



# HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE: (MEDICAL) (WITS INDEPENDENT ETHICS COMMITTEE) STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE



**SOP-IEC – 002 (VERSION 6)**

**IMPLEMENTATION DATE: JANUARY 2010**

## 1. DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CFR	Code of Federal Regulations (USA)
Clinical Investigation	Means any experiment that involves a test article and one or more human participants. The terms “research”, “clinical research”, “clinical study”, “clinical trial” and “clinical investigation” are considered synonymous for WITS IEC policies and procedures.
CTD	Clinical Trials Division
FDA	Food and Drug Administration (USA)
GCP	Good Clinical Practice
ICH	International Conference on Harmonisation
IRB	Institutional Review Boards (USA term for IEC)
IEC	Independent Ethics Committee (ICH GCP term)
SAGCP	Guidelines for Good Practice in the Conduct of Clinical Trials in Human Participants in South Africa (2000)
MCC	Medicines Control Council
SAE's	Serious Adverse Event Reports
WHC	WITS Health Consortium
WITS	Witwatersrand

## 2. REFERENCES

- ◆ International Conference on Harmonisation (ICH) Good Clinical Practices (GCP) Guideline (June 1996 Section 3)
- ◆ 21 Code of Federal Regulations Part 56 – Institutional Review Boards
- ◆ 21 Code of Federal Regulations Part 50 – Protection of Human Participants
- ◆ MRC Guidelines on Ethics for Medical Research, Revised Edition, 1993
- ◆ Guidelines for Good Practice in the Conduct of Clinical Trials in Human Participants in South Africa (2006)

## 3. PROCEDURE FOR ONGOING REVIEW OF RESEARCH ON HUMAN PARTICIPANTS THAT IS APPROVED BY THE WITS IEC

### 3.1. Review of Serious Adverse Events, Progress Reports, End of Study Reports and Study Termination Reports

Responsible person	Action to be taken
<b>Two Designated Committee Members</b>	1 Report on SAE findings - Instruct the IEC Secretariat to request safety information and / or comment from Sponsors of studies where there have been more than 10 possible / probable / related causality SAE's and Adverse Drug Reactions (ADR's) reported in a month
<b>All members present at meeting</b>	2 Review list of Serious Adverse Events (SAE's) / ADR's, (compiled in accordance with SOP-IEC-005) amendments passed by the Chairperson, Study Progress Reports, End of Study Reports and Study Termination Reports that are handed out at the WITS IEC meeting.
<b>Assessors</b>	3 Address any issues of concern relating to the above-mentioned list during the IEC meeting and request complete reports of any such documents from the IEC Secretariat as required.
<b>IEC Secretariat</b>	4 Assessors should pay particular attention to reports relating to protocols that were reviewed by them.
	5 Address any issues brought up at the IEC meeting with the Investigator and/or Sponsor as appropriate and forward responses to the IEC Chairperson. These issues will then be addressed again at the next meeting
	6 Track the receipt of progress reports for IEC review on approved research. (Progress reports must be submitted every six months to the IEC Secretariat. The IEC Secretariat reflects these reports in the minutes)



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## 3.2. APPROVAL OF AMENDMENTS TO CLINICAL INVESTIGATIONS AND PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLETS/CONSENT APPROVED BY THE WITS IEC

Investigators are not to implement any amendments until official approval has been received from the WITS IEC unless a change was implemented to eliminate immediate hazards to the participants. In such a case the WITS IEC should be informed of such deviations from the protocol immediately.

### 3.2.3. REVIEW OF MINOR AMENDMENTS (EXPEDITED REVIEW PROCESS)

Amendments are considered **MINOR** if they involve administrative changes or changes that do not affect the safety of patients or the conduct and safety of the clinical investigation. In the case of a minor amendment an expedited review process is applied. This allows the IEC Chairperson, or one or more reviewers designated by the Chairperson, to approve such a proposal without requiring a full IEC approval procedure. All minor amendments must be submitted with a copy of the notification to the MCC.

<b>Chairperson (or designated reviewer(s))</b>	1	Review amendment on receipt of the amendment and Amendment Approval Letter from the IEC Secretariat..
	2	If no objections are raised, the Amendment Approval letter must be dated, signed and returned to the IEC Secretariat for further distribution to the investigator and sponsor.
	3	If there are objections to approval of the amendment, the amendment and relevant comments must be returned to the IEC Secretariat for resolution of the queries and full IEC approval.
<b>IEC Secretariat</b>	4	Distribute approval letter OR handle queries and forward responses to the IEC Chairperson for approval as appropriate.
	5	Ensure that the approval or queries are addressed in the Agenda for the next IEC meeting that is to be distributed to all IEC members.
	6	Ensure that all documentation relating to the amendment, and the amendment, are archived according to the relevant Wits Clinical Research procedures.

### 3.2.4. APPROVAL OF MAJOR AMENDMENTS

Two members of the IEC must review amendments that affect the conduct of the clinical investigation and/or human participants safety. The IEC Secretariat handles administrative issues such as acknowledgement of receipt, and distribution of the amendment to Two Committee Members designated by the Chairperson and the Chairperson. These amendments are to be reviewed and comments forwarded to the IEC Secretariat within One week for distribution to the investigator and sponsor.

<b>Chairperson</b>	1	Designate one member OR the original Ethics Assessor / Reviewer of the IEC to co-review the Amendment.
	2	If the reviewers, without any queries, approve amendment, the Amendment Approval Letter must be signed when obtained from the IEC Secretariat. The IEC Secretariat will issue conditional approval in writing. Approval released on condition that a copy of the MCC approval for the amendment is forwarded to the IEC Secretariat.
	3	Return approval letter to the IEC Secretariat for further distribution to the investigator and sponsor.
<b>IEC Secretariat</b>	4	Address any queries arising from the reviewers with the investigator and sponsor until resolution thereof. Once all issues are resolved, the Chairperson approves the amendment.
	5	Distribute Amendment Approval Letter according to the relevant procedure
	6	Send a copy of the Amendment Approval Letter and any relevant correspondence for archiving according to the relevant procedure.



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### 3.3. APPROVAL OF ADDITIONAL INVESTIGATORS/CO-INVESTIGATORS/STUDY PERSONNEL AND/OR SITES (EXPEDITED REVIEW PROCESS)

<b>Chairperson</b>	1	Review request for new Investigator/Study Personnel/Site. Additional Study Personnel / Sites may be approved according to the Expedited Review process. A copy of the new / additional investigator / personnel CV detailing the trial experience of the new / additional investigator / personnel including the MCC application letter of approval to be submitted with the application. This must be accompanied by a copy of the certificate obtained by the new/additional investigator attending a recognised GCP course. This allows the IEC Chairperson, or one or more reviewers designated by the Chairperson to approve such a proposal without requiring a full IEC approval procedure.
	2	If no objections are raised, the Request for new Investigator/Study Personnel/Site approval letter must be signed and returned to the IEC Secretariat for further distribution to the Investigator and Sponsor. Final approval is subject to MCC approval
	3	If there are objections to approval of the new investigator / personnel and/or site, the IEC Secretariat must be notified of the objections
<b>IEC Secretariat</b>	4	Ensure that the approval and/or or queries are addressed in the Agenda for the next IEC meeting that is to be distributed to all IEC members.
	5	Ensure that all documentation relating to the new Investigator/Study Personnel/Site, are archived according to the relevant Wits Clinical Research procedures

### 3.4 THE APPROVAL AND ONGOING REVIEW OF CLINICAL TRIALS BY THE WITS IEC

All Phase I (one) to Phase IV (four) clinical trials that are conducted in the WITS institutions, as well as those submitted to be conducted in private practice, must be approved by the WITS IEC prior to the enrolment of any participants. Principal, Co and Sub Investigators will be required to sign the current Wits Commitments and Responsibilities Declaration, and submit this document with the trial application for approval. The requirements of the applicable ICH GCP and SAGCP Guidelines and FDA Code of Federal regulations will be applied in considering approval of Protocols and Informed Consent/Participant Information Leaflets. The WITS IEC will review all payments to be made to participants to assess possible problems with coercion or undue influence on participants. Payments to participants should be prorated and should not be wholly contingent on completion of the trial by the participants.

So as to facilitate the ongoing review of the clinical investigations that were approved, reports containing the following information are required on a regular basis from the Investigator:

- ◆ Number of Participants recruited
- ◆ Summary description of participants experiences (benefits, adverse reactions)
- ◆ Number of withdrawals and reasons for withdrawal
- ◆ Complaints
- ◆ Results obtained to that point
- ◆ Risk-benefit ratio base on results
- ◆ Any new information obtained since the IEC's most recent review

The WITS IEC will decide on the required frequency of these reports on a per-clinical investigation basis. This decision will be based on the degree of risk to human participants. The minimum requirement for these reports will be on a six monthly basis.

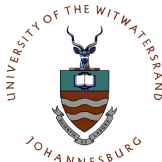
All Serious Adverse Events and Adverse Drug Reactions must be reported as per the requirements of the WITS IEC to ensure ongoing approval of the trial.

- 3.3.1 X2 Completed Recertification Application Forms, X1 Current Protocol and Summary of dates and version numbers of all documents currently approved and in use at research sites e.g. Informed Consent forms requiring re-approval to be submitted to Wits IEC Secretariat 30 days before the HREC meeting (the date of annual recertification will be 1 (one) year after the date of the convened meeting where the study was initially reviewed.
- 3.3.2 Secretariat Office to check documentation and process approval letter on database
- 3.3.3 Secretariat to include Recertification's onto the Agenda for review and approval by the Full HREC
- 3.3.4 Chairperson to sign approval letters at the monthly HREC meetings
- 3.3.5 Approval letter distributed to the Investigator and Sponsor after the meeting

**Attachments/**



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**Attachments**

1. *CV Format*
2. *Commitment and Declaration of Principal and Co Investigators*
3. *Commitment and Declaration of Sub-Investigators*
4. *Example of Minor and Major Amendments required*
5. *Recertification Application Form*

