# POLICY 3.6 – Research Ethics

Interior Health would like to recognize and acknowledge the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the Dãkelh Dené, Ktunaxa, Nlaka'pamux, Secwépemc, St'át'imc, syilx, and Tŝilhqot'in Nations, where we live, learn, collaborate and work together.

Interior Health recognizes that diversity in the workplace shapes values, attitudes, expectations, perception of self and others and in turn impacts behaviors in the workplace. The dimensions of a diverse workplace includes the protected characteristics under the human rights code of: race, color, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical disability, mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, criminal or summary conviction unrelated to employment.

## 1.0 PURPOSE

1. The Board of Directors (the "Board") and Interior Health Authority (the "Authority") is committed to exemplary standards of organizational behaviour and practice including active research and knowledge translation programs, and clear ethical frameworks that govern the conduct and review of research that the Authority may engage in or support.

2. In addressing the obligations for ensuring the ethical review, approval and conduct of research studies, the Authority will comply with the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, which requires the establishment of an independent, multi-disciplinary research ethics process.

3. In order to maximize the quality and benefits of research, and promote a positive research environment, the Authority will comply with the Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research and encourage researcher duties of honest and thoughtful inquiry, rigourous analysis, commitment to the dissemination of research results, and adherence to the use of professional standards.

## 2.0 SCOPE

1. All research that involves human participants living or deceased, and/or human biological materials, that is conducted by Authority staff and medical staff, in Authority facilities, involving Authority programs, or in which the Authority is a collaborative partner, will be subject to initial and continuing ethics reviews throughout the lifecycle of the project. If a minimal risk research study is already approved by another TCPS2-compliant Canadian REB, the IH REB will provide proportionate review on a case-by-case basis, with the following expected outcomes:
    a. For studies already approved by an institution eligible to hold Tri-Agency funds, the IH REB will accept their ethical review.

b. For studies already approved by an institution that is not eligible to hold Tri-Agency funds, the IH REB will provide a proportionate review.

2. In either case, IH Operational Review is required and is separate from ethical review. Respect for human dignity requires that research involving humans will be conducted in a manner that protects the interests of research participants, maximize the benefits of the research, and minimize the harms.

3. The realization of these policy objectives will require an appropriate allocation of resources and the development of a comprehensive administration program that will ensure:
   a. studies recognize, respect and protect the rights of individual human participants and respect human dignity;

   b. proposed research interventions are morally and ethically acceptable; and

   c. researchers meet their obligations regarding honest and thoughtful inquiry, rigorous analysis, high scientific standards, commitment to the dissemination of research results, and professional criteria.

4. The Authority's Research Ethics Board functions under the authority of the Board.

5. The Research Ethics Board's composition, functions and mandate are detailed in its Terms of Reference.

6. The Board assigns to the President and Chief Executive Officer (the "CEO") overall responsibility for the organization and leadership of the Research Ethics Board.

7. The CEO will assign the Research Ethics Board appropriate priority in its corporate strategic and operational planning and ensure the provision of the required administrative support.

## 3.0 POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed as part of the normal Board Policy Manual review, or as required by specific events.

## 4.0 REFERENCES

4.1 Canadian Association of Research Ethics Boards and N2 Network of Networks. (2023 ). Standard Operating Procedure 101.004: Authority and Purpose.

4.2 Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (2022)

4.3 International Council for Harmonization of Technical Requirements for Pharmaceuticals for Human Use (ICH). (2025). ICH E6(R3) Good Clinical Practice. https://database.ich.org/sites/default/files/ICH_E6%28R3%29_Step4_FinalGuideline_2025_0106.pdf

4.4 Interior Health. (2023) Research Policy Manual: RR0100 – Activities Requiring Research Ethics Review

4.5 Panel on Research Ethics. (2023). Applying the Single REB Review Model for Multi-jurisdictional Minimal Risk Research: Guidance to support the implementation of the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS).