

Dear Prospective Institutional Review Board Member,

The New Hanover Regional Medical Center Institutional Review Board (IRB) is looking for a non-scientific person to fulfill a vacancy on the Board. I have provided some information for you on the definition and history of an IRB and what is required of IRB members.

### **What is an Institutional Review Board?**

An Institutional Review Board (IRB) is charged with protecting the rights and welfare of people involved in research. The Food and Drug Administration and the Office of Human Rights Protection (part of the National Institutes of Health) set the guidelines and regulations governing human subject research and IRBs.

The NHRMC IRB has been in existence for over 15 years and reviews approximately 60 new studies each year. The NHRMC IRB operates under the principles of *The Belmont Report*. *The Belmont Report* exists because of the unfortunate history of unethical research conducted on human subjects. It clearly explains the three principals that are the main tools that all IRB members should use to evaluate the ethics of specific research proposals. **Respect for Persons** is the first principle which mandates that subjects voluntarily consent to participate in research, that they are adequately and thoroughly informed about the research and what is required, and that their privacy and confidentiality are protected. **Beneficence** is the second principle which mandates the risks of research are justified by potential benefits to the individual or society and that those risks are minimized. **Justice** is the third and final principle which mandates the equitable distribution of risks and benefits among those who may benefit from the research, meaning that one subset of a population should not take on all the burden of risk and reap all of the rewards; risks and rewards should be applicable and available to all subsets of a community.

### **Composition of the NHRMC IRB**

Our IRB consists of 9 primary members and 6 alternate members. Our IRB is comprised of scientific members: physicians (active and retired), nurses, pharmacists, and non-scientific members: hospital chaplain, hospital administration, ethics professor, private business director. In addition we like to have a varied population represented (minorities), a non-hospital affiliated representative (community), and any protected populations represented (pediatrics, pregnant women, prisoners, etc.)

### **Why would I want to be a member of the NHRMC IRB?**

- Opportunity to participate in important, worthwhile work
- Great dialogue with fellow IRB members
- Learn new things including the types of research studies going on at NHRMC
- Free lunch

## **What is Expected of Me as a NHRMC IRB Member?**

You do not have to have experience in healthcare or with research to be an IRB member.

You will be asked to do the following:

- Upon the IRB's approval of your IRB membership and before you can participate in IRB actions, attend a 1 hour orientation with the IRB Coordinator.
- Complete human research protection training online at <http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php>
- Prepare for each IRB meeting by reviewing the IRB packet that is sent out the week before the meeting. The IRB packet consists of the meeting agenda, previous month's meeting minutes, and any studies that will be reviewed. This may include new studies seeking approval, existing study renewals, existing study updates/amendments, adverse event reports, any education/training or other applicable information related to research.
- During your first year of service, attend every IRB meeting for that year (if possible) as part of the orientation process.
- Be an active participant during IRB meetings including providing insight, asking questions and participating in the voting process for the research studies being reviewed.
- Be prepared to serve a minimum of 2 years on the IRB.

The NHRMC IRB meets once a month on the third Wednesday of the month, (unless otherwise notified) at 12 Noon. The IRB meeting typically does not last longer than 2 hours. Lunch is provided. After the first year you may be scheduled on a rotating basis to attend meetings.

The estimated time required each month would be approximately 5 hours total (1-2 hours for meeting preparation and 3 hours for meeting time plus travel to and from the hospital).

If you would like additional information or think you may be interested in becoming an IRB member please contact Amy Southerland, IRB Coordinator at (910) 343-4621. You may also visit our website, [www.nhrmc.org/irb](http://www.nhrmc.org/irb).

Sincerely,

Amy Southerland, BS  
IRB Coordinator  
On behalf of  
George Willets, RPh  
IRB Chairperson