

# Ethics in Human Research

## Two key guiding principles:

### Non- maleficence: DO NO HARM

doing, or permitting, no foreseeable harm including infringement of rights as a consequence of the research

### Beneficence: DO GOOD

the requirement to serve the interests and well-being of others, including having respect for their rights.

**Research Ethics is about undertaking research in a way that protects others.**

### Protection of:

- participants
- researcher(s)
- institution
- scientific discipline

## ISSUES

- voluntary participation
- confidentiality of identity, information
- confidentiality vs anonymity
- informed consent
- conflicts of interest
- storage of data
- payment of participants – reimbursement vs coercion
- expertise and training of research students (e.g. interviews)

### Ethical responsibility to integrity of scientific discipline:

- standard of knowledge – literature and methods
- plagiarism
- fraud – fabrication / falsification / omission
- copyright and intellectual ownership of property

## **RISKS**

### **Physically intrusive techniques**

Any procedure involving invasive or 'hands-on' techniques with participants, including blood, urine and saliva sampling, biopsies, drug or other fluid injections, skinfold measurements, joint manipulations and tissue massage, skin shaving and electrode attachment, heart rate monitoring, respiration mouthpiece insertion, etc.

### **Causes discomfort beyond normal levels of inconvenience**

Any procedure, for example, disrobing, strapping to equipment, explosive or high-impact movements, stretching beyond normal range of motion, exercise or work movements, etc. that may produce discomfort (e.g., dizziness, nausea, fainting), injury (e.g., muscle strain), or concern (e.g., embarrassment, anxiety).

### **Examination of potentially sensitive or contentious areas**

Any method of your research (in-depth interviews, surveys, focus groups, etc.) where participants may be disclosing personal details, personal experiences, or other information has the potential to be distressing or disturbing.

### **Use therapeutic techniques**

Any method, which may or may not be of an intrusive nature, that involves techniques normally associated with a health treatment regime (e.g., massage, hypnosis, behaviour modification, aversion therapy, etc.)

### **Seeks disclosure of information which may be prejudicial to participants**

- a) Research that seeks the disclosure of information that exposes a participant's professional or social conduct to scrutiny (e.g. medical records, criminal behaviour).
- b) Research that seeks the disclosure of information from participants that may expose colleagues, teachers, supervisors and other managers' professional or social conduct to scrutiny (especially if they are in a dependent relationship with these individuals) and may be prejudicial to participant if disclosed.

- need to be aware of all potential risks to participants
- need to have procedures in place to minimize risks
- need to have procedures that deal with the realization of risks – i.e. management plan
- if risks, need to justify significance of project

## **ETHICS APPLICATION**

### **ETHICS REVIEW PROCESS**

#### **OUTCOMES:**

- Provisional – if required out of session
- Conditional - requires submission and review by Chair of committee
- Withheld – requires submission and review by committee

## **MUST NOT COMMENCE RESEARCH PRIOR TO RECEIVING OFFICIAL APPROVAL**