COVID-19 Update: Suggested Actions for Currently Approved Research Involving Humans

Given the evolving circumstances with COVID19 [INSITUTION] Research Ethics Boards (REBs) encourage all researchers with active protocols to evaluate the necessity of ongoing study activities at this time, and if needed, to make appropriate (and applicable) revisions to their study in response to Public Health

Ontario recommendations until further notice – maintaining compliance to all institutional, provincial and federal guidelines.

The PI on the application is responsible for exercising sound judgment in determining when ongoing study activities are appropriate, taking into consideration: (a) the objective of the research; (b) the mandate to protect all participants, research staff and the community at large; and (c) the resources available (e.g., access to study sites, personnel, technologies, etc.) to carry out ongoing activities.

Some things to consider:

1. Are ongoing study activities essential at this time?
2. If ‘yes’, what study activities must continue?
3. Are any modifications to approved study procedures needed to responsibly carry out these activities? See our guidelines for more information.
4. If ‘yes’, will these modifications increase any risk to participants, researchers, the community at large or the institution?
5. If ‘yes’, what steps will be implemented to minimize risk to all involved?

[INSITUTION] REBs recognize the width and wide range of research across campus will necessitate diverse modifications to facilitate research activities during this time.

Below are some technologies [INSITUTION] makes available which may help facilitate social distancing and minimize travel to campus and face-to-face interactions, while still allowing research teams to communicate with each other and with participants as needed.

* Consent modifications: verbal consent via telephone (required: verbal script and evidence of documented consent such as via audio-recording); written consent received via email attachment; online consent via Survey Monkey [available product].
* Videoconferencing options: MS Teams, Adobe Connect, [Zoom](https://zoom.us/)
* Office 365 Suite: deemed secure for collection, transfer, storage of some sensitive information (e.g., de-identified research data)
* LiquidFiles – Secure emails allowing to send files up to 10GB

As per the information on the [INSITUTION REB OFFICE], researchers must submit a modification request for any modifications that have been undertaken, ideally within 5 days of implementing the change \*if not possible to do so before\*.

We are monitoring emails and eReviews for requests. If yours is urgent – i.e. you need to implement a change as soon as possible in order to continue with your research – please indicate this in the request. Unless otherwise notified, the normal timelines, i.e. feedback within 2 weeks, will apply.