

# Does my project need ethics review?

Working toward a screening & review process for KG projects at Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH)



Patricia Tait, Coordinator, Internal Funding  
& Strategic Initiatives, VCHRI

May 5, 2008

# Why is this important?

---

- It will provide an integrated and consistent approach to ensuring ethical conduct and protection of privacy in projects at VCH
- It will facilitate the sharing of innovative practice with external colleagues

# Current situation

---

- there is a growing # and variety of KG projects being conducted across VCH
- Currently REB review is the only review process available, but often that level of scrutiny is not warranted and can be inefficient for both REBs and project leaders
- recognition that ‘non-research’ projects can have elements of risk or privacy implications
- there are feelings of confusion & frustration on all fronts

# Project Purpose

---

One year project with the goal of making policy & procedures recommendations to the senior executive of VCH on the ethics review of knowledge generating projects (both research and non-research) involving individuals (staff, patients, clients) and/or their personal information

# Project Plan

---

- Stakeholder consultations: Nov. 2006 - Aug 2007
- Approval of project plan: December 2006
- Advisory committee formed: January 2007
- Tool/process development: Feb – May 2007
- Pilot Phase: May to August 2007
- Post-pilot revisions: Aug – Sept 2007
- Recommendations report: November 2007
- Approval to move forward with initiative
- Implementation across VCH

# Recommendations

---

We developed a policy, process & tool to determine whether ethics review by a Research Ethics Board (REB) is necessary for internal KG projects (QI and PE).

The tool should be integrated with existing relevant VCH policies & procedures that staff must adhere to when conducting KG projects.

It would apply to VCH staff, medical staff and residents, volunteers, students. It would not apply to individuals (e.g. researchers) external to VCH.

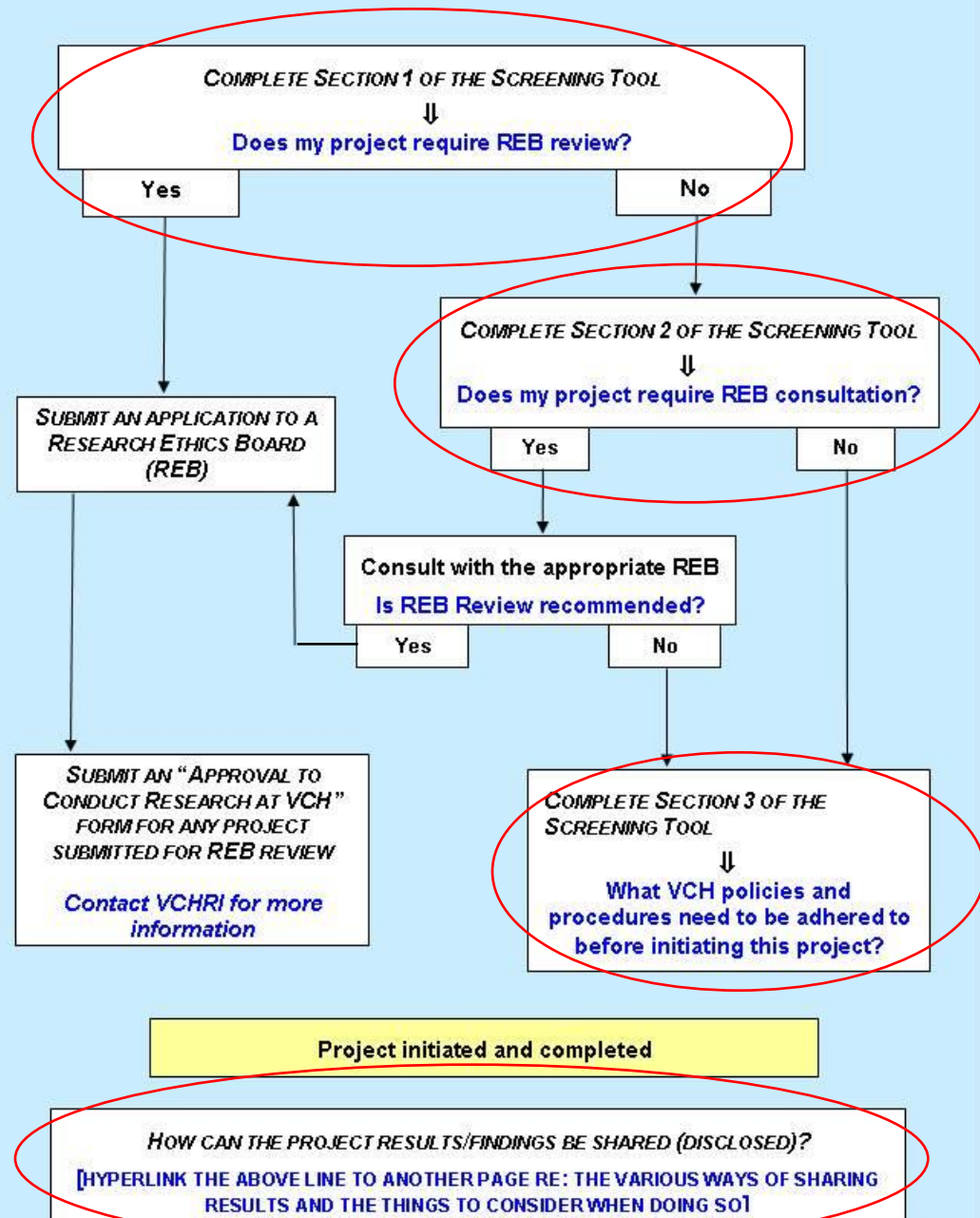
# Draft project screening process

Section 1: REB submission?

Section 2: REB consultation?

Section 3: Relevant VCH policies need to be considered

Sharing of results



# Example

---

A manager evaluates an innovative program by surveying past and present clients to determine the effectiveness of the program.

- There are concerns raised re: some of the questions and with how they accessed clients' current contact information.
- The program wants to share the amazing evaluation results but find they are limited in how and where. e.g. particular journals

# Next steps

---

- VCH senior executive team/Board approval to move forward with the proposed policy & process
- Identify the leader and resources for the initiative
- Finalize policy, process and online tool
- Launch of the initiative; communication & education across VCH

# Strengths and challenges

---

- Both VCH & the UBC REBs want a commonsense approach to the review of QI and program evaluation projects
- There was overwhelming support for the initiative across VCH
- Finding a balance between the needs and requirement of REB and VCH stakeholders
- Trying to encompass the various types of project and project-leader types
- Delays in moving forward

# Summary

---

The common message that I received was that clarity and direction were needed, but another large bureaucratic process was not.

As quality improvement/program evaluation initiatives are a required and important aspect of health care management, they need to be able to move forward efficiently but also appropriately.