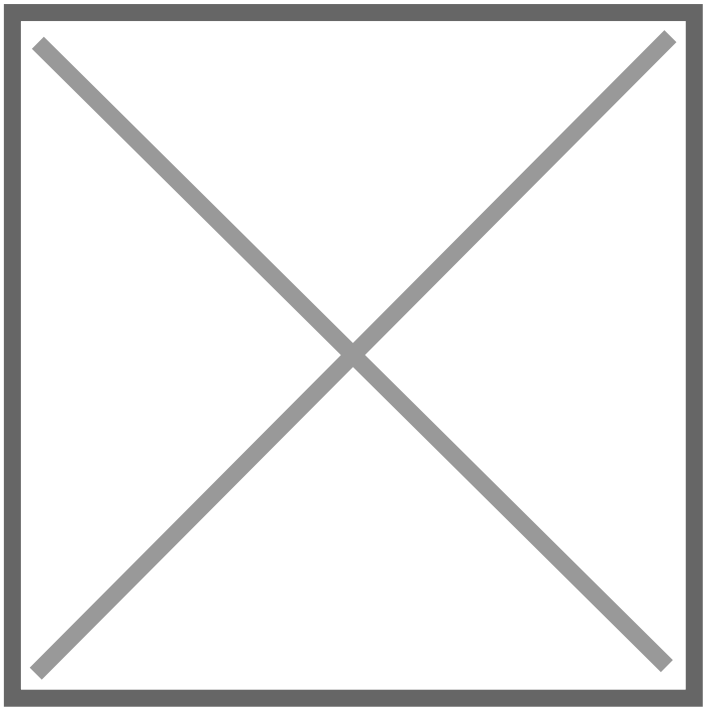
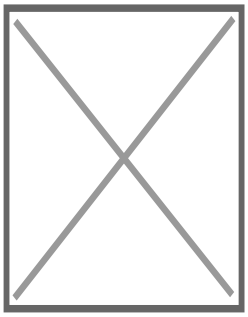
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"The CT industry is expected to touch $1.2 billion by 2010"

06 August 2007 | News



"The CT industry is expected to touch $1.2 billion by 2010"



-Prof SK Gupta, Dean, ICRI, New Delhi

How did you come up with the idea of such an institute?

India is recognized as a hub but trained professionals are not there. There are institutes like ICR (UK) or ACRP (US), but nothing as such in India. The clinical trial industry is expected to touch $1.2 billion by 2010. There have been a lot of national and international reports in which it has been mentioned that we will need around 20,000 -50,00 clinical research professionals. So the need for professionals was felt and that's how the institute came into existence.

How do you foresee growth in clinical research in a country like India?

India is on a rise as far as clinical trials are considered. There are around 264 clinical trials registered (Indian as well as global) and many more are being conducted. India its developing its own molecules so those clinical trials are done, but apart from this there are several multinational companies conducting clinical trials. Looking at the statistics, five years back there were 10 CROs. Today there are more than 150. Here is a vertical growth.

What kind of students does the institute take up?

There are broadly three categories of students- MBBS and pharmacy graduates, life science graduates, graduates from alternative system of medicine like Ayurveda, dentists. The students should have a life science background to understand how a drug works, how is it developed and absorbed in the body and its adverse effects in the body.

Give us an overview of the selection procedure.

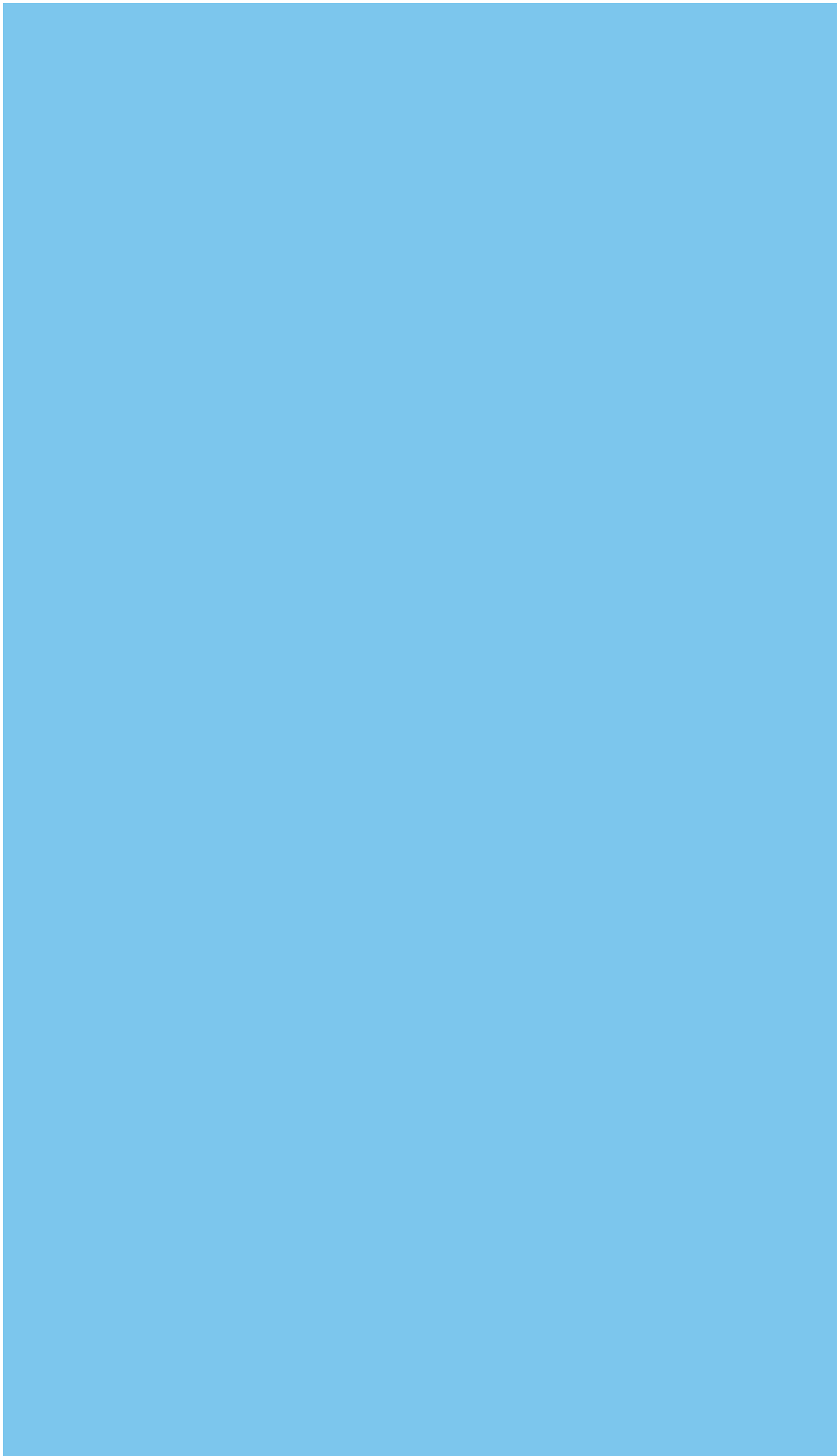
An interview and written test through which candidates are selected. Batch size varies from plakhe to plakhe. In Mumbai the pharmaceutical industry is much more developed and awareness level is very high and therefore we expect around 200 students there. Under the prog we also give them a PG diploma in Pharmaceutical management simultaneously to give them enough insight to conduct clinical trials, how to manage, how to do the financial bidding, how to monitor them.

Are you looking at any collaborations?

We are looking at collaborations with the DBT (Department of Biotechnology), Gujarat government, but it is not easy to bridge the gap between the mindset of the government and the industry.

Why do you think India is experiencing a rise in clinical research?

It is mainly because of a diverse patient population and fast track registration. So the drug development has a life span of 12 years in the US. It is almost half here, thereby cutting down on the cost.



Students speak

BioSpectrum spoke to Himanshu Tandon and Priyanka Chamoli, both of whom passed out from the first batch of MSc (CR) + MBA (Marketing) Course at ICRI in 2006 and are working in the field.

Where are you working currently?

HT: I am working as a clinical data programmer with i3 statprobe.

PC: I work in Panacea Biotec as research associate (quality assurance) - clinical research department.

What was your educational qualification when you took up this course?

HT: I was a life science graduate, B.Sc (General).

PC: When I joined ICRI in year 2004, I was a fresh graduate in science with physics chemistry and maths as my subjects in graduation.

Were you aware of clinical research as a career before you took up the course? What other courses were you considering before you took admission?

HT: At that point of time I was having an idea about this career through some magazines like Business World and Business Today. At that time I was considering an MBA course for my future. Now I feel I took a better decision.

PC: I was planning to go for MBA or MCA. Then I got to know about ICRI's course in clinical research. Frankly, I didn't know much about it but after I visited ICRI, I found the course very interesting and challenging. Today I realize that my decision was right.

Now that you are a clinical research professional, how relevant do you think the training in this field has been for you? How has it helped you get that extra edge?

HT: Being a clinical research professional I can say that training and course contents provided by ICRI were really useful and relevant. The professionals already in the industry had learnt through their experience but we got all those things from books and training. With this knowledge and some experience, ICRI students are very competitive and successful in the industry.

PC: While working in the clinical research industry the training and guidance i got in this field through ICRI helped me a lot. Despite being a fresher, I know many things that even a person in the industry is not confident about. I started my career not by starting learning things like others, I started my career directly by applying my knowledge.

How good do you think is the career in terms of growth and pay package?

HT: In terms of growth, this is a fantastic career because there is demand supply gap.

The growth rate is very high when compared to other careers because of lakhs of educated and trained candidates. The starting pay packages in this field are between Rs 1.8 to 3.5 lakh per annum.

PC: There is enormous growth in this field. The only requirement is dedicated and hard working professionals and if you have good experience, money is never an issue.

Now that you are in the industry, do you think that more such professionals are needed to meet the growing demand and how do you see its future?