

**OTTAWA HEALTH SCIENCE NETWORK RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

APPROVED BY:

Operations Committee

APPROVAL DATES

Date Initially Issued: February 19, 2013

Date reviewed / revised: July 29, 2020

Implemented Date: October 28, 2020

Date reviewed / revised: April 16, 2025

Implemented Date: May 23, 2025

1. PURPOSE

The OHSN-REB Operations Committee serves as the administrative mechanism for the OHSN-REB, operating within the authorities established by its terms of reference. The committee supports the REB in fulfilling its mandate by handling administrative tasks, addressing procedural matters, and providing guidance on ethical issues. It is responsible for overseeing policies related to research involving human participants and ensuring the efficient and ethical review of such research within the institutions it covers.

Relationship to the REB:

The Operations Committee operates under the authority of the REB and reports to the REB Chair.

The Operations Committee guides the mandate, operations, and jurisdiction of the OHSN-REB based on the authority granted by the written governance policy, which is approved by the Board of Governors of The Ottawa Hospital (TOH) and the Board of Directors of the University of Ottawa Heart Institute (UOHI).

The OHSN-REB Operations Committee will be led by the OHSN-REB Chair.

Committee members will advise and support the Chair and Vice-Chairs in ensuring compliance with relevant guidelines, as well as applicable statutory and regulatory requirements.

2. OBJECTIVES

The OHSN-REB Operations Committee will review and agree standard operating procedures (SOPs) to guide OHSN-REB processes related to:

- Established operations,
- Board composition,
- Management of real or perceived undue influence or conflict of interest concerning the establishment, operations, and decision-making of the OHSN-REB.

The OHSN-REB Operations Committee (or delegated working group under its authority) will develop, review, and approve common consent form templates and internally prepared guidance documents for

researchers at all institutions submitting to the OHSN-REB. Formal procedures will be established for the selection, appointment, training, and terms of the OHSN-REB members.

3. MEMBERSHIP

OHSN-REB Operations Committee

For the purposes of this committee, only the Chair, Vice-Chairs, current REB members and the TOH Ethicist (or delegate) are voting members; all ex-officio members are non-voting (NV).

OHSN-REB Operations Committee shall consist of the following members:

Chair (1)

Vice-Chairs (2)

OHSN-REB members (minimum 3) including one community member, with representation from TOH and UOHI

TOH Ethicist/Delegate (1)

OHSN-REB Administrative Director (ex-officio) – (NV)

OHSN-REB Manager (ex-officio) – (NV)

uOttawa administrative representative (ex-officio) – (NV)

OHRI Contracts Manager (ex-officio) – (NV)

OHIRC Clinical Research & Compliance representative (ex officio) - (NV)

OHIRC Legal Affairs representative (ex-officio) – (NV)

OHSN-REB Administrative Committee

The OHSN-REB Administrative Committee is designated as a working group and operates under the authority of the Operations Committee to develop, review and approve OHSN-REB SOPs addenda, common consent form templates, and internally prepared guidance documents for all researchers submitting to the REB.

The OHSN-REB Administrative Committee convenes to discuss REB board member training, updates to documents and procedures for review and approval by the Operations Committee, REB member evaluations, and any other administrative matters that may arise.

OHSN-REB Administrative Committee members

Chair

Vice-Chairs

Administrative Director for the OHSN-REB (or delegate)

OHSN-REB Manager

UOHI Clinical Research & Compliance Manager (or delegate)

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

OHSN-REB Operations Committee shall:

- 4.1 Review and/or approve the OHSN-REB governance policy, N2/CAREB SOPs (including applicable OHSN-REB addenda to address local processes and procedures), which outline the composition, appointment, resignation and removal process, duties, term, training requirements, signing authority, application/submission procedures, review criteria, conflict management and confidentiality.
- 4.2 Approve administrative changes to OHSN-REB governance policy, OHSN-REB Operations Committee Terms of Reference and N2/CAREB SOPs and OHSN-REB SOP Addenda, as presented by the OHSN-REB Chair Administrative Committee.

- 4.3 Review and approve consent form templates and internally prepared guidance documents for researchers prior to their release.
- 4.4 Recommend, as necessary, or new or revised SOPs, addenda, or changes to existing guidance documents and templates.
- 4.5 Forward approved documents to OHRI Senior Management Team and the Heart Institute Internal Scientific Advisory Committee for information purposes.
- 4.6 Review and recommend for approval by the Governors/Directors any jurisdiction or collaboration and reciprocity agreements that define board authority and jurisdiction.
- 4.7 Ensure that the OHSN-REB has an appropriate appeal process in place, ready for implementation should an appeal arise.
- 4.8 Assist in the review of procedures related to reviews conducted during publicly declared emergencies.
- 4.9 Review and provide feedback on a draft written annual report of the OHSN-REB operations and the related issues before its submission to the 'Governors/Directors, ensuring continued accountability and fulfillment of the OHSN-REB mandate.
- 4.10 Provide a copy of the annual report to the University of Ottawa and other relevant parties.
- 4.11 Meet at least quarterly or as needed, at the call of the Chair, to address any urgent issues that may arise.
- 4.12 Review relevant regulatory inspection results which pertain to process issues or the quality of OHSN-REB reviews, which may lead to the revisions of OHSN-REB SOPs and addenda.

5. QUORUM FOR VOTING

- Voting may occur in-person, by teleconference, or by electronic vote
- Chair and/or Vice Chairs (minimum 1), UOHI Vice-Chair (1)
- OHSN-REB members (minimum 2), including one community member, with representation from TOH and UOHI
- A member may fulfill up to two representative capacities.

6. TERM

Chair and/or Vice-Chairs will serve a five-year renewable term as per OHSN-REB Governance Policy.

7. RECORD KEEPING

The OHSN-REB Manager overseeing the administrative office will be responsible for the preparation of meeting agendas and minutes and circulation to committee members.