

## STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

# Health Research

**Commented [CD1]:** Title changed to align with the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

Under Review: Yes

Issued By: Council: September 1, 2012 (*Health Human Research Ethics Review*)

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The **Standards of Practice** of the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta (“CPSA”) are the **minimum** standards of professional behavior and ethical conduct expected of all regulated members registered in Alberta. Standards of Practice are enforceable under the *Health Professions Act* and will be referenced in the management of complaints and in discipline hearings. CPSA also provides **Advice to the Profession** to support the implementation of the Standards of Practice.

**Note:** a glossary of terms can be found at the end of this document. Glossary terms are indicated in teal with a “G” throughout this document.

## PREAMBLE

This standard applies to any regulated member involved in [health research](#)<sup>G</sup>, as identified through a current and recognized screening tool: as of Mar. 2025, [ARECCI \(A pRoject Ethics Community Consensus Initiative\)](#) is the recommended tool.

Regulated members who perform health research are encouraged to complete the [Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans](#) (TCPS 2) CORE-2022 [Course on Research Ethics](#) and are expected to be familiar with relevant published statements concerning the conduct of research, including the Canadian Medical Association’s (CMA) [Code of Ethics and Professionalism](#) and any other provincial and national requirements.<sup>1</sup>

Related standards, additional information and general advice can be found in the companion resources listed at the end of this document.

## STANDARD

1. A regulated member who intends to conduct health research **must**:
  - a. comply with the [Health Information Act](#), including submitting a proposal to a research ethics board in the Province of Alberta for review;
    - i. such boards include:

<sup>1</sup> From CMA’s “[Before starting a clinical research trial](#)” (Aug. 2022) – accessed Apr. 2025

### Terms used in the Standards of Practice:

- “Regulated member” means any person who is registered or who is required to be registered as a member of this College. The College regulates physicians, surgeons and osteopaths.
- “Must” refers to a mandatory requirement.
- “May” means that the physician may exercise reasonable discretion.
- “Patient” includes, where applicable, the patient’s legal guardian or substitute decision maker.

**Commented [CD2]:** Clause 1 of [current version](#) of the standard.

**Commented [CD3]:** Added based on CPSBC’s [Conflict of Interest](#) Practice Standard.

1. [Health Research Ethics Board of Alberta](#) (HREBA)
2. [Conjoint Health Research Ethics Board](#) (CHREB), University of Calgary
3. [Health Research Ethics Board](#) (HREB), University of Alberta;
- b. follow all applicable *Standards of Practice* (e.g., the [Conflicts of Interest](#) standard of [practice](#));
- c. have approval from a research ethics board before commencing health [research](#), where appropriate;<sup>2</sup> and
- d. comply with the requirements of the research ethics board as they relate to initial and ongoing review of the research [study](#).
2. [A regulated member recruiting or enlisting participants for health research must not:](#)
  - a. [charge the participant any fees; or](#)
  - b. [ask the participant to contribute to the research costs;](#)<sup>3</sup>

**Commented [CD4]:** Clause 4(d) of [current version](#) of the standard..

**Commented [CD5]:** Clause 3 of [current version](#) of the standard..

**Commented [CD6]:** Clause 4(c) of [current version](#) of the standard..

**Commented [CD7]:** From CPSM's [Research](#) standard of practice to protect the public.

## GLOSSARY

**Health research:** any research that aims to improve human health by leading to improved disease diagnoses, more effective treatment options or a strengthened health care system.<sup>4</sup>

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CPSA acknowledges the work of the College of Physicians & Surgeons of Manitoba in preparing this document.

<sup>2</sup> To determine application of ethics review/approval is necessary, please refer to the [ARECCI tool](#).

<sup>3</sup> CPSM's [Research](#) Standard of Practice (Sep. 2023) – accessed Apr. 2025.

<sup>4</sup> From the Canadian Institutes of Health Research's "[What is health research?](#)" (Nov. 2023) – accessed Apr. 2025.

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## RELATED STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

- [Code of Ethics & Professionalism](#)
- [Conflict of Interest](#)
- [Relationships with Industry](#)
- [Informed Consent](#)

## COMPANION RESOURCES

- Advice to the Profession documents:
  - [Conflict of Interest](#)
  - [Informed Consent for Adults](#)
  - [Informed Consent for Minors](#)
- [Alberta Clinical Research Consortium](#)
- [ARECCI Ethics Screening Tool](#)
- CMPA:
  - [Before starting a clinical research trial](#)
  - [Medical-legal issues to consider with research contracts](#)
  - [Physicians and research: Understanding your obligations](#)
- [Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans \(CIHR, NSERC, SSHRCC\)](#)

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