BROCK UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD
Friday, November 17, 2017
12:00 – 2:00 p.m.
MC D350-L

Minutes of the BREB Meeting

Attendance		**Regrets**
Jean Armitage	Jennifer Matunin-Brown	Stephen Cheung
Kirsten Bott	Sandra Peters	Stephen Emrich
Gail Frost	Maureen Shantz	Lara Green
Kimberley Gammage	Craig Tokuno	Matthew Mallette
Grant Hayward		Ayda Tekok-Kilic

MINUTES			
ITEM		**DISCUSSION**	**ACTION**
1	**Motion to approve Agenda** • Approved **Motion to approve October Decision Reports** • Approved **Motion to approve October Minutes** • Approved		Motion to approve: KG Seconded: GF All in favour Motion to approve: KG Seconded: KB All in favour Motion to approve: JA Seconded: JMB All in favour
2	**New Business**	**The REB Sub-Committee on Guidelines, Practice, and Procedure (GPP)** • The new documents to be approved by BREB today were reviewed: 1. REB Guideline – Continuity During Unforeseen Circumstances: • SREB approved this guideline. However, the Office noticed that continuity of research should be left up to the Vice-Present of Research (VPR), which is not consistent with what was written in this guideline. • Guideline went back to GPP and we confirmed with the VPR that it is up to the institution to determine whether research can continue in an emergency situation/pandemic. • It was also clarified in the document that research activities may continue with caution under the following circumstances: 1) the emergency or pandemic does not impose any additional threat to participant safety or comfort (e.g., exposure to communicable disease, dangers accessing the research location, etc.); 2) the required support services necessary for participant safety are available to respond (e.g., campus security, lab support staff, etc.); 3) where ceasing activity may pose a risk to participant safety or otherwise negatively affect the risk-benefit ratio.	

		• GPP felt it was important to note in this guideline that even if the research is not taking place anywhere near the emergency situation, researchers should consider whether appropriate campus support would be preoccupied with the emergency and therefore, unavailable to the researchers should anything happen (i.e., campus security tied up with a fire alarm on one end of campus and testing occurs at the other end where no alarms have been sounded. Even though research could still technically continue, researchers need to think about the fact that campus security would be tied up with the fire and unable to be of assistance to the researchers in the event they needed them). • A motion was put forward by KG to approve the guideline. Seconded by JMB. All members voted in favour. 2. REB Standard – Minor and Substantive Changes: • This standard was already reviewed by the Board at the October meeting but taken back to GPP with suggestions. GPP implemented those suggestions and is therefore coming back to the Board for approval. • A Board member asked whether reporting minor changes as an email update to the Research Ethics Office (REO) is a requirement. If so, wording must be strengthened (as currently written with the word "should," it appears optional). • The same suggestion was made for substantive changes: "Substantive changes should not be implemented until REB clearance…" If this is a requirement, it should say "must." • The Board agreed to change the wording under substantive changes to read "must" ("Substantive changes *must* not be implemented until REB clearance for the change has been secured through a Request for Change form unless immediate changes are required to protect participant safety"), however, leave the minor changes as "should" given the email update to the REO is optional (e.g., "Minor changes *should* be reported in a timely manner as an email update to the REO and *must* be summarized in annual status reports"). • The Board also suggested changing the order that minor and substantive changes appear in the document. This means researchers will read the definition for substantive changes first (importance placed on this category), and if their requested change does not fall under this category, they read further to the minor changes to confirm. • A motion was put forward by GF to approve the standard with the suggested changes. Seconded by JA. All members voted in favour. 3. REB Guideline – Definition of a Research Team: • The Board discussed the difference between investigator and research personnel. This was not clear	

		to members. Can these two categories be collapsed? • The Chair explained that without the research personnel category, we would not hear from researchers about students/other personnel being added or taken off the team. We needed a category that would bring light to these personnel, clearly identifying them as part of the research team (and therefore, need to be identified as such to the REB). An investigator is also involved in *key* aspects of research versus research personnel would be responsible for recruiting or interacting with human participants or have access to data in an identifiable form however, are not considered to be part of *key* aspects of the research. • The Board discussed whether committee members would be considered investigators. Members discussed that committee members are unique given they are generally only looking at the thesis document. This is different from someone who is really involved in *key* aspects of the research, development of methodology, crafting and shaping the research etc. Most committee members only read the thesis document and are not included on any publications. • A motion was put forward by MS to approve the guideline. Seconded by GF. All members voted in favour. **Proposed changes to the TCPS2 (re: cell lines)** • The Board discussed how the REB is meant to handle researchers who ask for approval to use cell lines that did not come from a biobank. At this point, we would be left to decide whether donor consent was obtained and if there is no way to track down this information, whether donors would be ok allowing the use of their cells for this purpose (would it be reasonable to allow cells to be used for this research purpose, even if donors didn't consent to this?). This puts the REB in a difficult position making this decision. • In fact, this proposed change might just put REBs in the same position as before (making the determination about whether cells can be used in the absence of consent). Should we be asking researchers to only use biobanks then, given the biobanks would be responsible for their own ethical provenance? • The REB is the gatekeeper between researchers and participants however in this case, we are left to make our own decisions (possibly subjective). These decisions could differ between each institution, so this also brings up the point of how do we keep these decisions consistent across institutions. • The REO agreed to take the following question back to the Panel on Research Ethics: How are REBs supposed to handle cell lines that are not exempt from REB review, meaning there is no evidence of consent? Can you provide some guidance on this?	

3	**Adjourn**	**Meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.**	Motion to adjourn: KG Seconded: KB All in favour