related diseases

Researches on prevention, treatment, and control of lifestyle-related diseases



Food safety and nutrition

Researches on food safety, food security, and nutrition status of the community



Health systems

Researches on health systems quality, access, availability, and monitoring & evaluation of programs and services



Environmental health

Researches on water safety, biodiversity, and climate change resilience of barangays



Disaster risk reduction and management

Researches on disaster risk assessment, prevention, and preparedness of the region



Substance abuse

Researches on causes of and interventions for substance or drug abuse



Herbal medicinal products

Researches on practices, use, and development of herbal medicines and products



Health effects of urbanization and industrialization

Researches on impact of urbanization and industrialization on health



Development of diagnostics

Researches advancing diagnostic development for various infectious agents



Mental health

Researches on causes, treatment, and management of mental health issues to aid health services



Geriatric health

Researches on health services and programs for the aging population



Functional foods

Researches on the development and commercialization of functional foods