

HREB ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Membership
3. New Applications
4. Continuing Review
5. Operations
6. Chair Comments

INTRODUCTION

The Health Research Ethics Board (HREB), appointed by the Health Research Ethics Authority (HREA), is responsible for the ethical review, approval and subsequent monitoring of applications for health research projects involving human subjects in Newfoundland and Labrador. Currently, there are three HREB subcommittees; one for clinical trials (HREB-CT), one for genetics and genomics research (HREB-GG) and one for all other health research (HREB-NCT).

As per the HREB Terms of Reference, the following annual report has been prepared for HREA Board of Directors.

MEMBERSHIP

There was turnover in the HREB membership throughout the fiscal year. Each subcommittee remained compliant with Article 6.4 of the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans, 2nd edition (TCPS 2)* and consisted of:

- a. at least two members with expertise in relevant research disciplines, fields and methodologies covered by the HREB;
- b. at least one member knowledgeable in ethics;
- c. at least one member knowledgeable in the relevant law, and
- d. at least one community member who has no affiliation with the institution.

The list of current HREB members is available on the HREA website under the HREB tab. The changes in membership between November 2019 and February 2021 were as follows:

New Members Added: 9

- Content Experts: 5
- Knowledgeable in Ethics: 1
- Knowledgeable in Privacy: 1
- Knowledgeable in the Law: 1
- Community Representative: 1

Former Members Stepping Down: 8

- Content Experts: 6
- Knowledgeable in Ethics: 1
- Knowledgeable in Privacy: 1

NEW APPLICATIONS

In the last fiscal year, the HREB adjudicated a total of 204 new research applications.

Number of applications reviewed by HREB-NCT: 142

Number of applications reviewed by HREB-CT: 53

Number of Genetics/Genomics applications reviewed: 9

CONTINUING REVIEW

Introduction: In the last fiscal year, the HREB adjudicated a grand total of 2066 events. The breakdown of these events is as follows:

Event	Quantity
Personnel Change Notification	342
Protocol Deviation Report	131
Other Event Form	144
Amendments	538
Renewals/Closures	604
Investigator Brochure Report	91
Safety Report	184
Serious Adverse Event Report	32
TOTAL	2066

OPERATIONS

HREB meetings are scheduled biweekly and are facilitated via distance technologies as required. One meeting is routinely cancelled for each subcommittee during the summer to accommodate summer vacation. Also, there are no HREB meetings scheduled during Memorial University's Christmas break.

The meeting activity for the 2020-21 fiscal year was as follows:

1. HREB-NCT

Total Scheduled Meetings: 24

Total Cancelled Meetings: 10

Total Meetings Held: 14

2. HREB-CT

Total scheduled Meetings: 26

Total Cancelled Meetings: 1

Total Meetings Held: 25

3. HREB-GG

Total scheduled Meetings: 22

Total Cancelled Meetings: 11

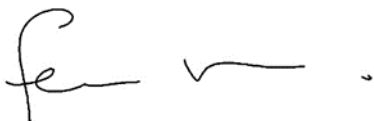
Total Meetings Held: 11

CHAIR COMMENTS

The last fiscal year was a productive one. Our Board members are extremely committed, energetic, thorough and – equally important – a joy to spend time with! We thank them all for their continued dedicated volunteer service to the research community, and for making the meetings so enjoyable. The work load is often quite heavy for this volunteer role, and it is rewarding for us all when gentle banter and joking can be interspersed with this very serious work, especially in the midst of a pandemic.

The Board “table” during this past fiscal year was a virtual one, which had its positives and negatives. We’ve met each other’s dogs and kids, and have occasionally seen odd things in backgrounds, which has brought a personal touch to the meetings in interesting ways.

We know this virtual meeting world has brought some additional challenges for the HREA staff. We want to give a huge thank you to Sharon, Kayla, and Joan working in the background for us all; and this year we are giving an extra loud shout out of “*We’re so glad you’re with us!*” to the Ethics Officers, Rob and Barb. Thank you both for the fine work you do and for being such great supports to us.



Fern Brunger (Chair, HREB-NCT)

On behalf of Paul Moorehead (Chair HREB-GG), Craig Pochini (Co-Chair, HREB-CT) and Joy Maddigan (Co-Chair, HREB-CT)