

Section A - General FAQs

QA1. I'm doing a simple survey! Do I need ethics approval?

Yes, all research projects involving human subjects will require ethics approval from the DSRB. Some research projects may qualify for a category of review that "exempts" it from a full review by the DSRB.

If your research is a survey or medical records review involving anonymous participants (no direct or indirect patient identifiers are maintained), the research proposal will be reviewed by the Chairperson via the exempt procedure.

Research proposals that include simple non-invasive procedures that are commonly done in clinical settings, such as collection of hair, saliva, excreta or small amounts of blood (excluding genetic studies) may qualify for review by the expedited procedure if the Chairperson determines that only minimal risk is involved.

QA2. Do I need to pay for the ethics review of my application?

For studies which are initiated by staff from NHG or partner institutions, there is no direct charge for the ethics review of their initial applications and any subsequent amendments.

For studies which are sponsored by industry / commercial entities, the following review fees will apply:

- Initial Application review involving Single Cluster institution(s) – \$3,000 (\$3,270.00 incl. GST*)
- Initial Application review involving Cross Cluster institution(s) – \$4,000 (\$4,360.00 incl. GST*)
- Subsequent Study Amendments review – \$200 (\$218 incl. GST*)
- Subsequent Study Amendment review for the addition of 1st Cross Cluster site – \$1,000 (\$1,090 incl. GST*)
- Review Fee for Study Renewal(s) – \$1,000 (\$1,090 incl. GST*)

* All rates are subject to prevailing GST and are subject to change

The review fee for study amendments is charged per submission and is not dependent on the number of documents submitted and/or changes made to the DSRB application form. Payment will be waived if the study amendment only involves administrative changes (e.g. change in study administrators and/or study team members, submission of translated documents etc.).

The review fee for study renewals will be charged for all renewals except where the study is suspended or closed (e.g. study completion or termination). The renewal fee will be charged for

re-activation of a suspended study. When in doubt, please contact the DSRB for clarification.

Methods of Payment

1. Payment by Cheque

Payment should be made via cheque payable to “**National Healthcare Group Pte Ltd**” and enclosed with an acknowledgement slip indicating the DSRB Reference Number. The cheque should be sent to the address below. Please ensure that the cheques are submitted early as DSRB will not be able to release the Approval Letters if payment has not been received.

Cheque should be sent to:

NHG Domain Specific Review Board (DSRB)
3 Fusionopolis Link
#03-08 Nexus@one-north
Singapore 138543

2. Payment via Bank Transfer

Name of Bank Account: **NATIONAL HEALTHCARE GROUP PL co MOHH**
Bank Name: **DBS Bank Ltd**
Account Number: **8858011403**
Swift Code: **DBSSGSG**
PayNow UEN Proxy: **198702955E01S**

Please indicate that the funds transferred are for **Group Research & include the Invoice No. and the DSRB Ref No.** Kindly send the Payment Advice to the Assistant IRB Analyst of the Domain that the study is being submitted to. The selected Domain is indicated in Section B3 of the DSRB application form. The DSRB Contact List can be found [here](#).

If an invoice is required for the payment of the DSRB review fees, please contact the Assistant IRB Analyst of the Domain that the study is being submitted to.

QA3. What if I am part of a multi-center study in Singapore and the PI of this study is from SingHealth?

From 1st October 2014 onwards, multi-center studies involving both SingHealth and NHG sites can be submitted to either SingHealth CIRB or NHG DSRB, depending on the Overall Principal Investigator's (PI) cluster.

Example:

- If it is a grant-awarded study, the Overall PI would be the person who is awarded the grant, and the application should be submitted to his/ her cluster's IRB.
- If it is an industry or commercially sponsored study, the Overall PI should be selected and the application submitted to his/her cluster's IRB.
- If it is an investigator-initiated study (no grant/ funding required), the Overall PI would be the person who initiated the study, and the application should be submitted to his/ her cluster's IRB.

For more information, please refer to the latest [DSRB-CIRB FAQ](#).

QA4. What if the study PI or collaborators are from Nanyang Technological University (NTU)?

NHG DSRB has a Cooperative Agreement with NTU IRB. From 1st October 2017 onwards, all new collaborative research study applications involving both NTU and NHG sites can be submitted to either NTU IRB or NHG DSRB, depending on the Overall Principal Investigator (PI).

NHG DSRB will act as the IRB for studies involving:

- 1) Patients from NHG and/or
- 2) Human tissue samples collected from NHG patients and/or
- 3) Medical records/dental records/databases from NHG institutions

In such instances, submissions of these studies should be made by an NHG PI or an NTU PI under his/her NHG appointment.

For more information, please refer to the latest [DSRB-NTU IRB FAQ](#).

QA5. What if the study PI or collaborators are from NUS?

NHG DSRB has a Cooperative Agreement with NUS IRB. If a research proposal involves NUS and NHG researchers, the study can be reviewed either by NUS IRB or NHG DSRB.

NHG DSRB) will be the reviewing IRB for any human biomedical studies involving the following:

- (i) Patients from NUHS or NHG
- (ii) Patient records belonging to NUHS or NHG
- (iii) Tissues collected from NUHS or NHG patients
- (iv) Study sites where procedures are performed officially belong to NUHS or NHG.

Do contact us or NUS IRB if you are unsure whether your study is covered by the cooperative agreement.

QA6. What sort of communications can I expect from the DSRB after the submission of my application?

Application Accepted by DSRB - The NHG Research Online Administration & Management (ROAM) portal will send an email notification once the application has been accepted by the DSRB.

Preliminary Queries - You may receive an email request for more information / clarification after a preliminary assessment of the application by the DSRB. You will be given adequate time to address these questions.

Post Review Query - You may receive an email request for more information / clarification or suggestions / recommendations after the DSRB has completed review of the application.

Approval Letter - You will receive a formal letter from the DSRB on the review. There are two possible outcomes - Approved and Not Approved. If a study is not approved, the DSRB will list reasons for the decision. The NHG ROAM portal will send an email notification once the outcome has been determined and the letter will be available for download in the ROAM portal.

QA7. When can I start my study?

You may start your research only after receiving the Approval letter from DSRB and fulfilling any prior requirements required by your institution. No research activities (e.g. subject recruitment) should be conducted before DSRB approval.