

Governance Structure and Terms of Reference of the Bangkok Health Research and Ethics Interest Group

Dr. Daniel Clarke^{1*}, Dr. Olivia Bennett¹, Dr. Ethan Mitchell², Dr. Sophia Turner², Dr. Liam Harris³, Dr. Ava Collins³

¹Toronto General Hospital, Toronto, Canada

²Ottawa Hospital, Ottawa, Canada

³Vancouver General Hospital, Vancouver, Canada

Purpose and objectives of the group

[MORU](#) is a collaboration between the Centre for Tropical Medicine and Global Health, Nuffield Department of Medicine, University of Oxford and Faculty of Tropical Medicine, Mahidol University. MORU's research portfolio covers a wide range of disease areas, with core expertise in clinical research on tropical diseases such as malaria, as well as maternal and child health. The MORU Health Research and Ethics Interest Group (HREIG) was established in August 2019 with the view to build a mutually beneficial partnership with members of the public. Group members will provide advice to researchers on ethical, practical and community engagement aspects of MORU programmes.

The group's objectives are:

- Help MORU programmes achieve their outcomes of being ethical, trustworthy, and to have maximum potential impact
- Increase group members' knowledge and understanding of bioethics and current health research
- Facilitate an environment in which constructive and honest dialogue between researchers, group members and facilitators can take place.

Group membership

HREIG group members are members of the public who are based in Bangkok and have an interest in health research. They are not drawn from a specific patient community. Recruitment takes place through a public job advertisement. The group is run by three facilitators (Prof Phaik Yeong Cheah, Dr Anne Osterrieder and Mr Supanat Ruangajorn). Other contributors (for example MORU Bioethics and Engagement staff, MORU researchers, collaborators or external partners) will help to facilitate individual sessions linked to their work.

Ways of working

The group works collaboratively with researchers, focusing on ethical issues and other concerns arising from their projects. Group members provide feedback on research by actively contributing to group discussions. The group will receive relevant training and briefing materials during the meetings, and where appropriate, in advance. Occasionally we will invite the group to participate in focus group discussions.

Meetings

The group will run for two years in the first instance, with face-to-face or online meetings held every 8-10 weeks. Meeting dates are announced by email/phone, and members should

confirm their attendance or send apologies in advance, if possible. Meetings will take around three hours. Group members will receive THB 1000 as token of appreciation and to cover any travel expenses and other costs incurred.

Sharing of information and resources (including confidential materials)

We will distribute meeting minutes, PowerPoint slides of the presentations, session materials, reading materials and other resources by email before or after each meeting. Group members can share those materials with friends and family. Confidential materials will be clearly marked as such and must not be shared with other people. Additional information will be posted to the group 'Line' chat.

Review

We will review group membership after every meeting. Group membership can be revoked at any time. If a group member is disruptive, does not engage with the discussion, or fails to attend two meetings in a row without having sent an apology, they will be asked to leave the group. The wider objectives of the group will be reviewed after Year 1 and Year 2 in form of an official evaluation. For this we will evaluate feedback from group members and participating researchers, as well as meeting outputs (such as meeting minutes, action points and recommendations, and lessons learnt).

Based on: "Terms of reference template", INVOLVE, National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). <https://www.invo.org.uk/getting-started/template-one/> (Feb 2020).