National Health Ethics Week
Semaine nationale de l'éthique de la santé

March 2 to 8 / 2015

Research Ethics Bulletin #1: THE HREA

Are you conducting health research in Newfoundland and Labrador? Are you involved with a research project involving human subjects in Newfoundland and Labrador? Have you participated in a health research study? If so, here are some things that you need to know!

In July 2011, the Health Research Ethics Authority (HREA)* was officially established with the proclamation of the *Health Research Ethics Authority Act* (http://www.assembly.nl.ca/legislation/sr/statutes/h01-2.htm). The Act requires that all health research involving human participants conducted in the province be reviewed and approved by a local (Newfoundland and Labrador) (NL) research ethics board (REB) established in accordance with the Act.

In keeping with the Act, the HREA ensures that all health research involving human subjects within the province is conducted in an ethical manner. One way of achieving this is by appointing the Health Research Ethics Board (HREB). The HREB has the legislated authority and responsibility for the ethics review and approval of applications for health research projects involving human participants. The HREB has two subcommittees – one that is designated to review clinical trials of new drugs and devices, and the other to review all other health research. The HREBs meet on alternating weeks.

By regulation, all clinical trials and genetics research conducted in NL must be reviewed by the HREB. Other forms of health research may be reviewed by the HREB or by other approved research ethics bodies established pursuant to the Act. Currently, there is only one other REB approved under the Act – the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR) – an REB internal to Memorial University of Newfoundland. The HREB, and any approved research ethics body under the Act, are accountable to the HREA.

Another way to ensure that health research is conducted in an ethical manner is through the requirement that Canadian and internationally accepted legal, ethical and regulatory principles affording protection of research participants shall govern the processes for review and continued oversight of health research (tomorrow's bulletin will cover more information on our locally adopted regulations (TCPS 2) under the Act .

The HREA also is responsible for providing public awareness and education on the ethics issues related to health research involving human participants. The HREA is committed to its vision of excellence in research ethics review by ensuring that all health research involving human participants is based on good science, meets ethical standards, and complies with international best practice. The HREA contributes to this vision by engaging in activities to generate knowledge in relation to the ethical conduct of health research involving human participants and promoting the integrity of the health research environment.

If you have any questions about the HREA, the HREBs or the research ethics review process you can visit our website: www.hrea.ca or contact the Ethics Office:

Health Research Ethics Authority
Suite 200, 2nd floor, 95 Bonaventure Avenue
St. John's, NL. A1B 2X5
t: 709-777-6974
e: info@hrea.ca

Health Research Ethics Authority

Canadian Bioethics Society / Société canadienne de bioéthique

* The HREA is a provincial, not-for-profit corporation