

## LETTER TO EDITOR

# The Transformative Strategic Program of the Men's Health and Reproductive Health Research Center: A Letter to the Editor-in-Chief

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## Dear Editor-in-Chief,

The Men's Health and Reproductive Health Research Center is addressing a critical challenge: the health needs of a vital segment of society that is often overlooked. Men, who represent half of the population, play an essential role in family and societal security. Their health is intrinsically linked to economic, social, cultural, and overall health development. Research reveals a concerning trend: men are generally less healthy than women, engage in riskier lifestyles, and exhibit lower levels of health awareness (1). They are more susceptible to various health risk factors, highlighting the urgent need for targeted interventions to enhance their well-being. Increasing health awareness through planning, training, and education is paramount. Furthermore, the prevalence of primary infertility in Iran stands at 18.3%, with 32% of cases attributed to unexplained causes, 12.5% to female causes, and 13.6% to male causes. As in many countries, infertility presents significant psychological and social challenges for Iranian couples (3).

The issue of infertility affects millions of couples in Iran (4), carrying substantial implications for both individual and societal well-being. Comprehensive healthcare services for this demographic are crucial, especially considering population policies aimed at fostering healthy families.

## 1. Challenges and Strategic Planning

The Center's management faces considerable challenges, including the attraction of specialized human resources, the cultivation of a collaborative and innovative work environ-

ment, the management of limited resources, and the navigation of a rapidly evolving landscape. Effective strategic planning is essential to navigate these complexities and achieve long-term success.

### 1.1. Program Development and Implementation

In a collaborative effort involving the Center's Supreme Council and a dedicated Strategic Council, we have developed a transformative program. This process included a review of historical documents and the application of the Delphi method to meticulously define:

### 1.2. Vision, Mission, and Values

Core principles guiding the Center's direction and impact.

#### 1.2.1. Vision

- Obtaining the first rank of clinical research centers and improving health promotion in Iran
- Becoming a scientific hub in the production of knowledge and the education of men's health and reproductive health
- Influence on policy making at national and international levels.
- Creating a focal point for restorative urology treatments with the ability to establish extensive and multilateral international communication for the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean region and the world.

#### 1.2.2. Mission Statement

The center fulfills its mission by monitoring men's health, monitoring reproductive health indicators, prioritizing areas affecting men's health and reproductive health, and guiding and laying the foundation for related research and technology.

#### 1.2.3. Values

An interaction with modern sciences, compliance with medical ethics, focus on the needs of society, effective governance

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in the field of scientific productions, responsiveness, effective feedback to interested parties and focus on first-level prevention

### 1.3. SWOT Analysis

Identification of internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats.

A: The most important strengths were identified as the presence of outstanding researchers, diversity of specialties, existence of biobank in the center to store biological samples for research, existence of a registry system in the center to manage clinical data. The implementation of the comprehensive project of men's health to identify the current situation and predict the future of men's health, as well as running a scientific journal of men's health.

B: The most important weaknesses were identified (insufficient information for patients to apply for biobank services, insufficient equipment and technology, weakness in ongoing review of research priorities, shortage of resources).

C: The most important opportunities included: global interest in men's health issues, the availability of foreign funding for research projects, interdisciplinary collaborations with governmental and private sectors including knowledge-based firms in Iran. Other aspects were increasing patients' expectations, planning annual conferences on men's health, policymakers' support for improving men's health, the epidemiological transition of disease patterns to chronic and non-communicable diseases, collaboration with scientific bodies at local and international levels. D: The most important threats that were identified included presence of competitors with experience in reproductive health, laborious recruitment policies, lack of reliable and up-to-date information on the process of changes in many aspects of men's health, problems in internationalization with the exchange of professors and Students and private sector investment in the research.

### 1.4. Strategic Positioning

Clarification of the Center's competitive advantage and sustainability path.

#### 1.4.1. Strategic Issues and Goals

Prioritization of focus areas and establishment of clear objectives.

#### 1.4.2. Strategies and Operational Plans

Detailed actions required to achieve our goals.

## 2. Program Outcomes and Key Features

The program, designed over a five-year horizon, aims to significantly enhance men's health through:

### 2.1. Comprehensive Health Monitoring

Tracking key indicators to assess the health status of Iranian men.

### 2.2. Reproductive Health Focus

Prioritization of male reproductive health issues.

### 2.3. Research and Technology Development

Promotion of innovative research solutions to improve men's health.

This program is distinguished by its clear roadmap for establishing the Center's scientific authority (5). By prioritizing differentiation strategies (6, 7), we aim to leverage the Center's unique position within the university and solidify its leadership in men's health and reproductive health research.

The selected actions of the Center are directed towards achieving excellence and establishing national and international leadership strategies. Our thematic differentiation strategy focuses on mission, academic governance, and the provision and allocation of human and financial resources, including the establishment of a specialized department of men's health and scientific governance in reproductive health within North and East Tehran.

The institutional excellence strategy involves the formation of specialized teams in men's and reproductive health, faculty participation in specialized courses, and enhancing societal knowledge regarding infertility and the importance of healthy family planning. Key initiatives include holding an annual conference in observance of International Men's Health Week (8) and collaborating with organizations such as UNFPA and WHO to improve organizational quality through the standardization of education and research systems (9).

The national management strategy focuses on developing curriculum standards for reproductive and men's health, establishing national service standards, and conducting prospective studies on reproductive health. Our engagement in policy-making and social campaigns will address recent declines in population growth while aiming to improve maternal and child health indicators.

The international strategy emphasizes advanced research in reproductive health, creating global forums for men's health, training leading scientists, and managing collaborations with reputable international institutions.

## 3. Conclusion

The strategic program of the Men's Health and Reproductive Health Research Center represents a bold and necessary initiative to enhance the health and well-being of Iranian men and families. Developed through a meticulous process, this program addresses key challenges and provides a clear framework for achieving our ambitious goals. We be-

lieve this initiative will have a significant and lasting impact on national health.

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