

Section A - General FAQs

QA1. I'm doing a simple survey! Do I need ethics approval?

Yes, all research projects involving human subjects will require ethics approval from the DSRB. Some research projects may qualify for a category of review that "exempts" it from a full review by the DSRB.

If your research is a survey or medical records review involving anonymous participants (no direct or indirect patient identifiers are maintained), the research proposal will be reviewed by the Chairperson via the exempt procedure.

Research proposals that include simple non-invasive procedures that are commonly done in clinical settings, such as collection of hair, saliva, excreta or small amounts of blood (excluding genetic studies) may qualify for review by the expedited procedure if the Chairperson determines that only minimal risk is involved.

QA2. Do I need to pay for the ethics review of my application?

For studies which are initiated by staff from NHG or partner institutions, there is no direct charge for the ethics review of their initial applications and any subsequent amendments.

For studies which are sponsored by industry / commercial entities, the following review fees will apply wef 1 April 2025:

- Initial Application review involving institution(s) from one healthcare cluster – \$3,000 (\$3,270.00 incl. GST*)
- Initial Application review involving institution(s) from two healthcare clusters – \$4,000 (\$4,360.00 incl. GST*)
- Initial Application review involving institution(s) from three healthcare clusters – \$5,000 (\$5,450.00 incl. GST*)
- Subsequent Study Amendments review – \$300 (\$327 incl. GST*)
- Subsequent Study Amendment review for the addition of each cluster institution(s) – \$1,000 (\$1,090 incl. GST*)
- Review Fee for Study Renewal(s) or Reactivation – \$1,000 (\$1,090 incl. GST*)

* All rates are subject to prevailing GST and are subject to change

The review fee for study amendments is charged per submission and is not dependent on the number of documents submitted and/or changes made to the DSRB application form. Payment will be waived if the study amendment only involves administrative changes (e.g. change in study team members etc.).

The review fee for study renewals will be charged for all renewals except where the study is suspended or closed (e.g. study completion or termination). The renewal fee will be charged for re-activation of a suspended study. When in doubt, please contact the DSRB for clarification.

Method of Payment

Payment via Bank Transfer

Name of Bank Account: **NATIONAL HEALTHCARE GROUP PL co MOHH**

Bank Name: **DBS Bank Ltd**

Account Number: **8858011403**

Swift Code: **DBSSGSG**

PayNow UEN Proxy: **198702955E01S**

Please indicate that the funds transferred are for **NHG Group Research & Innovation and the DSRB Ref No.**

Please note that the review fees should be paid and proof of payment should be included at the time of submission. Please attach the proof of payment in the **Other Attachments** section of the Application, Amendment and Study Status Report Forms.

An invoice would be issued to acknowledge receipt of the review fee and would be sent to the contact person listed in the CRMS, IRB Review Fees Billing Details.

QA3. What if I am part of a multi-center study in Singapore and the PI of this study is from SingHealth?

From 1st October 2014 onwards, multi-center studies involving both SingHealth and NHG sites can be submitted to either SingHealth CIRB or NHG DSRB, depending on the Overall Principal Investigator's (PI) cluster.

Example:

- If it is a grant-awarded study, the Overall PI would be the person who is awarded the grant, and the application should be submitted to his/ her cluster's IRB.
- If it is an industry or commercially sponsored study, the Overall PI should be selected and the application submitted to his/her cluster's IRB.
- If it is an investigator-initiated study (no grant/ funding required), the Overall PI would be the person who initiated the study, and the application should be submitted to his/ her cluster's IRB.

For more information, please refer to the latest [DSRB-CIRB FAQ](#).

QA4. What sort of communications can I expect from the DSRB after the submission of my application?

Application Accepted by DSRB - The NHG Research Online Administration & Management (ROAM) portal will send an email notification once the application has been accepted by the DSRB.

Preliminary Queries - You may receive an email request for more information / clarification after a preliminary assessment of the application by the DSRB. You will be given adequate time to address these questions.

Post Review Query - You may receive an email request for more information / clarification or suggestions / recommendations after the DSRB has completed review of the application.

Approval Letter - You will receive a formal letter from the DSRB on the review. There are two possible outcomes - Approved and Not Approved. If a study is not approved, the DSRB will list reasons for the decision. The NHG ROAM portal will send an email notification once the outcome has been determined and the letter will be available for download in the ROAM portal.

QA5. When can I start my study?

You may start your research only after receiving the Approval letter from DSRB and fulfilling any prior requirements required by your institution. No research activities (e.g. subject recruitment) should be conducted before DSRB approval.