

ALBERTA'S
HEALTH RESEARCH ETHICS HARMONIZATION
INITIATIVE
HREH

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ALBERTA'S HEALTH INFORMATION ACT

Collection of **identifying** health information is limited:

[...]

conducting **research** or performing data matching or other services to facilitate another person's research

- (i) if the custodian or **researcher has submitted a proposal to a research ethics board** in accordance with section 49,
- (ii) if the **research ethics board is satisfied** as to the matters referred to in section 50(1)(b),
- (iii) if the custodian or researcher has complied with or undertaken to comply with the conditions, if any, suggested by the research ethics board, and
- (iv) where the **research ethics board recommends that consents** should be obtained from the individuals who are the subjects of the health information to be used in the research, if those consents have been obtained;

HREH 2013-2016

- Joint mandate letter from Deputy Ministers of Health and of Enterprise and Advanced Education (now EDT but separate from AE) directing AIHS to expand upon the goals of harmonization > *Alberta Health Research and Innovation Strategy*
- In response, “modified proposal” presented by HREH partners; DM accepted the proposal and suggested an interim stage
- Reciprocity Agreement established across three HIA-designated REBs
*i.e. an ethics application in Alberta will require only **one review** to be accepted at all health research locations in the province*

NOV 2013

Minister of Health signed a Designation Regulation to reduce the number of Health Information Act (HIA) designated boards from six to three:

- **Health Research Ethics Board of Alberta (HREBA)**
3 committees: cancer; non-university affiliated clinical trials and community health
- **University of Alberta – HREB**
- **University of Calgary – CHREB**

HREH - Vision

To achieve an integrated model for health research ethics review in Alberta that supports

- health research
- encourages multi-site research
- attracts health research and investment in Alberta

The HREH Model

- Ensure the protection of research participants
- Recognize the autonomous nature of REB decision-making
- Support provincial level metrics for strategic management of health research ethics

HREH GOVERNANCE AGREEMENT

HREH Steering Committee

Alberta Health Services

Covenant Health

Alberta Innovates-Health Solutions

College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta

University of Alberta

University of Calgary

HREH GOVERNANCE AGREEMENT

HREH Steering Committee

- facilitates **cooperation and collaboration** among the Parties... in particular with respect to Applications for and the conduct of ethics reviews of proposed Studies
- facilitates a **systems-level, province-wide** mechanism for the **collection, aggregation, and presentation of data** and information related to the ethics review;

RECIPROCITY AGREEMENT, NOV 2013

Section 8 - Recognized Review

(1) When a Designated REB receives an Application for an Ethics Review, the Designated REB shall review the Application in compliance with that Designated REB's normal processes and procedures and in compliance with the requirements of this Agreement.

(2) An Ethics Review completed in compliance with this Agreement shall constitute a Recognized Review.

[...]

Section 9 - Acceptance of Recognized Review

(1) Each Party confirms that it will accept, and will authorize its Designated REB to accept, a Recognized Review.

HREH – KEY OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

- Governance > Facilitated decision making
- Reciprocity > Changed practice
- IT Platform > Two systems: IRISS (hosted by UofC and used by HREBA) & REMO (hosted by UofA)
- Health Research Ethics System Level Reporting > Draft for 2014-2015
- Evaluation, communication and knowledge transfer > Draft progress report

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Spring 2016

- Key implementation of the Reciprocity Agreement > all cancer-related studies transferred to HREBA-CC

November 2016

- HIA designation expired > designation of the 3 REBs has been renewed
- Reciprocity Agreement expired > ongoing negotiations for a new Reciprocity Agreement
- A new Alberta Innovates corporation created, effective Nov 1st 2016 and new CEO, effective Jan 1st 2017