

# Institutional Review Board (IRB) Policies & Procedures Manual



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## Multi-Site Research When a Boston Children's Hospital Investigator Oversees a Coordinating Center

### Purpose

This policy defines a Coordinating Center and provides guidance on the application and review process.

### Policy

The term **Coordinating Center** (CC) covers a number of very different research-related activities that range from a data center focused on the aggregation, management, and analysis of data from multiple sites, to a study-wide center responsible for overseeing all aspects of a multi-site study, including the development of consent forms, the preparation of a '*manual of operations*', the coordination of data collection, and the overall governance of all research activities at all sites. Because the nature of these activities may vary from study to study, depending in part on the design of the study and the type of funding mechanism, it is critically important that investigators accurately describe to the IRB exactly what their responsibilities are.

A Boston Children's Hospital Principal Investigator (PI) wishing to act as the PI for a Coordinating Center for a multi-site research study must receive IRB approval for these activities:

- For studies in which there will be no subject enrollment at BCH: A specific Coordinating Center protocol that outlines the responsibilities of the Center and the PI must be submitted to the IRB for review and approval prior to initiating the Center's functions.
- For studies in which there will be subjects enrolled at BCH: A BCH PI may submit a separate protocol or describe the Coordinating Center functions in the protocol submitted for the subject related activities.

### Procedure

Most Coordinating Center applications receive expedited review, but it is possible that a full board review may be needed, depending on the nature of the Coordinating Center responsibilities.

It is the expectation of the IRB that those serving as a Coordinating Center will have adequate resources and expertise to carry out these responsibilities and have processes in place to ensure appropriate oversight.

The IRB will review the application materials submitted to determine if the operations of the Coordinating Center has sufficient mechanisms in place to ensure that:

1. Management, data analysis, and data safety and monitoring (DSM) systems are adequate, given the nature of the research involved.
2. Sample protocols and informed consent documents are developed and distributed to each collaborating institution.
3. Each collaborating institution holds an applicable OHRP-approved assurance of compliance with the HHS regulations for the protection of human subjects
4. Each protocol is reviewed and approved by the IRB at the collaborating institution(s) prior to the enrollment of subjects or appropriate reliance agreements are in place.
5. Any substantive modification by the collaborating institution(s) of sample consent information related to risks or alternative procedures is appropriately justified.
6. informed consent is obtained from each subject in compliance with HHS regulations or that appropriate waivers of alterations are considered and approved when applicable.

The IRB will receive from the Coordinating Center PI an IRB protocol submission containing documentation of how the center will ensure that the above activities will be performed appropriately, and a listing of active sites.

At the time of initial review, the IRB will assess the procedures for prompt dissemination of protocol information to all participating sites. Assessment of protocol information includes unanticipated problems involving risks to participants, protocol modifications, and interim findings.

## Related Content

IRB Policy

*Reliance Agreements*

## Document Attributes

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<b>Author</b>	Susan Kornetsky	<b>Dates Reviewed/ Revised</b>	6/10/2010 5/1/2015
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<b>Approved</b>	<hr/> Susan Kornetsky, MPH Director of Clinical Research Compliance <hr/> August Cervini, MBA Vice President for Research Administration		