

*Improving the Coordination of
and Streamlining the Process for
Health Research Ethics Reviews
in Saskatchewan*

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Research Ethics Working Group

Outline

- Overview of Saskatchewan Initiative
- Our 5 C's:
 - Common Sense
 - Current Environment
 - Coordination and Consistency
 - Challenges
- Future Plans

Saskatchewan Academic Health Sciences Network

- The Saskatchewan Academic Health Sciences Network (SAHSN) works to create an environment of excellence among its partners promoting broader province-wide approaches on academic health sciences
- Partners include U of S, U of R, SIAST, SHR, RQHR, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment & Labour and other Health Regions

SAHSN Provincial Health Research Ethics Working Group

- Participation from health education and health care provider groups
- **Goal:** To develop an effective, coordinated, collaborative, value-added (provincial) approach to the ethical review and approval of human research – one that improves quality, access, consistency, efficiency, and capacity for ethics review of research involving human subjects.

Common Sense

- Recognition by project partners that current environment needs improvement
- Small pool of REB expertise within province
- Look for 'made-in Saskatchewan' solutions to meet multiple stakeholders needs while staying informed of developments underway both nationally and in other provinces

Current Environment

- HIPA Legislation requires approval from Minister-approved REB for research involving personal health information
 - 4 Minister-approved REBs in Sask.
 - Not all researchers have access to a minister-approved REB

Current Environment

- 4 Minister-approved REBs: U of S Biomedical, U of S Behavioural, RQHR, U of R; 2 REBs under consideration for development (FNUC, SIAST)
- Different application guidelines, consent form guidelines, different approaches to defining 'research' and 'non-research' projects

Coordination & Consistency

- Currently developing common consent form template and guidelines for behavioural and biomedical studies
 - Next step is development of common application guidelines
- All existing and planned REBs have agreed to use common templates and consent form/application guidelines

Challenges

- Multi-jurisdictional research
- Differences in opinion between having privileges to practice within an organization and the rights this affords practitioners
- Unaffiliated practitioner access to an REB
 - Liability (Risk Management and Insurance) issues

Future Plans

- Investigating feasibility of moving to a province-wide, on-line environment for all REB applications
- Reciprocity between Saskatchewan REBs

Working Group Members

- Saskatchewan Academic Health Sciences Network
- First Nations University of Canada
- Ministry of Health
- Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region
- Researchers
- Saskatchewan Cancer Agency
- Saskatchewan Drug Research Institute
- Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation
- Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology
- Saskatoon Health Region
- University of Regina
- University of Saskatchewan
- Other Health Regions