Northwestern | RESEARCH

Northwestern University
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IRB Office COVID-19 Memo to Research Community

Because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, it is possible that principal investigators may determine it necessary to make changes to study procedures of existing IRB-approved projects to eliminate an apparent immediate hazard to research participants. Examples may include allowing:

- study visits by telephone
- laboratory assessments to be completed at a participant's local lab
- shipment of oral drug
- vital signs obtained by the participant's local primary care physician
- the omission a study procedure

In cases where the principal investigator has made such a determination, the human research regulations allow for changes necessary to eliminate immediate hazard to be implemented prior to IRB approval. After the changes have been instituted, the principal investigator should submit an RNI via eIRB+ within five days to inform the Northwestern University IRB. The RNI should include sufficient detail on the temporary changes being made and the harm being mitigated.

If you have a COVID-19 specific new project, expanded access protocol, or emergency use request, please submit in eIRB+ according to standard IRB submission procedures and send an email with the IRB project number to Lisa Linn at l-linn@northwestern.edu. We will be prioritizing these requests.

The IRB Office is closely monitoring University guidance on responding to COVID-19 and will update the research community with any changes in our office operation.

Every effort is being made to address the COVID-19 situation in a way that is seamless while upholding our mission to protect human research participants.

If you have any questions, you can contact the IRB at IRB@Northwestern.edu or SBIRB@northwestern.edu.

Thank you,
Northwestern IRB Office