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Calgary Centre for Clinical Research

## COVID Wave 2 Restrictions: Clinical Research Guidance

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This message addresses questions we have received about how the COVID restrictions announced by the Government of Alberta on December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020 may be impacting clinical research.

At this stage UCalgary is not reinstating the critical research designation that was in effect in the spring of 2020. However, given the public health crisis and the mandatory COVID restrictions, the following considerations need to be given to all clinical research studies:

### Working from Home:

Any research work that can be carried out from home, must be carried out from home. For details on the work from home policy UCalgary issued, see the December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020 message from the Provost.

### Working on Campus:

Where work is being performed on campus, an approved workplace safety plan must be in place, and all must comply with those plans. Working on campus can be permitted under the following conditions:

- Campus access is required to use tools and equipment: Some positions, such as those involved in ongoing research, have unique requirements for ongoing access to tools and equipment, and greater reliance on the physical campus setting. This is distinct from where materials or equipment are needed from time to time, such as accessing paper files. Positions that have an ongoing reliance on equipment that cannot be removed from the campus in order to be productive are permitted to continue to work on campus.
- Work involves secure data and confidential information: Work that involves access to and handling of confidential, classified or sensitive information and

data in some cases is best performed on campus, particularly if this information is not in electronic form.

- On-site preparation and attendance are required to deliver critical research services: This includes services to support COVID-19 research as well as clinical research or clinical trials that, if interrupted, would endanger the life, health or safety of the study participants or patients.

### **Remote Patient Visits:**

Researchers are advised to choose a remote study visit format whenever possible. There are two options for conducting remote patient visits. The UCalgary Microsoft Teams license can be used for remote patient visits. The AHS Zoom license for patient visits can also be used. Note: Only the AHS Zoom license can be used for sharing personal health information (level 4 data); the UC zoom license or a personal zoom account cannot be used.

### **Studies involving AHS Resources:**

For those studies that involve AHS resources, researchers need to determine if the required AHS operational areas are open to support research. Areaspecific information on research readiness is accessible via the [AHS Health System Access Research Resource page \(COVID-19 section\)](#).

### **Ethics Guidance:**

The CFREB and CHREB advise investigators if their research protocols could be modified or delayed, to limit personal contacts, laboratory visits or trips into clinics and hospitals. Whenever possible, in-person participant interactions should be reduced and/or replaced with telephone or online communication.

### **CLINICAL TRIALS**

#### **Heritage Medical Research Clinic:**

The Heritage Medical Research (HMRC) remains open and continues to see research patients. Operation of the HMRC facility is following [AHS guidance](#).

#### **Virtual Monitoring Visits:**

Researchers are strongly encouraged to use a virtual format for clinical trial monitoring visits. Guidance on how monitoring visits can be conducted virtually can be found [here](#).

#### **On-Site Monitoring Visits:**

As the UCalgary campus remains open at this time, on-site clinical trial monitoring visits are still permitted. Unless further restrictions are announced, on-site visits that were booked before December 15<sup>th</sup> can go forward. No new on-site monitoring visits will be booked until further notice.

We will keep you updated on further information as it becomes available.

For specific questions, please email [sabine.moritz@ucalgary.ca](mailto:sabine.moritz@ucalgary.ca).

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