



NATIONAL HEALTH RESEARCH ETHICS COUNCIL



1. Overview

The National Health Research Ethics Council (NHREC) was established by the Minister of Health in 2006, in terms of section 72 of the National Health Act, Act No. 61 of 2003.

2. Main objective

The NHREC's core responsibilities are to set ethical norms and standards for health research and to advance

research ethics in South Africa; to promote, ensure and monitor compliance by health research ethics committees with regulations and ethics guidelines; and to register and audit health research ethics committees.

The responsibilities of the NHREC flow from the need to ensure ethical integrity in research involving human participants and animals; and that the research is based on sound scientific principles.

3. Appointment of NHREC members.

The Minister of Health appoints members in terms of s 72(2)(a) of the National Health Act. Eligibility criteria include knowledge of and experience in research ethics or law; involvement in health or ethics disciplines including the Medicines Control Council (MCC), the Department of Health or the interests of the community.

4. NHREC Code of Conduct

A Code of Conduct requires NHREC members to demonstrate and maintain integrity, honesty, good judgement and professionalism.

5. NHREC Members (2016 – 2019)

Professor A Pope (Chairperson)
Dr S Ncanana (Vice Chairperson)
Dr G Andrews
Professor C Brink
Dr T Burgess
Professor P Engel-Hills
Dr J Gardner
Professor M Greeff
Ms P Nkambule
Dr B Mohr
Ms T Sebata
Dr Y Sikweyiya
Dr S Singh
Dr M Sekhoacha
Dr N Tsotsi

6. NHREC Working Groups

Working Groups and Committees deal with the Council's responsibilities in a systematic manner. They include

- i. The EXCO
- ii. Complaints, Advisory and Disciplinary Committee
- iii. Quality Promotion and Enhancement Committee
- iv. Norms and Standards Working Group

- v. Legal and Regulatory Working Group
- vi. Animals in Health Research Working Group

7. Research Ethics Committees

Section 73(1) of the National Health Act requires RECs to register with the NHREC, which is mandated to register and audit health RECs. Registered RECs are audited by the NHREC to comply with the process stipulated by the National Health Act, 2003.

8. NHREC Achievements to date:

- Completed audits and registration for 33 RECs; registration certificates distributed
- Nine RECs assessed and provisionally registered
- Revised Ethics in Health Research (2004); 2nd edition published in 2015
- Developed procedures for managing Disciplinary Processes; document on NHREC website
- Finalised Regulations for Human Subject research; published on 19 September 2014

- Developed Operational Guidelines for Ministerial authority for non-therapeutic research on minors
- Audited Animal RECs 2016/17

9. Secretariat

The Health Research Directorate in the Department of Health provides Secretariat and Technical support to the NHREC.

10. NHREC Contacts

Chairperson:

Prof Anne Pope
+27 021 685 2971

Secretariat:

1. Dr Tshilizdi Muthivhi
Tel: (012) 395- 8125
Fax: 012 395 8467
Email:
Tshilizdi.Muthivhi@health.gov.za
Email: nhrec@health.gov.za

2. Mr. Jacques van der Westhuizen
Tel: (012) 395-8119
Fax: 086 6327890
Email: Jacques.vanderwesthuizen@health.gov.za
Email: nhrec@health.gov.za

WEBSITE: <http://www.nhrec.org.za>