

## **Ontario Cancer Research Ethics Board Call for “Legal Members”**

A **research ethics board (REB)** is an independent, multi-disciplinary committee that reviews the ethical acceptability of research involving humans. Working within a defined regulatory and ethical framework, the REB's role is to safeguard the rights and welfare of the individuals who volunteer to participate in research.

Since January 2004, the Ontario Cancer Research Ethics Board (OCREB), a centralized, expert oncology REB, has been working with researchers, institutions and sponsors to safeguard the rights and welfare of research participants in Ontario while advancing ethically sound cancer research.

The composition of an REB and its collective expertise in ethical and scientific issues provides assurances that it can carry out its responsibilities effectively and independently. Each REB member has a specific role, bringing a variety of experience and perspectives to the ethics review. To meet the challenges of multi-centre oncology clinical trials, OCREB's membership is gathered from across Ontario, and includes medical, surgical and radiation oncologists, advanced practice nurses and clinical trial coordinators, informed community members, individuals with cancer and family members of individuals with cancer, and experts in ethics, statistics, pharmacology and law, including privacy.

OCREB currently is **seeking members with knowledge in relevant law (“legal member”)**. As someone not affiliated with the institutions at which the research is conducted, the legal member brings the perspective of relevant health law as it applies to research. The legal member also provides a counterbalance to the interests and focus of the scientific members. The legal member is expected to alert the REB to legally-related issues with the research, but not to provide formal legal opinions nor to serve as legal counsel to the REB. Examples of areas that the legal member would consider in conducting their reviews include, but are not limited to:

- that the ethics review is just and focused on the welfare of research participants;
- that the proposed research, including the participant materials such as the consent form, do not include language that would waive or appear to waive a participant's rights;
- that the risks to privacy are minimized and balanced with the potential benefits of the proposed research.

### **Commitment**

Meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of each month in downtown Toronto beginning at 10:30 a.m. and ending around 2:30 p.m., with lunch provided. Appropriate expenses are covered for travel to attend the meetings. Web/teleconferencing attendance is available for the occasions that a member may not be able to attend in person.

OCREB receives approximately 8 new studies per month, plus amendments and annual continuing reviews, which are submitted and reviewed in a secure web-based system accessible from anywhere. Members are expected to review all agenda items from the perspective that their role brings to the REB. Members receive access to the materials approximately 10 days prior to the meeting, and are expected to submit their reviews in advance of the meeting, and to take part in the discussion at the meeting.

### **Appointment Process**

The potential member's CV is reviewed by the OCREB Chair and the [OCREB Advisory Committee](#). Interested members are invited to observe a meeting, after which time a mutual decision regarding the appointment is made. Members may serve up to two terms (2 to 3 years per term).

Regular members are expected to attend 75% of the meetings each year, although members with similar expertise may share a position, reducing their overall time commitment. OCREB also appoints substitute or alternate members to serve when the regular member is unable to attend a meeting. Substitute or alternate members are expected to attend a minimum of two meetings per year, and additional meetings as needed to cover the absence of the regular member.

Members receive a modest honorarium for serving on OCREB and are covered for liability for errors and omissions in the course of OCREB duties under the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research (OICR) insurance plan.

### **Orientation and Training**

New members attend a 2-hour research ethics education and orientation session, which includes the ethics review processes, and OCREB's policies and procedures. Training in the use of the online system also is provided. Prior to conducting a review, new members must complete the online Course on Research Ethics (CORE) - [TCPS2 Tutorial](#).

### **Contact**

If you have any questions or wish to discuss this opportunity, please call or e-mail Janet Manzo, Executive Director of OCREB at 416-673-6636 or [janet.manzo@oicr.on.ca](mailto:janet.manzo@oicr.on.ca). If you are interested in pursuing an appointment on OCREB, please email your CV to Janet Manzo.

**For additional information, please visit the OCREB website at <https://ocreb.ca>**