WHICH ETHICS COMMITTEE SHOULD I APPLY TO?

NUI GALWAY REC, THE UHG REC or BOTH??

INTRODUCTION

Some research uses or generates data from HSE hospitals or patients. However, HSE hospitals have their own ethics committees and require a separate ethics application. Both ethical committees are independent bodies committed to supporting ethical health research, but it is important to note that no reciprocity of approval exists between the two committees. To support the conduct of such research, both committees now utilize a standard application form.

These guidelines are intended to aid the researcher in deciding whether to apply to one or both ethical committees. The Chairpersons of both committees are also available for informal discussion, should you so wish.

WHICH COMMITTEE TO APPLY TO?

The three key discriminatory questions are:

- How have participants been identified for inclusion in the study?
- In what location has explicit consent for participation been sought?
- In what location will the work of the study largely take place?

1) APPLY TO GALWAY UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS (GUH) RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE ONLY:

Ethical approval from GUH Ethics Committee only is appropriate when participants:

- have been identified through the use of GUH databases or clinical services
  
  **AND**
  - consent has been sought on the site of GUH
  
  **AND**
  - the work of the study will largely take place in GUH

In addition, all studies involving new therapeutic modalities i.e. medications, medical devices etc require approval by the GUH Ethics Committee.

2) NUI GALWAY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE ONLY

Ethical approval from NUI Galway only is appropriate when participants:

- have been identified without the use of GUH databases or clinical services
  
  **AND**
  - consent has been sought on a site other than GUH
AND

- the work of the study will largely take place in NUI Galway

3) BOTH NUI GALWAY REC AND GUH ETHICS COMMITTEE:

In other applicable circumstances, ethical approval from both Galway University Hospitals and NUI Galway is generally appropriate.

A common example is where patients are identified using GUH resources, consented on the site of GUH and where the work of the study largely occurs in NUI Galway.

The flow chart below is intended to aid medical researchers in deciding whether to apply to the NUI Galway or GUH ethical committees. Please note: Ethical approval as currently operated by the University is a service rather than a requirement and thus investigators are not obliged to obtain approval from the NUI Galway Research Ethics Committee.

Chairpersons of both committees are available for informal discussion, should you so wish.

Email ethics@nuigalway.ie to contact NUI Galway REC.
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