

National Health Research Symposium 2025



Fourth National Health Research Symposium 2025, the flagship scientific event organized by Education, Training and Research Unit of the Ministry of Health, was successfully held on 26 November 2025 at Hotel Galadari. Established in 2017 and conducted biennially, the symposium serves as the premier national platform for showcasing health-related research conducted by healthcare professionals, academics, and students across the country.

This year's theme, "Advancing Health Research in the Era of Artificial Intelligence," highlighted the evolving role of digital innovation in strengthening the nation's research landscape. The event was graced by the Hon. Minister of Health and Mass Media, as Chief Guest, and the Hon. Minister of Science and Technology as Guest of Honour. The symposium brought together administrators, clinicians, researchers, academics, and students, reflecting the multidisciplinary nature of contemporary health research.



This year, the NHRS featured a pre-congress session on “Research Ethics and Community Engagement & Involvement (CEI),” which was held at the auditorium of the Medical Research Institute. Conducted in collaboration with the Institute for Research and Development (IRD), the workshop strengthened participants’ practical understanding of ethical standards and promoted meaningful community participation in health research on 11th November 2025. The main symposium comprised the inauguration, plenary session, breakout sessions for oral presentations, a dedicated poster presentation bay, and the closing ceremony.

Inaugural Ceremony

The ceremonial opening featured the participation of several distinguished guests, including Hon. Minister of Science and Technology, Prof. Chrishantha Abeysena, Dr. Anil Jasinghe (Secretary, Health and Mass Media), Dr. Suranga Dolamulla (Deputy Director General, Education, Training and Research), Dr. Dewanee Ranaweera (Director, Research), Prof. Rohini Seneviratne (Chairperson, National Health Research Council), and Dr. Ke Yuhe, the event’s international special delegate. Their collective presence underscored the Ministry’s commitment to strengthening the national research ecosystem and encouraging evidence-informed policymaking.

Plenary Session: Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Health Research

The highlight of the symposium was the plenary session dedicated to the transformative impact of artificial intelligence in health research.

The Hon. Minister of Health and Mass Media actively participated as the chair during plenary session, reflecting the Government’s strategic interest in advancing health research and innovation. The session was co-chaired by Dr. Suranga Dolamulla, Dr. Janaka Pushpakumara, and Dr. Chamika Senanayake.

Dr. Ke Yu He of SingHealth special delegate from SingHealth Singapore delivered an insightful lecture on “Integrating Artificial Intelligence into Health Research: From Design to Discovery,” highlighting how AI can be embedded across the research lifecycle. Prof. Shamini Prathapan of Department of Community Medicine, University of Sri Jayewardenepura followed with a thought-provoking address on ethical and equity considerations in her presentation, “Ethics and Equity in AI-Driven Health Research: Navigating New Frontiers,” emphasizing responsible and inclusive AI use. Dr. Supun Wijesinghe, Consultant Community Physician of Health Promotion Bureau, then explored the implications of AI for research methodology in his session, “AI and the Future of Research Methodology: Rethinking Evidence Generation,” discussing how AI is reshaping traditional approaches to evidence generation.

A vibrant discussion followed, marked by strong audience engagement. The plenary provided a forward-looking perspective on how AI can be effectively integrated into Sri Lanka's health research culture

Scientific Sessions

Following the plenary session, oral presentations were conducted across eight parallel sessions covering five thematic areas: clinical and biomedical sciences, public health, oral health, Ayurveda, and cross-cutting research domains. Researchers shared locally generated evidence of high relevance, contributing valuable insights to support evidence-informed decision-making processes.

A dedicated poster presentation area allowed participants to engage with research displays without disrupting conference proceedings.

The diversity of scientific contributions highlighted the breadth and vitality of health research initiatives taking place nationwide.

Closing Ceremony

The symposium concluded with a formal closing ceremony presided over by Dr. Suranga Dolamulla, along with senior officials of the Ministry. Awards for the best papers in each category were presented to acknowledge outstanding scientific contributions. Dr. Sinha De Silva, Consultant Community Physician of the Education, Training and Research Unit, delivered the vote of thanks on behalf of the organizers.

Through the successful organization of the National Health Research Symposium 2025, the Ministry of Health and Mass Media has further strengthened Sri Lanka's health research ecosystem and reaffirmed its dedication to fostering high-quality, ethical, and innovative research for national development.