

[AS INTRODUCED IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY]

A

BILL

to amend the Pakistan Health Research Council Act, 2016

WHEREAS it is expedient to amend the Pakistan Health Research Council Act, 2016 (Act No. XII of 2016), for the purposes hereinafter appearing:

It is hereby enacted as follows:—

1. Short title and commencement: — (1) This Act shall be called the Pakistan Health Research Council (Amendment) Act, 2020.

(2) It shall come into force at once.

2. Amendment of Section 2, Act XII of 2016. — In the Pakistan Health Research Council Act, 2016 (XII of 2016), hereinafter referred to as the said Act, in section 2, clauses (f), (g), (h), (k), and (s) shall be omitted.

3. Amendment of section 4, Act XII of 2016.—In the said Act, in section 4, in sub-section (1),-

- (a) in clause (c), the words “including training of manpower” shall be omitted;
- (b) in clause (d), for the words “organize and facilitate utilization of” the words “disseminate the” shall be substituted;
- (c) in clause (f), after the words “support of research” the expression “including publication of research” shall be inserted; and
- (d) clauses (g) and (i) shall be omitted.

4. Amendment of section 5, Act XII of 2016.—In the said Act, for section 5, the following shall be substituted, namely:—

“5. Board.— (1) The overall control and superintendence of the affairs of the Council shall vest in a Board, consisting of not less than five members and not exceeding seven members.

(2) The members shall be appointed by the Prime Minister on the recommendation of a nominating committee consisting of—

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| (a) | Minister-in-charge | <i>Chairman</i> |
| (b) | Dean Research of the Aga Khan University, Karachi | <i>Member</i> |
| (c) | Chief Medical Officer of the Shaukat Khanum Hospital, Lahore; | <i>Member</i> |
| (d) | Vice Chancellor of the Khyber Medical University | <i>Member</i> |
| (e) | Principal of the Bolan University | <i>Member</i> |

(3) Nominations to the Board shall be based on the individual's national and international research reputation, who are currently employed by reputable institutions, are involved in research and have a minimum of twenty-five research publications in reputable journals with citation indices greater than 1.0. Experience in research administration, for example as head of a research department or institution or as a research mentor, for example as a supervisor of researchers shall be preferred.

(4) There shall be a Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Board who shall be elected by the Board members at their first meeting.

(5) Board members shall, unless otherwise directed by the Prime Minister, hold office for a period of five years and be eligible for re-appointment. Membership of the Board shall cease and fall vacant if a Board's member resigns or fails to attend three consecutive meetings without sufficient cause or for any other reasons which incapacitates him to function as a member. Any such vacancy shall be filled in within one month.

(6) No person shall be appointed or remain as a member of the Board, if he—

- (a) is declared by a competent court of law to be of an unsound mind;
- (b) has applied before by a competent court of law to be adjudged as an insolvent and his application is pending;
- (c) is declared by a competent court of law to be an un-discharged insolvent;

- (d) has been convicted by a court of law for an offence involving moral turpitude;
- (e) has been debarred from holding any public office under provisions of law; or
- (f) has a conflict of interest with such a position.

(7) The nominating committee may recommend removal from the membership of any member of the Board at any time if the member is disruptive or violates the rules of the Council.”

5. **Amendment of section 6, Act XII of 2016.**—In the said Act, for section 6, the following shall be substituted, namely:—

“6. **Functions of the Board.**— (1) The functions of the Board shall be—

- (a) to formulate policy on health research;
- (b) subject to other provisions of this Act, to appoint necessary officers and employees in a manner and on such terms and conditions as may be prescribed;
- (c) to ensure a transparent, fair and equitable process for evaluating research grant applications and prioritizing the same for grant distribution;
- (d) to ensure that ethical standards are met in all research projects considered for funding, according to the Helsinki principles for human research;
- (e) to ensure a rational merit-based grant distribution system;
- (f) to approve the annual budget;
- (g) to ensure the scientific validity and maintain the highest standards for any publications issued by the Council, including but not limited to the Pakistan journal of medical research; and
- (h) to undertake regular review and evaluation of the research projects and programs funded by the Council to ensure that ethical and scientific principles are not violated and these projects and

programs are proceeding according to their objectives.

(2) In the discharge of its functions, the Board shall be guided on questions of policy by the instructions, if any, given to it from time to time by the Federal Government.”.

6. Amendment of section 7, Act No. XII of 2016.—In the said Act, in section 7,—

(a) in sub-section (1),—

(i) for the word “two”, the word “four” shall be substituted; and

(ii) for the expression “Minister of State or Advisor of the administrative ministry or in their absence the Secretary of the administrative ministry”, the words “Vice Chairman” shall be substituted;

(b) in sub-section (2), for the word “One”, the word “Two” shall be substituted; and

(c) after sub-section (2), amended as aforesaid, the following new sub-section (3) shall be added, namely:—

“(3) The Secretary of the Board shall be a full time employee of the Board, who shall perform all secretarial and office functions of the Board at the direction of the Chairman and shall be responsible for taking minutes at the Board’s meetings, convening Board’s meetings, sending out letters to Board’s members as per direction of the Board’s Chairman.”.

7. Amendment of section 9, Act XII of 2016.— In the said Act, for section 9, the following shall be substituted, namely:—

“**9. Office of the Council**— (1) The Office of the Council shall principally consist of—

- (a) Chief Operating Officer;
- (b) Finance Director;
- (c) Director Research Grants; and
- (d) Director Research Grant Applications.

(2) The Chief Operating Officer shall be appointed by the Board for a period of three years on the recommendation of a recruitment committee, on such terms and conditions as the Board