

HREB ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

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1. 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.

2. 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 April 2024 and March 2025 were as follows:

New Members Added:

- Content Experts: 6
- Members knowledgeable in ethics: 2
- Community member: 1

Member Resignations:

Content Experts: 4

Community Representative: 2

3. NEW APPLICATIONS

In the last fiscal year, the HREB adjudicated a total of 206 new research applications.

	HREB- CT	HREB- GG	HREB-NCT
Number of Applications Reviewed	48	10	148

4. CONTINUING REVIEW

Introduction: In the last fiscal year, the HREB adjudicated a grand total of 1810 events. The breakdown of these events is as follows:

Event	Quantity
Serious Adverse Event	50
Amendment	484
Ethics Renewal/ Study Close Out	578
Investigator Brochure/Product Monograph	57
Other Form	59
Protocol Deviation	72
Research Staff Change	407
Safety Report	103
TOTAL	1810

5. OPERATIONS

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HREB meetings are scheduled biweekly and are facilitated via distance technologies as required. No HREB meetings are scheduled during Memorial University's Christmas break, which occurred between December 24, 2024 to January 3, 2025. Accordingly, no HREB-CT, HREB-GG nor HREB-NCT meetings were scheduled for that period.

The meeting activity for the 2024-25 fiscal year was as follows:

	HREB- CT	HREB- GG	HREB-NCT
Total Meetings Scheduled	25	25	25
Total Meetings Canceled *	1	20	2
Total Meetings Held	24	5	23

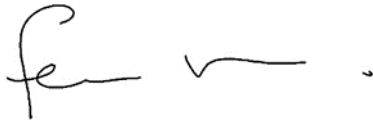
**Meetings cancelled due to absence of studies requiring full Board review.*

6. CHAIR COMMENTS

This was another successful year thanks to the dedicated staff at the HREA/B office. A special thanks to Barb (Ethics Director), Alex and Stacey (Ethics Officers), and Kayla and Joan (doing the 'behind the scenes' administration). They consistently went above and beyond to keep the work of the REBs running efficiently. Their support and guidance to researchers, Board members, and of course to us Chairs has been most appreciated.

As Chairs of the three REBs, we continue to be overwhelmed by the tremendous dedication of the volunteer researchers, clinicians, lawyers, and ethicists who comprise the review Boards. As we look back over the year, it is with appreciation and respect for these devoted volunteers. We cannot over-emphasise that any acclaim for successes the HREBs have seen over this past year must – as always – rest primarily with them.

Fern Brunger (Chair, NCT) on behalf of Dr. Debra Bergstrom (Chair, GG), Dr. Peter Daley (Co-Chair, CT), and Dr. Joy Maddigan (Co-Chair, CT).

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'fern', followed by a horizontal line and a small dot.