

Name:

Dr. Rajesh Kumar

Designation:

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Dr. Rajesh Kumar, born on 26 October 1954, is an accomplished public health expert with over four decades of experience in academic leadership, research, and health system strengthening. He currently serves as Senior Consultant at the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), New Delhi, Director of the HealthEquity Action Research Foundation in Chandigarh, and Adjunct Faculty at the University Institute of Public Health Sciences, Maharshi Dayanand University, Rohtak. He resides in Chandigarh, India, and also maintains a current address in Kellyville, NSW, Australia.

He completed his Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) from Medical College, Rohtak in 1981, followed by an MD in Social and Preventive Medicine from the same institute in 1984. He later pursued a Master of Science in Epidemiology from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, UK, in 1992.

Dr. Kumar's career spans from early clinical and academic positions at Medical College, Rohtak and PGIMER Chandigarh, where he served as a Senior Resident, Assistant Research Officer, and eventually rose to become Professor and Head of Community Medicine. He was Dean (Academic) at PGIMER from 2017 to 2019. He also held key national roles, such as Executive Director of the State Health Systems Resource Center, Punjab, and Technical Advisor to the Health Systems Transformation Platform, New Delhi. He worked with WHO-SEARO on multiple assignments as a Temporary International Professional between 2007 and 2012.

His academic contributions are substantial, having supervised 11 doctoral and 15 postgraduate theses, and published 476 scientific papers and book chapters. He has presented over 160 research papers at national and international conferences. His research portfolio includes 32 projects funded by ICMR, DST, WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, and others, raising over ₹13 crores in grants. Dr. Kumar's h-index is 77 with over 37,000 citations, indicating his significant impact on global public health research.

A visionary academic leader, he was instrumental in launching MD (Community Medicine) in 1996, establishing a School of Public Health in 2004, and initiating MPH and BPH programs at PGIMER. He also conceptualized fellowship programs in health economics, occupational and environmental health, and short courses in public health informatics.

Dr. Kumar has received numerous prestigious awards, including the British Council Award (1990), Dr. M. K. Sheshadari Award (1998), and the Endeavour Executive Award from the Australian Government (2010). He has delivered many notable orations including the Dhanwantri Oration and Dr. RV Rajam Oration, and is a Fellow of NAMS, IPHA, and IAPSM.

His policy and advisory work includes membership in national steering committees on NCD monitoring, health standards, and human resources, and chairing committees on rural health research and TB certification. His innovations include development of verbal autopsy tools now used in national mortality surveillance, and designing cost-effective digital health systems for primary care. He also evaluated the National Health Mission and reviewed health equity-related policies.

Dr. Rajesh Kumar's life work reflects a deep and sustained contribution to improving public health in India and beyond, through a rare blend of research excellence, academic innovation, and policy influence.