

# The Future of Islamic Spiritual Medicine

A White Paper on the Establishment  
of the International Research  
Institute of Islamic Spiritual Medicine  
(IRIISM)

[www.iriism.org](http://www.iriism.org)

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# Part I – Why the World Needs an International Research Institute for Islamic Spiritual Medicine

A Global Opportunity at the Intersection of Faith, Health and Research

## Introduction

Across the world, healthcare systems are evolving to meet increasingly complex challenges. Advances in medicine have transformed the diagnosis and treatment of disease, extended life expectancy, and improved the quality of care for millions of people. Yet many patients continue to seek support beyond conventional medical interventions, particularly when facing chronic illness, persistent pain, psychological distress, bereavement, trauma, or conditions for which no clear medical explanation exists.

For many individuals, health is understood not only as a physical or psychological state, but also as a spiritual one. Spiritual beliefs often influence how illness is experienced, how recovery is understood, and where people seek comfort, resilience, and meaning. Consequently, spiritual care has become an increasingly recognised component of holistic healthcare in many parts of the world.

Within Muslim communities, this spiritual dimension encompasses a broad spectrum of practices rooted in Islamic teachings and scholarly tradition. These include supplication (du'a), Qur'anic recitation, remembrance of Allah (dhikr), ruqyah, prophetic guidance on health and wellbeing, hijama (wet cupping), and the responsible use of traditional remedies described within the Islamic tradition. Together, these practices form part of what may be described as Islamic Spiritual Medicine—an interdisciplinary field that seeks to understand the relationship between faith, spirituality, lifestyle, and human health. Millions of Muslims seek these forms of support every year, whether independently, through local scholars, or from practitioners specialising in spiritual care.

Islamic Spiritual Medicine should be understood not as a single therapy, but as a multidisciplinary field encompassing spiritual care, prophetic health practices, complementary therapeutic approaches rooted in Islamic tradition, and their responsible investigation through ethical research.

Despite the widespread demand for these services, the field remains fragmented, under-researched, and largely disconnected from formal systems of scientific inquiry. While individual practitioners have accumulated valuable experience over decades, there is no internationally recognised institution dedicated to systematically studying, evaluating, documenting, and advancing Islamic Spiritual Medicine through rigorous research and ethical collaboration.

This represents both a challenge and an opportunity.



# A Changing Healthcare Landscape

Healthcare in the twenty-first century increasingly recognises that human wellbeing extends beyond biological function alone. Modern clinical practice routinely acknowledges the importance of psychological wellbeing, social circumstances, lifestyle factors, and patient-centred care. In many healthcare settings, spiritual care has also become an accepted component of holistic support, particularly within palliative care, chaplaincy services, oncology, and mental health.

At the same time, patients are becoming increasingly proactive in seeking complementary approaches alongside conventional medicine. Rather than viewing healthcare as a choice between medicine and spirituality, many seek ways to integrate both responsibly and ethically.

Within Muslim populations, this integration presents unique opportunities. Islamic teachings contain a rich tradition concerning compassion, healing, personal resilience, spiritual purification, and reliance upon Allah. These principles continue to shape how millions of Muslims understand illness and recovery today.

However, while healthcare systems have invested heavily in biomedical research, relatively little attention has been devoted to systematically investigating Islamic approaches to spiritual wellbeing using contemporary research methodologies.

# The Current Landscape

Across the Muslim world, millions of people seek guidance and treatment through practices such as ruqyah, hijama, prophetic dietary recommendations, and traditional herbal therapies. Some of these practices have explicit foundations within the Qur'an or authentic Sunnah, while others have developed through centuries of scholarly interpretation, clinical experience, or regional tradition. Despite their widespread use, there remains considerable variation in practitioner training, documentation, governance, terminology, and the quality of available evidence.

Islamic Spiritual Medicine today is characterised by considerable diversity. Across different cultures and regions, practitioners employ a wide range of approaches influenced by religious scholarship, local traditions, clinical experience, and individual interpretation.

This diversity reflects the richness of Islamic civilisation but also creates significant challenges.



Many valuable practitioner observations remain unpublished, unverified, or inaccessible to the wider community.

As a result, knowledge often remains isolated within individual practitioners or local communities, making meaningful comparison, replication, and collaborative advancement difficult.

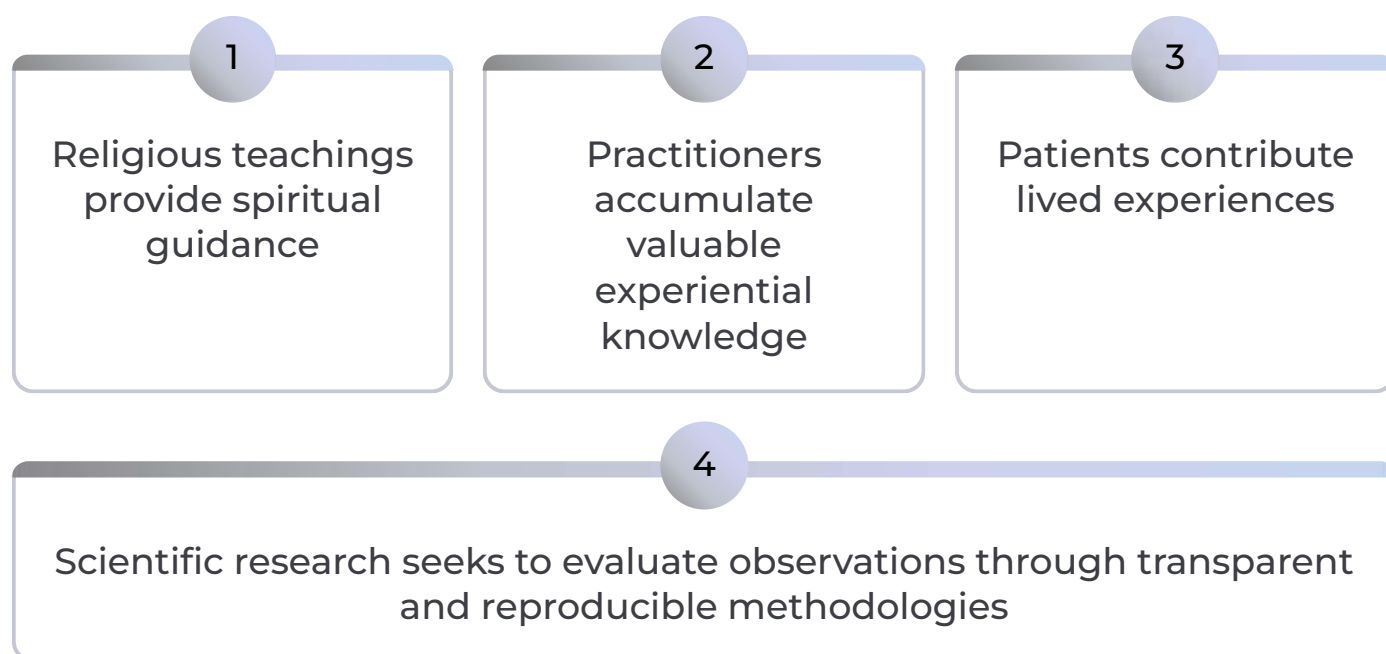
This does not imply that existing practice lacks value. Rather, it highlights the absence of a coordinated international framework through which observations can be systematically documented, critically evaluated, ethically investigated, and appropriately shared.

# The Evidence Gap

Some disciplines within Islamic Spiritual Medicine have attracted greater scientific attention than others. Hijama, for example, has been the subject of increasing clinical research in recent decades and is practised widely across many countries. Nevertheless, important questions remain regarding practitioner standards, clinical indications, outcome measurement, safety protocols, governance, and integration with conventional healthcare. Other areas—including spiritual interventions, traditional remedies, and emerging practitioner methodologies—remain comparatively under-investigated despite their widespread use.

A significant distinction exists between personal experience, practitioner observation, theological belief, and scientific evidence.

Each has an important role.



These different forms of knowledge should not be viewed as competitors. Instead, they represent complementary sources of understanding that can inform one another when approached with intellectual humility and methodological rigour.

Unfortunately, discussions surrounding Islamic Spiritual Medicine often become polarised. Some dismiss the field entirely because high-quality evidence remains limited. Others present personal observations as universally established facts without sufficient investigation.

Neither approach advances knowledge.

Progress requires a framework capable of distinguishing clearly between established religious teachings, practitioner observations, research hypotheses, and evidence supported through systematic investigation.

# From Observation to Knowledge

Throughout the history of science, many important discoveries began as observations before becoming established knowledge through careful investigation.

Islamic Spiritual Medicine should be no different.

Practitioners frequently report recurring patterns, treatment responses, and clinical observations. Some may ultimately prove to have broader significance. Others may not withstand further investigation. Both outcomes contribute to knowledge.

The responsibility of research is not to defend existing assumptions nor to dismiss emerging observations, but to investigate them objectively, ethically, and transparently.

Such an approach encourages innovation while maintaining scientific integrity.



A man in a dark suit and tie is seated at a large, light-colored wooden conference table. He is looking towards the left, away from the camera. On the table in front of him is a silver laptop, a dark blue mug, and several glasses of water. The background is a large window offering a view of a dense city skyline with various skyscrapers under a hazy sky.

# An International Opportunity

The absence of a dedicated international research institution represents one of the greatest opportunities within the field of Islamic Spiritual Medicine.

An organisation capable of bringing together clinicians, researchers, Islamic scholars, healthcare professionals, practitioners, statisticians, ethicists, and policymakers could provide the structure necessary to transform fragmented knowledge into a coordinated programme of research, education, and international collaboration.

Such an institution would not seek to replace existing healthcare systems, nor to substitute scientific medicine with spiritual practice. Rather, its purpose would be to investigate how Islamic Spiritual Medicine may responsibly contribute to holistic patient care, while maintaining the highest standards of ethics, governance, transparency, and academic integrity.

The establishment of such an institution would represent not merely the creation of another organisation, but the beginning of an international research agenda dedicated to understanding one of the world's largest, yet least systematically studied, traditions of spiritual healthcare.

The purpose of research is not only to preserve existing knowledge, but also to deepen understanding, evaluate practice, challenge assumptions where necessary, identify new questions, and responsibly advance the discipline for future generations.

# Part II – Islamic Spiritual Medicine: A Distinct Field of Research

## Defining the Discipline

Healthcare traditions throughout history have developed within the cultural, philosophical, and spiritual worldviews of the societies from which they emerged. Systems such as Traditional Chinese Medicine, Ayurveda, and numerous indigenous healing traditions have each evolved distinctive approaches to understanding health, illness, prevention, and recovery. Over time, many of these traditions have become recognised fields of academic inquiry, attracting scientific investigation while continuing to develop alongside modern healthcare.

Islamic civilisation likewise possesses a rich and enduring tradition of health, healing, and spiritual care. For more than fourteen centuries, Muslim scholars, physicians, jurists, theologians, and practitioners have explored the relationship between the physical body, the human mind, and the spiritual dimension of human existence. This tradition draws upon the Qur'an, the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the scholarship of successive generations, and the practical experiences of Muslim communities throughout history.

Despite its breadth and historical significance, there remains no internationally recognised research discipline dedicated specifically to the systematic study of Islamic Spiritual Medicine as an integrated field.

The purpose of this White Paper is not to redefine Islamic teachings, nor to replace established religious scholarship. Rather, it proposes that Islamic Spiritual Medicine should be recognised as a multidisciplinary field worthy of rigorous academic investigation, ethical clinical research, and responsible international collaboration.



# What is Islamic Spiritual Medicine?

For the purposes of this White Paper, Islamic Spiritual Medicine refers to the study and responsible application of spiritual, behavioural, lifestyle, and complementary therapeutic approaches derived from Islamic sources and Muslim scholarly tradition, investigated through ethical research and considered alongside contemporary healthcare.

It encompasses both inherited knowledge and emerging investigation. It recognises the importance of authentic religious sources while encouraging careful evaluation of practitioner observations, clinical experience, and contemporary scientific methodologies.

This broad definition acknowledges that Islamic Spiritual Medicine is not a single therapy, but an interdisciplinary field comprising multiple areas of study.

These include, but are not limited to:

## Spiritual care

Through the Qur'an, supplication (du'a), remembrance of Allah (dhikr), repentance, and acts of worship.

## Ruqyah and related spiritual interventions

Rooted in the Qur'an and authentic Sunnah.

## Prophetic health practices

Including hijama (wet cupping), and other therapeutic practices established within authentic Islamic sources.

## Traditional remedies

Historically utilised within Islamic civilisation, including those mentioned in the Qur'an and Sunnah, alongside other therapies developed through scholarly and clinical experience.

## Lifestyle principles

Informed by Islamic teachings concerning nutrition, sleep, fasting, hygiene, physical activity, emotional wellbeing, and community responsibility.

## Contemporary practitioner observations

And emerging therapeutic methodologies that warrant responsible investigation.

Together these areas represent a broad and evolving discipline whose purpose is not only to preserve inherited knowledge, but also to expand understanding through systematic research and responsible innovation.

# A Tradition of Scholarship and Inquiry

From its earliest centuries, Islamic civilisation cultivated an intellectual environment in which the pursuit of knowledge was regarded as both a religious virtue and a societal responsibility. Scholars across numerous disciplines contributed to advances in medicine, pharmacy, surgery, psychology, public health, ethics, and scientific methodology.

The Islamic intellectual tradition did not separate spiritual understanding from rational inquiry. Rather, observation, reflection, experimentation, and critical scholarship were frequently regarded as complementary means through which creation could be better understood.

This tradition produced physicians whose influence extended far beyond the Muslim world and whose writings shaped medical education for centuries. At the same time, scholars of Qur'an, Hadith, jurisprudence, and theology developed sophisticated discussions concerning illness, healing, spiritual wellbeing, ethics, and the responsibilities of caregivers.

Islamic Spiritual Medicine therefore emerges not as a modern invention, but as a contemporary continuation of a long-standing tradition of inquiry that seeks to understand the human being in physical, psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions.



A woman wearing a white hijab and a dark blue business suit is seated at a wooden desk. She is looking down and writing in a small white notebook with a pen. On the desk, there are several books stacked together, a black inkwell, and a pair of glasses. The lighting is warm and focused on the desk area.

# A Multidisciplinary Field

One of the defining characteristics of Islamic Spiritual Medicine is its breadth.

Rather than focusing upon a single intervention, it incorporates multiple interconnected disciplines that contribute to holistic health and wellbeing.

Some disciplines primarily address spiritual care through worship, Qur'anic recitation, supplication, and pastoral support.

Others involve therapeutic practices with explicit foundations within authentic Islamic sources, such as ruqyah and hijama.

Others examine nutrition, traditional remedies, lifestyle, emotional resilience, preventive health, and patient education.

Increasingly, practitioners are also documenting new observations arising from contemporary clinical practice. Some of these observations may ultimately contribute to improved understanding. Others may require refinement or may not withstand further investigation.

The role of research is neither to accept nor reject emerging ideas prematurely, but to investigate them with intellectual honesty, methodological rigour, and ethical responsibility.

# Faith and Scientific Inquiry

## **Religious revelation**

provides theological guidance, moral principles, and spiritual direction.

## **Scientific inquiry**

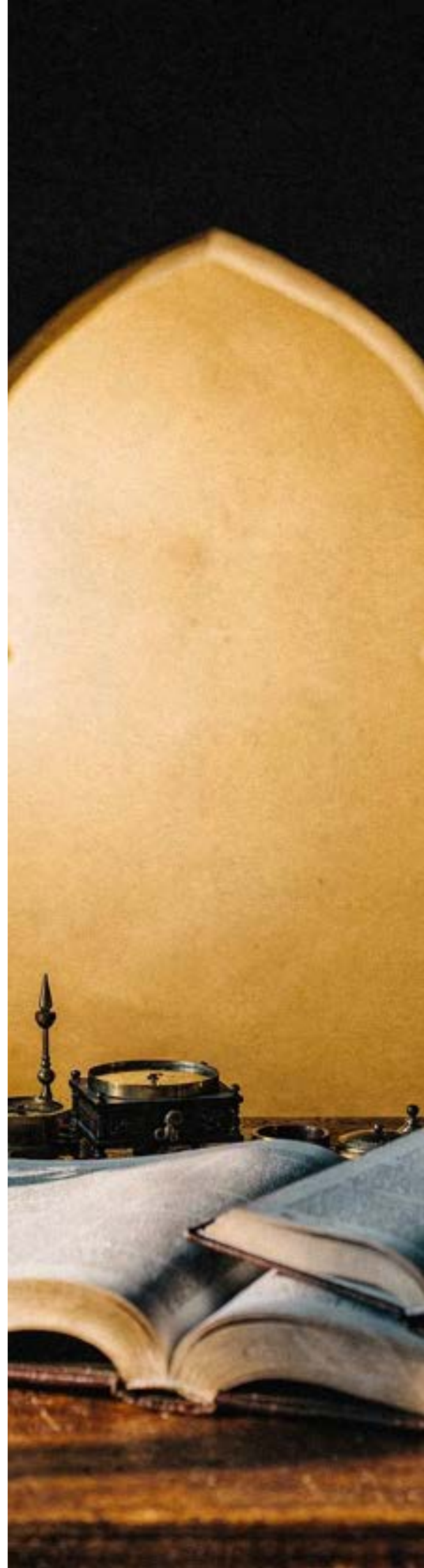
seeks to understand observable phenomena through systematic investigation.

Islamic Spiritual Medicine recognises that religious belief and scientific investigation serve different, yet complementary purposes.

These domains need not exist in conflict.

Authentic religious teachings provide a framework within which Muslims understand health, illness, suffering, and healing. Research, meanwhile, enables practitioners and researchers to evaluate observations, improve clinical practice, measure outcomes, identify limitations, and refine future approaches.

The objective of research is therefore not to validate revelation itself, but to improve human understanding of how Islamic Spiritual Medicine may be responsibly applied within contemporary healthcare settings.



# The Need for a New Academic Discipline

Although individual aspects of Islamic Spiritual Medicine have attracted growing attention in recent decades, research remains fragmented across numerous disciplines.

Studies concerning hijama, traditional remedies, spiritual wellbeing, Qur'anic recitation, mental health, and complementary therapies often exist in isolation from one another.



Consequently, opportunities for interdisciplinary learning remain limited.

Recognising Islamic Spiritual Medicine as a coherent field of research would encourage greater collaboration between clinicians, researchers, Islamic scholars, practitioners, universities, healthcare institutions, and policymakers.

Rather than replacing existing disciplines, such an approach would provide an academic framework through which these diverse areas of knowledge could be studied together while maintaining appropriate scientific, ethical, and theological standards.

This multidisciplinary approach forms the intellectual foundation upon which the International Research Institute of Islamic Spiritual Medicine (IRIISM) is proposed.

# Part III – The Research Gap

## From Fragmented Practice to Coordinated Knowledge

The previous chapter established Islamic Spiritual Medicine as a broad and historically significant field encompassing spiritual care, therapeutic practices rooted in Islamic sources, traditional remedies, lifestyle principles, and contemporary practitioner observations.

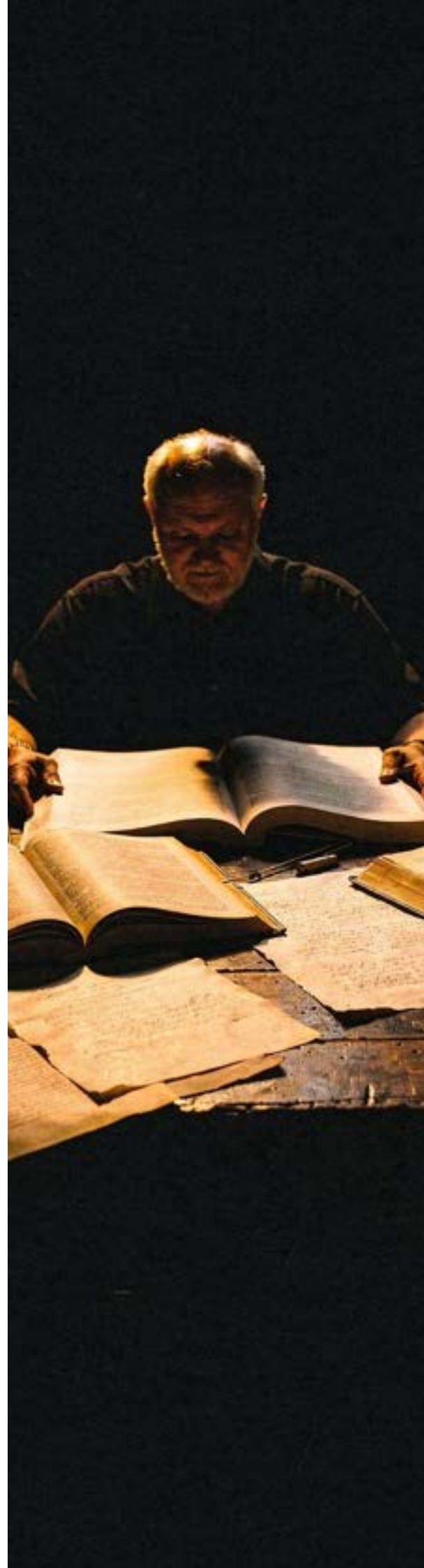
Despite this rich heritage, the discipline remains in an early stage of organised scientific development.

Across the Muslim world, millions of people continue to seek spiritual and complementary healthcare every year. Thousands of practitioners provide services through clinics, community organisations, mosques, charitable initiatives, and private practice. Universities continue to publish research concerning individual therapies, while healthcare professionals increasingly recognise the importance of spiritual wellbeing within holistic patient care.

Yet these developments largely occur in isolation.

There is currently no internationally recognised institution responsible for coordinating research priorities, establishing methodological standards, facilitating collaboration, maintaining international datasets, or translating practitioner experience into systematically evaluated knowledge.

As a result, much of the field continues to develop through individual effort rather than coordinated scientific advancement.



# A Fragmented Knowledge Base

Knowledge within Islamic Spiritual Medicine currently exists across multiple communities that rarely interact in structured ways.



**Islamic scholars  
contribute  
theological  
guidance**



**Healthcare  
professionals  
contribute  
clinical expertise**



**Researchers  
publish studies  
within their  
respective  
academic  
disciplines**



**Practitioners  
accumulate  
extensive  
experiential  
knowledge  
through years of  
patient care**



**Patients  
themselves  
contribute  
valuable lived  
experiences**

Each possesses an important part of the overall picture.

However, there are relatively few mechanisms through which these different forms of knowledge can be systematically integrated.

Consequently, valuable observations often remain undocumented, isolated within local communities, or unavailable for independent evaluation.

This fragmentation limits opportunities for replication, collaboration, quality improvement, and international learning.

# The Absence of Standardisation

Many areas of Islamic Spiritual Medicine continue to lack internationally recognised standards.

Terminology frequently differs between countries and even between neighbouring practitioners.



None of these challenges imply that existing practice lacks value.

Rather, they demonstrate the need for greater coordination and shared frameworks capable of supporting both practitioners and researchers.

Standardisation should never seek to suppress legitimate diversity of scholarly opinion or clinical judgement.

Instead, it provides a common language through which meaningful comparison, collaboration, and continuous improvement become possible.



# Practitioner Knowledge: An Underutilised Resource

One of the greatest untapped resources within Islamic Spiritual Medicine is the accumulated experience of practitioners.

Across decades of clinical practice, many practitioners develop observations concerning patient presentations, treatment responses, recurring patterns, and practical challenges.

Some observations may ultimately prove clinically significant. Others may represent local phenomena. Some may be refined through further investigation. Others may be shown to be incorrect.

All possess potential value when approached through appropriate research methodology.

At present, however, much of this knowledge remains informal.

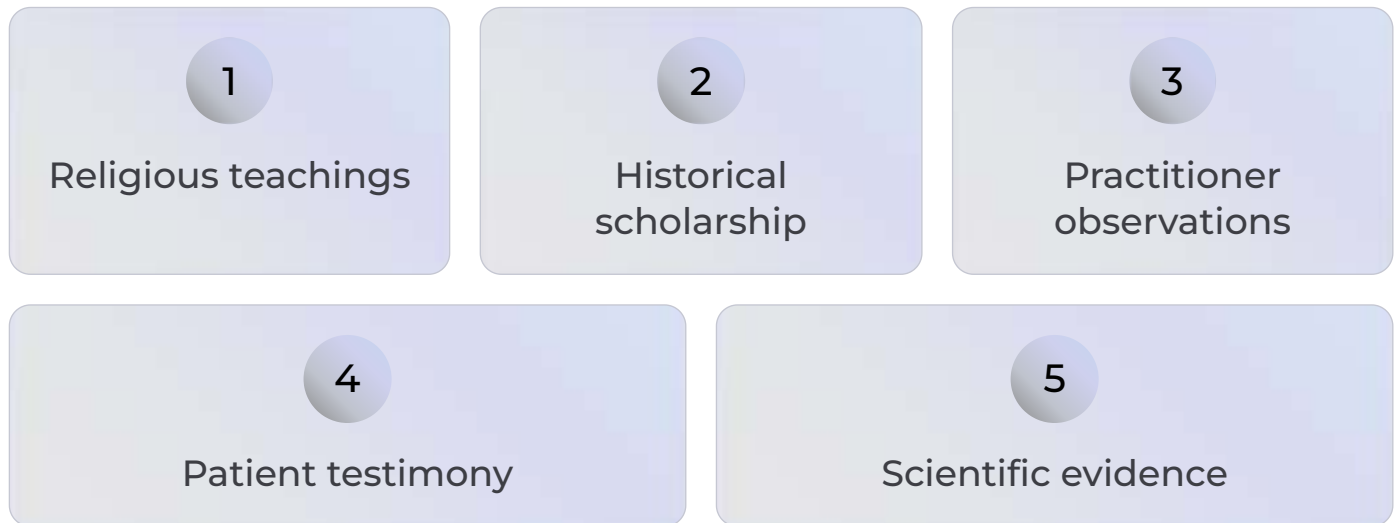
It is discussed privately, shared through personal networks, or transmitted through apprenticeship rather than systematically documented, critically evaluated, and preserved.

As experienced practitioners retire, substantial amounts of practical knowledge risk being permanently lost.

An organised research infrastructure offers the opportunity to preserve valuable observations while subjecting them to appropriate academic scrutiny.

# Distinguishing Observation from Evidence

Perhaps the greatest challenge facing Islamic Spiritual Medicine is not the absence of knowledge, but the absence of clear distinctions between different kinds of knowledge.



These categories should neither be confused nor placed in unnecessary opposition.

Confusing practitioner observations with established scientific evidence risks overstating conclusions.

Conversely, dismissing practitioner experience solely because it has not yet undergone formal investigation risks overlooking valuable avenues for future research.

A mature discipline requires intellectual humility.

- Observations should be recognised as observations.
- Hypotheses should remain hypotheses until appropriately investigated.
- Evidence should be interpreted proportionately to its quality.

Such distinctions strengthen rather than weaken the credibility of the discipline.

# The Need for Research Infrastructure

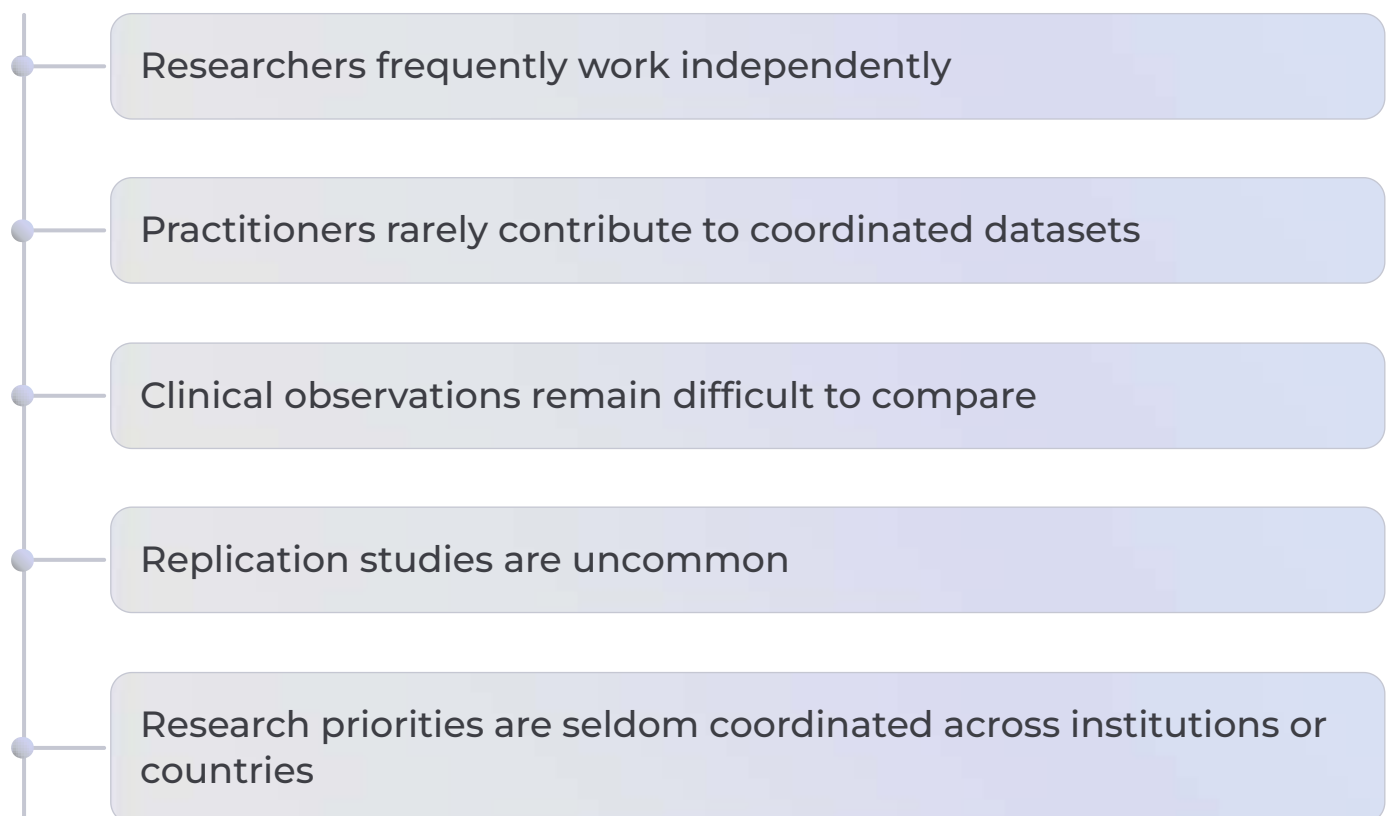
Scientific progress rarely occurs through isolated individuals alone.

It depends upon institutions capable of supporting long-term collaboration, methodological consistency, ethical governance, peer review, publication, education, and international partnerships.

Most established healthcare disciplines benefit from dedicated research institutes, specialist journals, professional societies, clinical registries, international conferences, and collaborative networks.

Islamic Spiritual Medicine currently possesses relatively few equivalent structures operating at an international level.

Consequently:



The establishment of dedicated research infrastructure would significantly strengthen the discipline's capacity for sustained scientific development.

# Responsible Innovation

Every healthcare discipline evolves.

- New technologies emerge.
- Clinical techniques improve.
- Research methodologies advance.

Questions previously considered impossible to investigate become increasingly accessible.

Islamic Spiritual Medicine should likewise remain open to responsible innovation.

Innovation does not require abandoning established knowledge.

Rather, it involves building upon authentic religious foundations while encouraging careful observation, ethical investigation, interdisciplinary collaboration, and continuous learning.

Emerging practitioner methodologies, novel therapeutic approaches, improved educational models, digital health technologies, and international data collaboration all represent opportunities worthy of responsible investigation.

Innovation should therefore be guided not by novelty alone, but by intellectual honesty, patient safety, ethical governance, and rigorous evaluation.



# A New Research Paradigm

The future development of Islamic Spiritual Medicine requires more than additional individual studies.

It requires a coordinated international research paradigm.

Such a paradigm would encourage collaboration between practitioners, clinicians, Islamic scholars, researchers, universities, hospitals, policymakers, statisticians, ethicists, and public health specialists.

It would establish:



Most importantly, it would provide a framework through which inherited knowledge, contemporary practice, and future innovation may contribute to a continuously developing body of evidence.

The challenge facing Islamic Spiritual Medicine is therefore not simply the need for more research.

It is the need for an institution capable of organising that research into a coherent international programme.

It is this challenge that gives rise to the vision presented in the following chapter.

# Part IV – Introducing IRIISM

## A Vision for the Future of Islamic Spiritual Medicine

The preceding chapters have outlined a simple but significant conclusion.

Islamic Spiritual Medicine represents a substantial and historically important field of knowledge that continues to influence the lives of millions of people worldwide. Yet despite its global relevance, the discipline remains fragmented, under-coordinated, and without a dedicated international institution responsible for advancing its scientific, clinical, and academic development.

To address this challenge, this White Paper proposes the establishment of the International Research Institute of Islamic Spiritual Medicine (IRIISM).

IRIISM is envisioned as an independent international research institute dedicated to advancing knowledge through ethical research, interdisciplinary collaboration, education, innovation, and responsible engagement with healthcare systems worldwide.

It is not intended to replace existing universities, hospitals, healthcare providers, Islamic institutions, or professional organisations.

Rather, it seeks to provide the research infrastructure through which these communities may collaborate, contribute, and collectively advance the discipline of Islamic Spiritual Medicine.





# Mission

**To advance the understanding and responsible application of Islamic Spiritual Medicine through world-class research, ethical governance, international collaboration, education, and innovation for the benefit of patients, practitioners, healthcare systems, and society.**

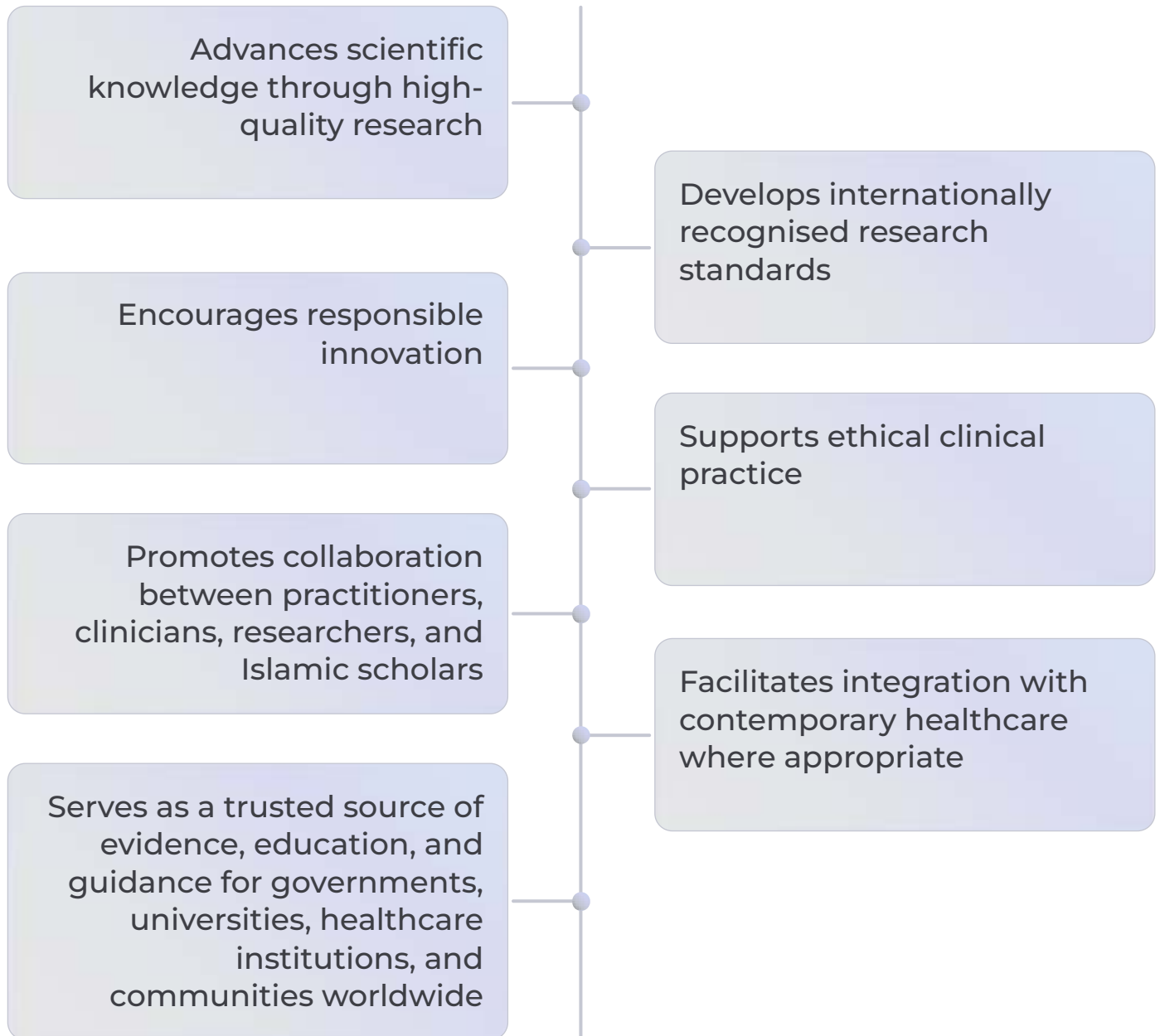
The mission of IRIISM is stated above.

This mission recognises that scientific inquiry, clinical experience, authentic Islamic scholarship, and patient-centred care each contribute valuable perspectives toward improving human wellbeing.

# Vision

IRIISM aspires to become the world's leading research institute dedicated to Islamic Spiritual Medicine.

Its long-term vision is to establish an internationally recognised centre of excellence that:



Rather than promoting a single methodology or school of thought, IRIISM seeks to provide an intellectual home for rigorous inquiry across the full spectrum of Islamic Spiritual Medicine.

# Guiding Principles

The work of IRIISM is founded upon several core principles.

1

## Commitment to Authentic Islamic Foundations

Research undertaken by the institute shall respect the foundational teachings of the Qur'an and authentic Sunnah while recognising the important contributions of Islamic scholarship throughout history.

2

## Commitment to Scientific Integrity

Research should be conducted according to recognised principles of academic honesty, methodological rigour, transparency, peer review, and ethical governance. The institute recognises that not every hypothesis will ultimately be supported by evidence, and regards such outcomes as an essential part of scientific progress.

3

## Commitment to Patient Welfare

The wellbeing, dignity, autonomy, and safety of patients shall remain central to all research activities and clinical collaborations. Spiritual care should complement, rather than unnecessarily compete with, appropriate medical, psychological, and allied healthcare services.

4

## Commitment to Intellectual Humility

Knowledge develops through continual learning. IRIISM therefore distinguishes carefully between established religious teachings; historical scholarship; practitioner observations; research hypotheses; and evidence generated through systematic investigation. Maintaining these distinctions strengthens both scientific credibility and public trust.

5

## Commitment to International Collaboration

The advancement of Islamic Spiritual Medicine cannot be achieved by any single institution, country, profession, or community. Progress depends upon collaboration across borders, disciplines, and cultures. IRIISM therefore seeks partnerships with universities, hospitals, research institutes, healthcare providers, Islamic scholars, practitioners, policymakers, and international organisations.

# Strategic Objectives

To fulfil its mission, IRIISM proposes six strategic objectives.

1

## Advance Research

Conduct, coordinate, and facilitate high-quality research across the disciplines of Islamic Spiritual Medicine.

2

## Build International Research Infrastructure

Develop shared terminology, research frameworks, clinical registries, outcome measures, ethical standards, and collaborative networks capable of supporting long-term international research.

3

## Promote Responsible Innovation

Encourage the ethical investigation of emerging practitioner observations, therapeutic methodologies, educational models, and healthcare technologies.

4

## Strengthen Clinical Integration

Support constructive collaboration between Islamic Spiritual Medicine practitioners and conventional healthcare professionals through evidence-informed guidance, referral pathways, and interdisciplinary dialogue.

5

## Develop Future Leaders

Support education, mentorship, fellowships, publications, and research opportunities that prepare future generations of scholars, clinicians, and investigators.

6

## Serve Society

Provide governments, healthcare organisations, researchers, practitioners, and the wider public with reliable information that promotes safe, ethical, and evidence-informed approaches to Islamic Spiritual Medicine.



# The Role of IRIISM

IRIISM is not conceived as a treatment provider.

Nor is it intended to function solely as an educational institution.

Its primary role is to serve as the international research and knowledge hub for Islamic Spiritual Medicine.

Its activities may include:

- Coordinating international research programmes.
- Establishing clinical registries.
- Publishing research and position papers.
- Developing research methodologies.
- Supporting ethical review processes.
- Facilitating multicentre collaborations.
- Hosting international conferences.
- Producing professional guidance.
- Supporting postgraduate research.
- Advising healthcare institutions and policymakers.
- Promoting public understanding through evidence-based communication.

In fulfilling these functions, IRIISM seeks to become the central platform through which research, education, innovation, and clinical collaboration converge.

# Looking Forward

Every established scientific discipline has benefited from institutions dedicated not only to preserving knowledge, but to expanding it.

Islamic Spiritual Medicine now stands at a similar point in its development.

The creation of IRIISM represents more than the establishment of a new organisation.

It represents the creation of an international research infrastructure capable of transforming fragmented knowledge into coordinated understanding, isolated practice into collaborative investigation, and individual observation into a continuously developing body of evidence.

The chapters that follow describe how this vision may be translated into practical reality through research frameworks, governance, education, partnerships, and long-term institutional development.



# Founding Statement

## The International Research Institute of Islamic Spiritual Medicine (IRIISM)

Advancing Knowledge. Serving Humanity.

Human health has always been understood through multiple dimensions.

Medicine seeks to understand the body.

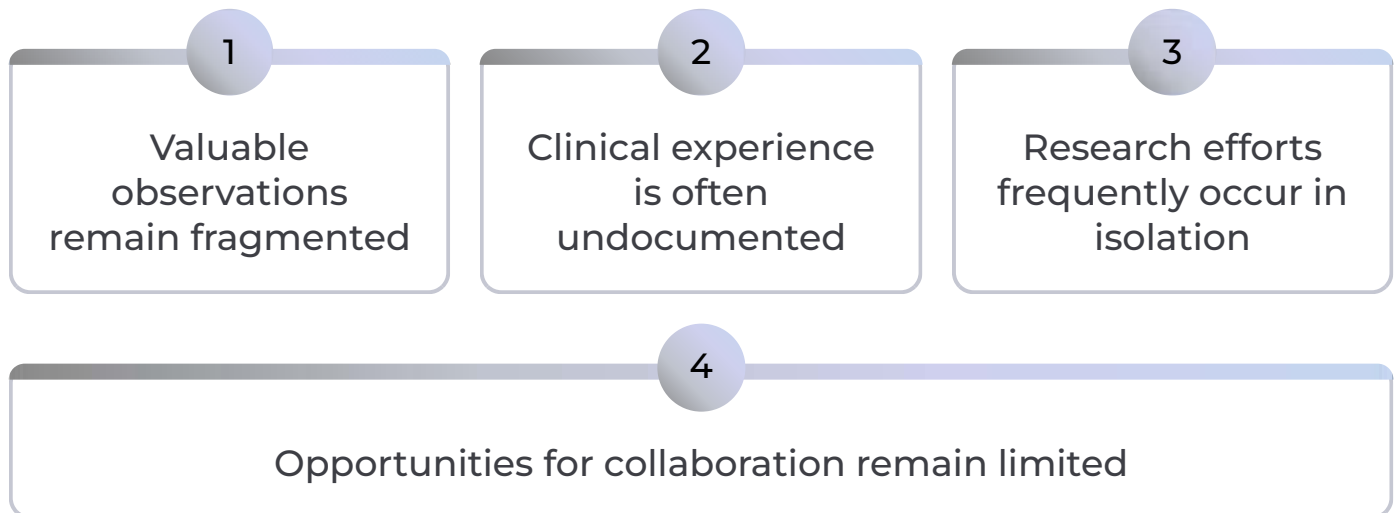
Psychology seeks to understand the mind.

Communities recognise the importance of social wellbeing.

For billions of people throughout history, spirituality has also remained an integral part of health, resilience, meaning, and recovery.

Within the Islamic tradition, spiritual care has been practised for more than fourteen centuries through worship, supplication, Qur'anic recitation, prophetic guidance, ethical conduct, compassion, and therapeutic practices rooted in authentic Islamic sources. Alongside these foundations, generations of scholars, physicians, and practitioners have sought to understand the relationship between faith, illness, healing, and human wellbeing.

Yet despite its historical significance and continued relevance to millions of people worldwide, Islamic Spiritual Medicine remains one of the least coordinated fields of healthcare research.



The International Research Institute of Islamic Spiritual Medicine (IRIISM) is founded upon the belief that this can change.

IRIISM exists to provide an international home for the responsible advancement of Islamic Spiritual Medicine through research, scholarship, ethical governance, clinical collaboration, education, and innovation.

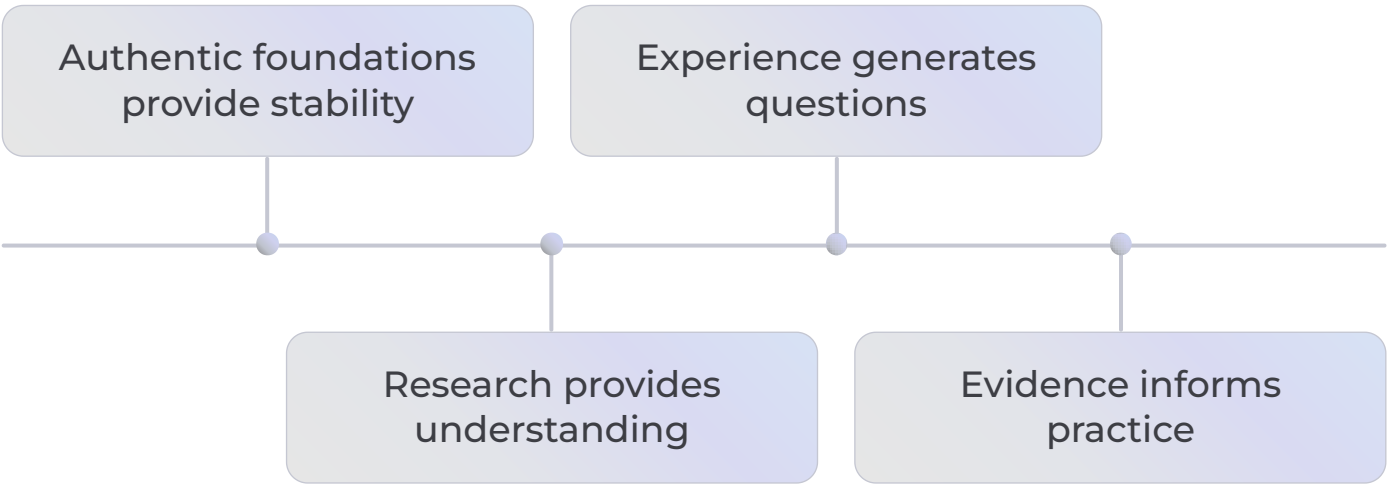
The Institute recognises that authentic religious teachings, historical scholarship, practitioner experience, patient perspectives, and scientific investigation each contribute important forms of knowledge. These are not competing sources of understanding, but complementary perspectives that, when approached with intellectual humility and methodological rigour, can strengthen one another.

IRIISM neither seeks to replace conventional healthcare nor to substitute scientific medicine with spiritual practice.

Instead, it seeks to investigate how Islamic Spiritual Medicine may responsibly contribute to holistic healthcare while maintaining the highest standards of patient safety, scientific integrity, ethical governance, and academic excellence.

The Institute is committed to distinguishing carefully between established religious teachings, practitioner observations, research hypotheses, and evidence generated through systematic investigation. It recognises that progress depends not upon certainty alone, but upon honest inquiry, transparent methodology, and the willingness to continually refine understanding in light of new knowledge.

IRIISM believes that innovation and tradition need not exist in opposition.



Together, these create the conditions through which knowledge may responsibly develop for the benefit of future generations.



The Institute therefore welcomes collaboration across disciplines, professions, cultures, and nations.



**Researchers**



**Clinicians**



**Islamic scholars**



**Practitioners**



**Universities**



**Hospitals**



**Governments**



**Healthcare organisations**



**Students**

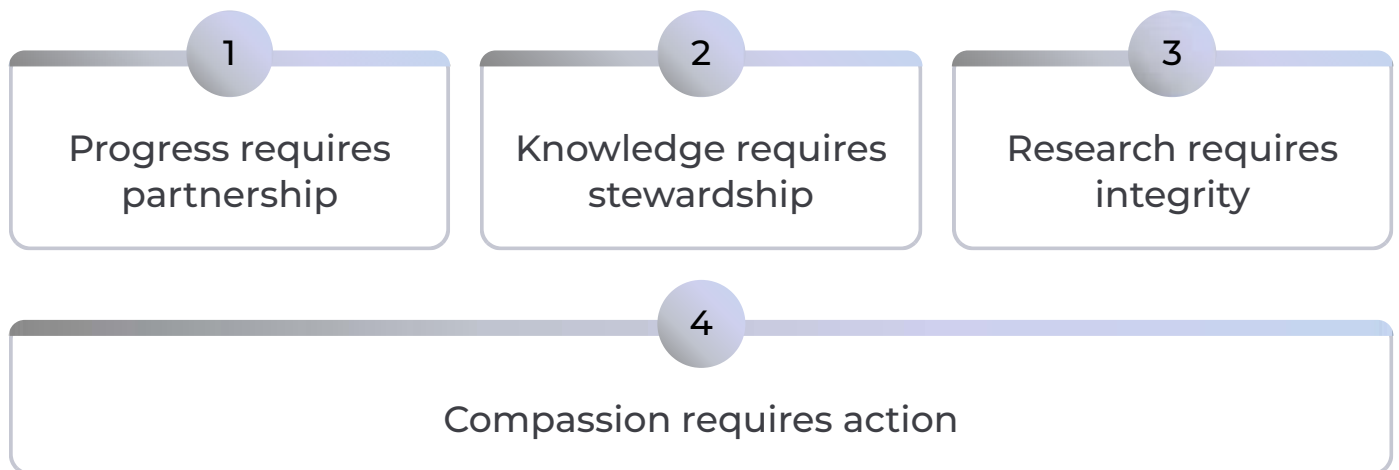


**Patients**

All have a role in advancing understanding.

The challenges facing human health are increasingly complex.

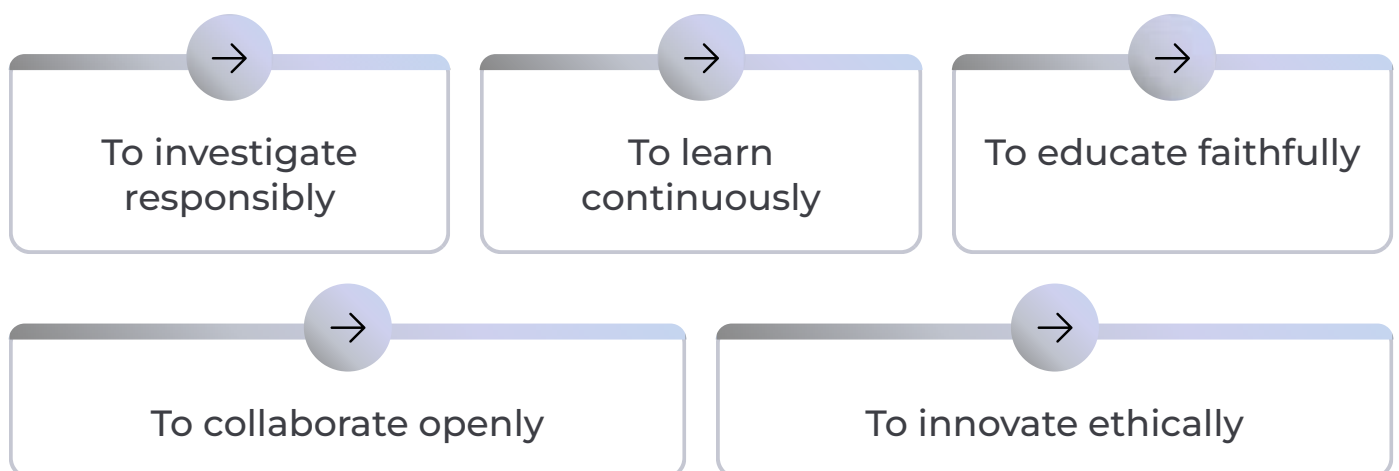
No single profession, institution, or nation possesses every answer.



IRIISM is founded upon the conviction that Islamic Spiritual Medicine deserves the same standards of scholarship, research infrastructure, ethical oversight, and international collaboration afforded to every mature healthcare discipline.

Our purpose is not merely to preserve knowledge inherited from previous generations.

It is:



And to contribute, through knowledge and service, to the wellbeing of humanity.

This is the purpose for which IRIISM is established.



# Part V – The IRIISM Research Framework

## A New Framework for Investigating Islamic Spiritual Medicine

Scientific disciplines mature not only through the accumulation of knowledge, but through the development of rigorous methods by which knowledge is generated, evaluated, challenged, and refined.

The future of Islamic Spiritual Medicine depends not simply upon conducting more research, but upon establishing a coherent framework through which meaningful research can be undertaken consistently across institutions, countries, and disciplines.

The International Research Institute of Islamic Spiritual Medicine (IRIISM) therefore proposes a research philosophy that combines authentic Islamic foundations, scientific methodology, clinical experience, ethical governance, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

This framework does not seek to predetermine conclusions.

Rather, it seeks to provide an organised process through which observations may be investigated responsibly and transparently.

# The IRIISM Knowledge Cycle

Knowledge develops progressively.

Every established scientific discipline has evolved through continual observation, investigation, refinement, and re-evaluation.

Islamic Spiritual Medicine should follow the same principle.

IRIISM therefore proposes the following knowledge cycle:

**12. New Clinical Observations**

**11. Improved Patient Care**

**10. Clinical Guidance**

**9. Evidence Synthesis**

**8. Replication & Independent  
Evaluation**

**7. Peer Review & Publication**



**1. Clinical Observation**

**2. Systematic Documentation**

**3. Research Question**

**4. Hypothesis Development**

**5. Ethical Review**

**6. Scientific Investigation**

Knowledge is therefore understood not as static, but as continuously developing through responsible investigation.

# Five Categories of Knowledge

One of the defining principles of IRIISM is that not all knowledge occupies the same evidential position. Confusion between different categories of knowledge has historically contributed to misunderstanding, unnecessary disagreement, and inconsistent practice. IRIISM therefore distinguishes between five broad categories.

## 1 Revealed Knowledge

Knowledge established through the Qur'an and authentic Sunnah. These teachings provide theological guidance and form the religious foundations upon which Islamic Spiritual Medicine is built. Their religious authority is independent of scientific investigation.

## 2 Scholarly Knowledge

Interpretations, legal rulings, ethical discussions, and scholarly analyses developed throughout Islamic intellectual history. These provide important guidance while recognising legitimate scholarly diversity where it exists.

## 3 Observational Knowledge

Patterns recognised through clinical experience or practitioner observation. These observations may generate valuable research questions but should not automatically be regarded as established evidence. Observation is the beginning of inquiry, not its conclusion.

## 4 Investigated Knowledge

Findings generated through systematic research using appropriate methodologies. These findings contribute to the developing evidence base while remaining open to refinement through future investigation.

## 5 Consensus Knowledge

Knowledge that becomes consistently supported through accumulated evidence, scholarly consideration where relevant, and broad professional acceptance. Such knowledge informs guidance, education, and future practice.

These categories should not be viewed hierarchically in every context. Rather, they represent different forms of knowledge that interact while maintaining appropriate distinctions.

# Research Begins with Questions

IRIISM encourages curiosity.

Many important advances begin not with certainty, but with thoughtful questions.

1

Practitioners may observe recurring clinical patterns.

2

Researchers may identify unexplained findings.

3

Patients may describe experiences that warrant further exploration.

4

Healthcare professionals may recognise opportunities for improved collaboration.

Rather than dismissing such observations or accepting them uncritically, IRIISM encourages their systematic investigation.

Good research begins with good questions.





# Responsible Innovation

Innovation occupies an essential place within scientific progress.

However, innovation without discipline risks speculation.

Conversely, excessive conservatism risks preventing genuine advancement.

IRIISM therefore adopts a balanced approach.

Innovation should emerge through observation, ethical investigation, critical evaluation, replication, and transparent publication.

New ideas should neither be accepted because they are novel, nor rejected simply because they challenge existing assumptions.

Instead, they should be evaluated according to the quality of available evidence and the robustness of the investigative process.

# Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Islamic Spiritual Medicine cannot develop through a single discipline acting alone.

Its future depends upon meaningful collaboration between diverse forms of expertise.

IRIISM therefore encourages collaboration among:

- Islamic scholars
- Physicians
- Nurses
- Allied health professionals
- Psychologists
- Public health researchers
- Biomedical scientists
- Statisticians
- Ethicists
- Historians
- Social scientists
- Practitioners of Islamic Spiritual Medicine
- Patients and community representatives

Each contributes valuable knowledge.

No single discipline possesses every answer.





# Evidence Before Advocacy

IRIISM does not exist to promote predetermined conclusions.

Its responsibility is to investigate questions honestly, report findings transparently, acknowledge limitations openly, and revise understanding where evidence requires.

Research should never become an exercise in defending personal opinion.

Nor should it become an exercise in dismissing inherited knowledge without careful investigation.

The Institute therefore adopts a principle of evidence before advocacy.

Its commitment is not to preserving assumptions, but to pursuing truth through disciplined inquiry.

# The Responsibility of a Research Institute

A research institute serves more than science.

It serves society.

Its responsibility is to create an environment in which difficult questions may be investigated responsibly, disagreement may occur respectfully, evidence may be evaluated objectively, and knowledge may continually develop.

IRIISM therefore understands research not merely as the production of publications, but as a public trust.

The integrity of its methods will ultimately determine the credibility of its conclusions.

For this reason, every activity undertaken by the Institute should reflect its founding motto: Advancing Knowledge. Serving Humanity.



A man with a beard and glasses, wearing a dark suit and tie, is seated at a desk. He is looking down at a document in his hands. On the desk, there is a laptop, a small potted plant with yellow flowers, and a cup of coffee. In the background, there are shelves with various items, including bottles and papers.

# Part VI – Strategic Research Programmes

## Building a Global Research Agenda

The advancement of any scientific discipline requires more than individual research projects.

It requires a coordinated research agenda capable of addressing immediate clinical questions while simultaneously building the long-term foundations of the discipline.

IRISM therefore proposes a multidisciplinary research portfolio that reflects the breadth of Islamic Spiritual Medicine while encouraging collaboration across clinical, academic, theological, and scientific communities.

These programmes are intended to evolve over time in response to emerging evidence, technological advances, healthcare priorities, and international collaboration.

Together, they provide the strategic direction through which Islamic Spiritual Medicine may mature into a recognised field of research.

# Programme One – Spiritual Wellbeing and Human Health

Understanding the relationship between spirituality, faith, resilience, and health outcomes.

Potential areas of investigation include:

- Spiritual wellbeing and quality of life.
- Coping with chronic illness.
- Psychological resilience.
- Bereavement and grief.
- Hope, purpose, and recovery.
- Patient-centred models of spiritual care.
- Integration of spiritual wellbeing within holistic healthcare.





# Programme Two – Ruqyah and Spiritual Interventions

Investigating Qur'anic spiritual interventions through responsible clinical and observational research.

Areas may include:

- Contemporary models of ruqyah practice.
- Patient experiences.
- Practitioner methodologies.
- Outcome documentation.
- Clinical governance.
- Safety.
- Professional standards.
- Referral pathways.
- Comparative approaches across cultures.

This programme seeks not to standardise religious practice, but to improve understanding through systematic investigation.

# Programme Three – Prophetic Health Practices

Research concerning therapeutic practices established within authentic Islamic sources.

Areas may include:

- Hijama.
- Prophetic dietary guidance.
- Preventive health.
- Lifestyle recommendations.
- Historical medical literature.
- Clinical applications.
- Safety standards.
- Practitioner competency.
- Healthcare integration.

The objective is to investigate both historical understanding and contemporary clinical application.





# Programme Four – Traditional Remedies and Complementary Therapies

Investigating traditional remedies utilised throughout Islamic civilisation.

Potential topics include:

Honey

Black seed

Olive oil

Costus

Senna

Zamzam

Vinegar

Herbal  
preparations

Emerging complementary therapies

Research should distinguish clearly between traditional use, practitioner observation, and available scientific evidence.

# Programme Five – Mental Health and Spiritual Care

Supporting collaboration between Islamic Spiritual  
Medicine and contemporary mental healthcare.

Research themes include:

Anxiety

Depression

Trauma

Stress

Burnout

Spiritual distress

Religious coping

Integrated models of care

Collaborative referral pathways

This programme recognises the complementary roles of  
spiritual care and professional mental healthcare.





# Programme Six – Chronic Illness, Pain and Supportive Care

Exploring the role of Islamic Spiritual Medicine in supporting patients living with long-term health conditions.

Areas may include:

- Chronic pain
- Fatigue
- Cancer support
- Palliative care
- Rehabilitation
- Quality of life
- Caregiver support

The objective is to improve patient wellbeing while complementing established medical treatment.

# Programme Seven – Clinical Governance and Professional Standards

## **Developing internationally recognised standards for practice.**

Areas include: Ethics. Patient safety. Consent.  
Documentation. Risk management. Professional  
competency. Continuing professional development.  
Accreditation. Quality assurance.

***Long-term credibility depends upon professional  
standards that inspire public confidence.***





# Programme Eight – Education and Workforce Development

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## **Preparing future generations of researchers and practitioners.**

Research themes include: Curriculum development. Competency frameworks. Professional education. Continuing education. Fellowship programmes. Postgraduate research. Clinical supervision. Educational innovation.

***Knowledge advances through people.***

# Programme Nine – Healthcare Integration

**Building constructive relationships between Islamic Spiritual Medicine and contemporary healthcare systems.**

Potential projects include: Hospital collaboration. Community healthcare. Referral models. Multidisciplinary teams. Patient pathways. Healthcare policy. Service evaluation. Public health initiatives.

***The goal is to encourage responsible integration where supported by evidence and appropriate governance.***





# Programme Ten – Innovation and Emerging Methodologies

**One of the defining characteristics of IRIISM is its commitment to responsible innovation.**

Healthcare continues to evolve. New questions emerge. Practitioners develop new observations. Technologies create new opportunities. This programme provides a structured environment through which emerging ideas may be investigated ethically and transparently.

Projects may include: Novel practitioner methodologies. Digital health technologies. Artificial intelligence. Outcome registries. Remote healthcare. New educational models. Emerging therapeutic frameworks. Future developments within Islamic Spiritual Medicine.

***Innovation should always be accompanied by appropriate ethical review, scientific methodology, and independent evaluation.***

# Cross-Cutting Research Themes

Although presented separately, these programmes are intended to interact continuously.

Many research projects will naturally involve multiple disciplines simultaneously.

For example:

## A hospital-based chronic pain study may include:

- Spiritual wellbeing
- Ruqyah
- Mental health
- Clinical governance
- Patient-reported outcomes
- Healthcare integration

## A study investigating hijama may involve:

- Historical scholarship
- Clinical safety
- Practitioner competency
- Research methodology
- Patient satisfaction
- Healthcare policy

IRIISM therefore encourages interdisciplinary research that reflects the complexity of human health rather than artificially separating related areas of knowledge.



A vertical photograph on the left side of the page shows a person standing on a dark, grassy hill. The person is silhouetted against a bright, orange and yellow sky, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The horizon is visible in the distance, with rolling hills or mountains. The overall mood is contemplative and forward-looking.

# Looking Forward

These strategic programmes are not intended to limit future research.

Rather, they provide an initial framework upon which the discipline may continue to expand over coming decades.

As knowledge develops, new programmes will emerge.

Existing priorities will evolve.

Questions once considered speculative may become established areas of investigation.

Others may be revised or abandoned in light of new evidence.

This willingness to learn, adapt, and continually refine understanding reflects the Institute's founding commitment: Advancing Knowledge. Serving Humanity.

# Part VII – Governance, Ethics and Institutional Integrity

## Building Trust Through Good Governance

The credibility of a research institute depends not only upon the quality of its research, but also upon the strength of its governance.

Public trust is earned through transparency.

Scientific credibility is strengthened through accountability.

Institutional independence is protected through ethical oversight.

For these reasons, governance is not an administrative function of IRIISM.

It is one of its founding principles.

The Institute is committed to establishing governance systems that support scientific integrity, responsible stewardship, patient welfare, and public confidence.



# Principles of Institutional Governance

IRIISM shall be guided by the following principles.

## 1 Independence

Research priorities should be determined according to scientific, clinical and societal need rather than political, commercial or personal interests.

## 2 Transparency

Research methods, funding arrangements, governance structures, partnerships and institutional policies should be communicated openly wherever appropriate.

## 3 Accountability

The Institute accepts responsibility for maintaining high standards of research, education, financial stewardship and ethical conduct.

## 4 Collaboration

Governance should encourage constructive dialogue between researchers, clinicians, Islamic scholars, practitioners, patients and partner organisations.

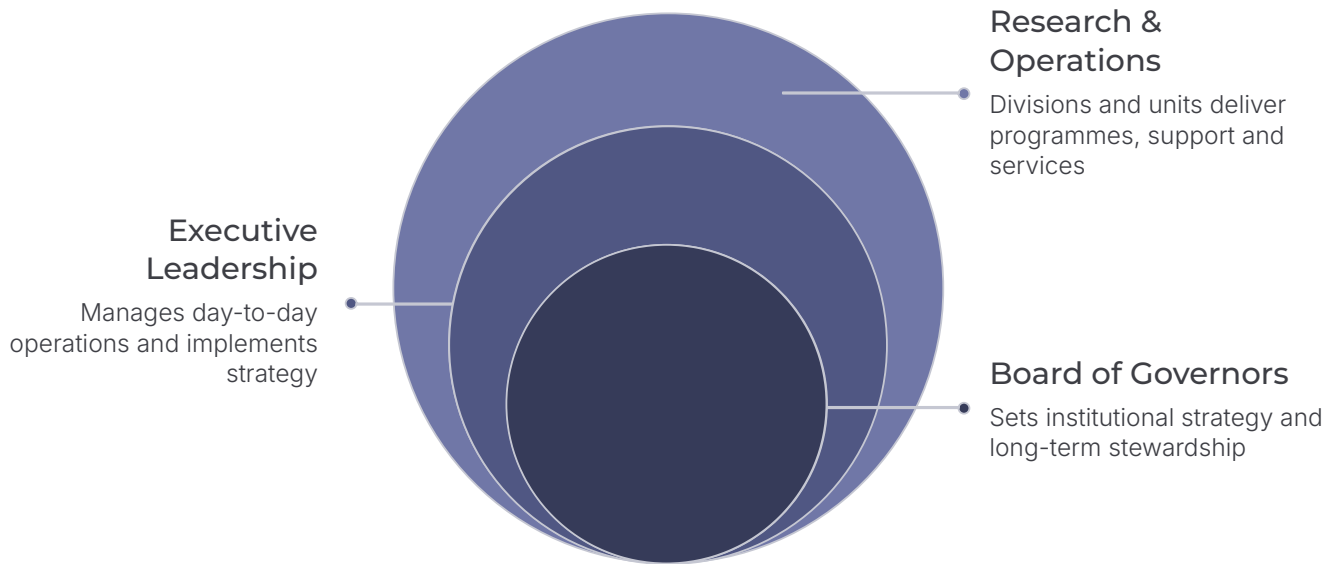
## 5 Integrity

Scientific integrity shall remain central to every activity undertaken by the Institute. Evidence should never be selectively presented to support predetermined conclusions.

# Organisational Structure

IRIISM is envisioned as an independent international research institute governed through a multidisciplinary leadership model.

The proposed structure includes:



This structure separates strategic oversight from operational management while promoting accountability throughout the organisation.

# International Advisory Council & Research Ethics Committee

## International Advisory Council

IRIISM proposes the establishment of an International Advisory Council comprising recognised experts from diverse disciplines.

Membership may include:

- Islamic scholars
- Physicians
- Researchers
- Public health specialists
- Biomedical scientists
- Statisticians
- Ethicists
- Healthcare administrators
- University leaders
- International collaborators

The Council provides strategic advice but does not interfere with the independence of individual research findings. Its role is to strengthen collaboration, identify emerging priorities and contribute diverse perspectives to the Institute's long-term development.

## Research Ethics Committee

Every mature research institution requires independent ethical oversight.

IRIISM therefore proposes a dedicated Research Ethics Committee responsible for reviewing research involving human participants, personal data or other ethically sensitive activities.

The Committee should include expertise in:

- Research ethics
- Clinical medicine
- Islamic ethics
- Law
- Public health
- Data governance
- Patient representation

Research should not proceed without appropriate ethical review. The welfare, dignity and autonomy of participants remain paramount.

# Scientific Review, Data Governance and Conflicts of Interest

IRIISM encourages scientific excellence through robust review processes.

Research proposals should undergo appropriate scientific evaluation before implementation.

Completed studies should be subjected to peer review and, where appropriate, published within recognised academic channels.

Constructive criticism is regarded as an essential component of scientific progress.

Research increasingly depends upon responsible management of information. IRIISM is committed to protecting personal data, respecting confidentiality and complying with applicable legal and ethical standards.

Data should be:

- Collected lawfully
- Securely stored
- Appropriately anonymised where required
- Used only for approved purposes
- Managed transparently

Where international collaborations occur, appropriate agreements should govern the responsible sharing and protection of research data.

Researchers, advisors, collaborators and institutional leaders should disclose interests that may influence, or reasonably be perceived to influence, their judgement.

Potential conflicts should not necessarily prevent participation.

However, they should be managed openly and transparently to protect the credibility of the Institute.

Institutional trust depends upon visible integrity.

# Patient Representation, Academic Freedom and Institutional Culture

Research should not be designed solely by researchers. Patients, families and communities possess valuable perspectives that strengthen research quality and societal relevance. IRIISM therefore encourages meaningful public involvement where appropriate.

Patient experience can help shape:

- Research priorities
- Outcome measures
- Educational materials
- Communication strategies
- Future service development

The Institute recognises that healthcare ultimately exists to serve people.

IRIISM supports responsible academic freedom. Researchers should be encouraged to investigate important questions without fear of institutional pressure to reach predetermined conclusions. Likewise, findings that challenge existing assumptions should be reported honestly, provided they are supported by appropriate evidence and presented responsibly. Academic freedom carries corresponding responsibilities. Research should always be conducted with respect, professionalism and intellectual integrity.

The long-term success of IRIISM will depend not only upon governance structures but also upon institutional culture.

The Institute seeks to cultivate a culture characterised by:

- Intellectual curiosity
- Humility
- Collaboration
- Professionalism
- Critical thinking
- Compassion
- Continual learning
- Service to humanity.

Disagreement should be approached respectfully. Evidence should be evaluated fairly. Knowledge should remain open to refinement. Every member of the Institute shares responsibility for protecting its reputation and advancing its mission.

# Stewardship for Future Generations

Institutions are established not merely to address present challenges, but to preserve knowledge and create opportunities for those who follow.

IRIISM therefore views governance as an act of stewardship.

The decisions made today will shape the quality of research, education and public trust for decades to come.

Strong governance provides the foundation upon which meaningful scientific progress can occur.

1

Without trust, research cannot flourish.

2

Without integrity, evidence cannot persuade.

3

Without stewardship, institutions cannot endure.

For this reason, governance shall remain central to every aspect of the Institute's work.





# Part VIII – From Research to Real-World Impact

## Transforming Knowledge into Better Care

The ultimate purpose of research is not the production of publications alone.

Research fulfils its greatest value when it improves understanding, informs decision-making, strengthens professional practice, and contributes to better outcomes for individuals and society.

IRISM therefore views research not as an end in itself, but as a catalyst for responsible change.



**Knowledge should lead to understanding.**



**Understanding should inform practice.**



**Practice should improve lives.**

This principle underpins every activity undertaken by the Institute.

# The Translation of Research

Many valuable discoveries fail to achieve meaningful impact because they remain confined within academic journals. IRISM seeks to bridge the gap between research and practice.

Research findings should inform:

- Professional education
- Clinical guidance
- Healthcare policy
- Public understanding
- Practitioner development
- Future research priorities

The Institute therefore regards knowledge translation as a core responsibility rather than a secondary activity.





# Supporting Patients and Practitioners

Every research programme undertaken by IRIISM should ultimately seek to improve the wellbeing of patients and communities. This does not necessarily require every project to produce immediate clinical applications. Fundamental research, historical scholarship, methodology development, educational innovation and ethical analysis all contribute to long-term improvement. Nevertheless, the Institute remains committed to ensuring that research retains practical relevance wherever possible. Success should ultimately be measured not only by publications, but by positive contributions to human wellbeing.

Across the world, practitioners of Islamic Spiritual Medicine often work in relative isolation. Many possess valuable experience but have limited opportunities to contribute to coordinated research, professional development, or international collaboration. IRIISM seeks to provide a platform through which practitioners can:

- Contribute clinical observations
- Participate in research projects
- Access educational resources
- Engage with researchers
- Contribute to professional standards
- Benefit from international collaboration

By connecting practitioners with research, both communities become stronger.

# Supporting Healthcare Systems

Healthcare systems increasingly recognise the importance of holistic, patient-centred care. Where appropriate, Islamic Spiritual Medicine may contribute to this broader understanding through responsible collaboration rather than competition.

IRIISM therefore seeks constructive engagement with healthcare providers by:

- Supporting evidence-informed practice
- Encouraging appropriate referral pathways
- Promoting interdisciplinary dialogue
- Developing educational resources for healthcare professionals
- Contributing to discussions surrounding spiritual care
- Facilitating collaborative research projects

The objective is not to replace existing healthcare systems, but to contribute knowledge that may support more comprehensive approaches to patient wellbeing.





# Supporting Education

Research and education exist in continual partnership. New knowledge informs education. Education prepares future researchers.

IRIISM therefore seeks to strengthen educational opportunities through:

- Postgraduate research programmes
- Fellowships
- Internships
- Continuing professional development
- Practitioner education
- Academic publications
- Conferences
- International teaching partnerships

Developing people remains one of the most effective ways of advancing any scientific discipline.

# Supporting Public Understanding

Public discussion surrounding Islamic Spiritual Medicine is often characterised by uncertainty, misunderstanding, inconsistent terminology, and conflicting claims. IRIISM seeks to improve public understanding through responsible communication.

The Institute intends to publish:

- Position papers
- Systematic reviews
- Evidence summaries
- Educational resources
- Public guidance documents
- Consensus statements
- Policy recommendations where appropriate

Accurate information enables individuals, families, practitioners and healthcare professionals to make more informed decisions.



A man with dark hair, wearing a dark sweater, is seated at a wooden desk. He is looking down at a document he is holding with both hands. The document has some text and a heading that is partially visible, including the word "ing". The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

# Supporting Public Policy

Governments increasingly seek reliable evidence when considering healthcare policy, regulation, professional standards and public health initiatives. IRIISM seeks to become a trusted source of independent research capable of informing such discussions. The Institute does not advocate policy based solely upon tradition or opinion. Instead, it seeks to contribute evidence, analysis and expert collaboration that may assist policymakers in making informed decisions.

Where appropriate, IRIISM may provide:

- Technical reports
- Research briefings
- Consultation responses
- Expert advisory input
- Collaborative policy development

# Building International Collaboration

Many healthcare challenges extend beyond national borders. Likewise, the future development of Islamic Spiritual Medicine requires international cooperation. IRIISM therefore seeks to establish a global network connecting:



Universities



Hospitals



Research institutes



Healthcare providers



Islamic scholars



Practitioners



Professional organisations



Governments



Philanthropic partners

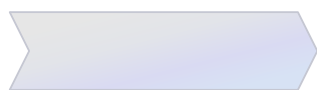
Such collaboration enables:

- Multicentre research
- International registries
- Shared educational resources
- Comparative studies
- Joint publications
- Coordinated responses to emerging research priorities

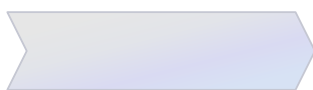


# Measuring Success

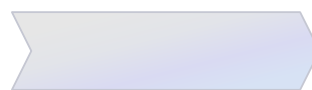
The success of IRIISM should be evaluated through meaningful impact rather than institutional size alone. Indicators of success may include:



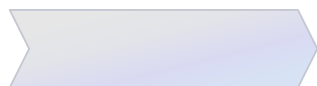
Improvements in research quality



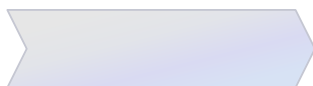
Increased international collaboration



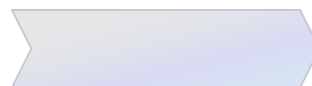
Publication of influential research



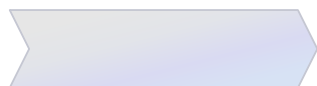
Development of professional standards



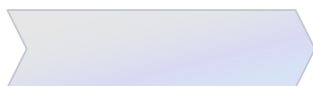
Improved educational opportunities



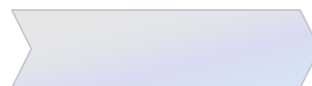
Adoption of evidence-informed clinical guidance



Strengthened healthcare partnerships



Greater public understanding



Measurable contributions to patient wellbeing

Institutional growth is valuable only insofar as it contributes to these broader objectives.

# A Legacy Beyond Research

Every generation inherits knowledge from those who came before. Every generation also carries responsibility for improving that knowledge before passing it forward.

IRIISM seeks to become more than a research institute.

It seeks to become an enduring institution that strengthens scholarship, improves practice, supports healthcare, develops future leaders, and contributes meaningfully to the wellbeing of communities across the world.

Its success will not be measured solely by the number of papers it publishes, but by the quality of understanding it helps create, the partnerships it builds, the standards it inspires, and the lives it ultimately serves. In doing so, the Institute seeks to fulfil its founding commitment:

**Advancing Knowledge. Serving Humanity.**



# Part IX – The Global Ecosystem of Islamic Spiritual Medicine

## Building an International Community of Knowledge

No single institution can advance an entire discipline alone. Building an International Community of Knowledge

No single institution can advance an entire discipline alone. Scientific progress depends upon collaboration.



### Universities

Universities contribute research.



### Hospitals

Hospitals contribute clinical experience.



### Practitioners

Practitioners contribute observation.



### Islamic scholars

Islamic scholars contribute theological guidance.



### Patients

Patients contribute lived experience.



### Governments

Governments contribute leadership and public policy.

Each possesses valuable knowledge.

The role of IRIISM is not to replace these communities. Its role is to connect them.

The Institute therefore envisions Islamic Spiritual Medicine not as a collection of isolated organisations, but as a global ecosystem united by a shared commitment to improving knowledge, strengthening practice, and serving humanity.

# A Connecting Institution

IRIISM is conceived as an enabling institution rather than a controlling institution.

Its purpose is to strengthen collaboration rather than centralise authority.

The Institute seeks to create opportunities through which knowledge may move more effectively between communities that have historically worked independently.

## **Rather than asking:**

"Who owns Islamic Spiritual Medicine?"

## **IRIISM asks:**

"How can we help the world's experts work together?"

This philosophy underpins every partnership the Institute seeks to establish.





# Universities

Universities remain central to the future development of Islamic Spiritual Medicine.

They contribute:

1

Scientific methodology

2

Postgraduate education

3

Interdisciplinary expertise

4

Academic supervision

5

Laboratory research

6

Peer-reviewed publication

7

International credibility

IRIISM seeks long-term partnerships with universities through collaborative research projects, visiting fellowships, doctoral supervision, student placements, academic conferences and joint publications. Rather than duplicating the work of universities, the Institute aims to complement and strengthen it.

# Hospitals and Healthcare Providers

Healthcare institutions provide essential opportunities for responsible clinical research.

Hospitals contribute:

1

Patient populations

2

Multidisciplinary expertise

3

Clinical governance

4

Outcome measurement

5

Healthcare integration

6

Practical understanding of patient care

IRIISM seeks collaborative relationships that allow research to be undertaken ethically, transparently and in ways that respect existing healthcare systems.

The Institute does not seek to replace medical services. It seeks to contribute knowledge that may support more holistic approaches to healthcare where appropriate.





# Islamic Scholars

Authentic Islamic scholarship remains fundamental to the integrity of Islamic Spiritual Medicine.

Scholars provide:



IRIISM recognises that scientific research and Islamic scholarship perform different yet complementary roles.

The Institute therefore encourages ongoing dialogue between researchers and scholars while respecting the independence of each discipline.

# Practitioners

Practitioners represent one of the discipline's greatest resources. Every day they encounter patients, observe treatment responses, identify recurring patterns and develop practical experience that may contribute to future research.

IRIISM seeks to provide practitioners with opportunities to:

1

Contribute anonymised clinical observations

2

Participate in multicentre research

3

Engage in professional development

4

Collaborate with researchers

5

Contribute to international registries

6

Help shape future research priorities

The Institute views practitioners not simply as service providers, but as important contributors to the advancement of knowledge.





# Patients and Communities

Healthcare ultimately exists to benefit people.

Patients therefore occupy a central place within the IRIISM ecosystem.

The Institute encourages meaningful engagement with patients and communities throughout the research process.

Their experiences help identify important research questions, improve educational resources, refine outcome measures and strengthen the relevance of future research.

**Knowledge grows stronger when informed by those it ultimately seeks to serve.**

# Governments and Policymakers

Governments play an essential role in supporting research, strengthening healthcare systems and promoting public wellbeing.

IRIISM seeks constructive engagement with ministries, public health agencies and policymakers through:

1

Evidence-informed consultation

2

Collaborative research

3

Technical advice

4

Policy dialogue

5

International cooperation

The Institute recognises that sustainable progress requires partnership between researchers and public institutions.





# International Organisations

Many of today's healthcare challenges extend across national boundaries.

IRIISM therefore seeks collaboration with international organisations whose work aligns with research, education, ethics, healthcare, public health and humanitarian development.

Such partnerships may support:

International research networks

Collaborative conferences

Educational initiatives

Research capacity building

Knowledge exchange

Global dialogue concerning Islamic  
Spiritual Medicine

# Philanthropy and Civil Society

The advancement of research has historically depended upon individuals, charitable foundations and philanthropic organisations committed to serving society.

IRIISM welcomes partnerships that strengthen research capacity, education, patient benefit and long-term institutional sustainability while preserving the Institute's scientific independence and governance standards.

Support should never compromise research integrity.

Instead, it should expand opportunities for responsible investigation and public benefit.



# The Global Network

IRIISM envisions an international network in which knowledge flows continuously between all participants.

- 
- 1 — Clinical observations generate research questions.
  - 2 — Researchers investigate those questions.
  - 3 — Universities contribute scientific expertise.
  - 4 — Hospitals facilitate ethical clinical studies.
  - 5 — Islamic scholars contribute theological insight.
  - 6 — Practitioners refine clinical practice.
  - 7 — Educational institutions prepare future leaders.
  - 8 — Governments support responsible implementation.
  - 9 — Patients contribute lived experience.

The resulting knowledge returns to the community, improving practice and generating new questions for future investigation.

This continuous cycle transforms isolated expertise into collective progress.

# A Shared Responsibility

The future of Islamic Spiritual Medicine does not belong to a single institution.

Nor does it belong to a single profession, country or community.

It belongs to everyone committed to advancing knowledge responsibly and improving human wellbeing.

IRIISM therefore seeks not to become the centre of the discipline in the sense of authority.

Rather, it seeks to become its centre of collaboration.

The Institute's greatest contribution will not be measured by the number of people it employs, but by the number of people and organisations it successfully connects.

By creating an international ecosystem founded upon trust, scholarship, scientific integrity and partnership, IRIISM seeks to accelerate the responsible development of Islamic Spiritual Medicine for generations to come.

In doing so, it continues to fulfil its founding purpose:

**Advancing Knowledge. Serving Humanity.**

 Email: [founder@iriism.org](mailto:founder@iriism.org)

