January 2025



Surrey Place Research Ethics Board Request for Exemption Instructions for Investigators

Before submitting a Request for Exemption, please read the following information carefully and contact the Research Ethics Board Coordinator (REB) REB@surreyplace.ca with any questions.

# Background and Purpose

Surrey Place Staff often engage in quality improvement and evaluation projects that are not necessarily defined as research. Staff may want to publish or disseminate such projects, but publication of these often requires REB approval or exemption

The purpose of this document is to outline procedures for obtaining REB exemptions

# Procedures for submitting

The project team/lead requesting an REB exemption is responsible for:

1. Reviewing criteria to help determine if their proposed project is research requiring REB review or QI (see definition below).
2. Completing the Alberta Innovates (2017) [ARECCI](https://arecci.albertainnovates.ca/) Ethics Screening Tool to help determine if the relevant project is QI, as well as the degree of risk associated with the proposed project.
3. Submitting to the REB (reb@surreyplace.ca) the following documents for their review and consideration:
	1. Description or proposal of the project plan for which the employee(s) is requesting REB exemption.
	2. Written justification explaining why, from their perspective, the proposed project does not meet the TCPS 2 (2022) definition of research requiring REB review and approval.
	3. ARECCI documentation.

# What to Expect

The REB Chair/Vice Chair/Delegated Reviewer will:

1. Assess the submitted materials provided and determine if the proposed project meets the TCPS 2 (2022) definition of research requiring REB review or whether an exemption is warranted.
2. Providing a formal letter to the project team/lead outlining the decision accompanied by the rationale.

# Definitions

**Research:** As per the TCPS 2 (2022), research is defined as “an undertaking intended to extend knowledge through a disciplined inquiry and/or systematic investigation.”

**Quality Improvement (QI):** Projects that:

* 1. do not increase risk to patients beyond the risks that are involved in care they are already receiving
	2. are often flexible and incremental in design, employing strategies such as a plan-do- study-act cycle
	3. implement a new practice or process to improve (for example) workflow, patient safety, staff expertise, cost effectiveness, etc.
	4. often have been proven to be successful elsewhere and are widely accepted in the profession/discipline
	5. evaluate the best strategies to implement these interventions locally
	6. can help us characterize our population in order to better serve their needs or improve their care
	7. aim to directly benefit existing patients by implementing immediate local improvement