Distribution of IRBs in India
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**Background:** India is considered as a favorite global site for international drug clinical trials. Following the 1,542 deaths related to clinical trials in 2010-12, the Drugs Controller General of India made registration of IRBs mandatory from August 2012.

**Research Questions:** How are these registered IRBs distributed in the different districts of India? Will these IRBs be able to monitor and review the approved projects at regular intervals?

**Findings:** The latest list of registered IRBs (updated up to March 4, 2014) was obtained and analysed in detail. In some states like Sikkim, there is no registered IRB in the whole state. Some states, like Bihar, had total three IRBs in 38 districts and Assam had one IRB in 27 districts. Most of the IRBs were concentrated in cities like Mumbai (56 IRBs in an area of 603.4 km²) and Pune (54 IRBs in an area of 450.69 km²). Big states, like Madhya Pradesh (with an area of 3,09,252 km²), had only six IRBs. Out of the 672 districts in India, only 110 districts had at least one IRB. Professionals wanting to do research in roughly 80% of India have to go to another district to submit their research proposal. For example, a researcher from Kishanganj district Bihar would have to travel 371 kilometres to reach the nearest IRB in Patna district Bihar. From the analysed data, it is obvious that there is no uniform distribution of IRBs in the different parts of India. Researchers in some cities have 56 IRBs nearby to submit proposals whereas other researchers have to travel long distances to submit a proposal to nearest IRB.

**Conclusions:** Proper monitoring and regular review of research activities in a district is practically possible only if there is at least one IRB in that district. In 2013, the Government of India launched measures to upgrade one hospital in each district in India into a Government Medical College. I have sent letters requesting the Government of India to start one IRB in each of these district Medical Colleges. I hope my efforts to setup one IRB in each district of India will help facilitate ethical and useful research in India.