

CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE BUSY COORDINATOR

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Standing Databases: How to Store Research Data for Future Research?

Scenario:

Announcement: From October 2024, researchers who intend to store data for future research must submit a standing database application via the Ethics & Compliance Online System (ECOS). (Only for NHG and NUHS Users)

Dr X from a NHG public healthcare institution would like to store his research data for use in a new research study. Upon reading the announcement, he approached the clinical trial unit (CTU) for advice to find out more about standing databases.

Dr X: What are Standing Databases (SDBs)?

CTU: SDBs contain electronic data stored for the purposes of patient care/services and/or as a potential resource for future research.

The NHG DSRB uses the registration of these databases to review key specific issues pertaining to tissue and data banking. This includes reviewing the methods of collection, storage, privacy and confidentiality measures, and the informed consent process.



Dr X: How to register a Standing Database?

CTU: Databases created for future research use must be registered as Standing Databases (SDBs) on ECOS. Before setting up any SDB, you must obtain approval from the relevant institutional authorities. These requirements ensure proper oversight and compliance for research data storage. With effect from 01 August 2020, all NHG Standing Database applications will be routed to the NHG Research Data Institutional Deputies (IDs) for approval.



Dr X: Am I considered the “Owner” or “Custodian” of the Standing Database?

Owner

The respective Institutions/Cluster possesses ownership of Standing Databases set up by their staff.

The Head of Department (HOD) is the appropriate authority to endorse as “Owner” for Standing Databases created within his/her department.

The Chairman Medical Board (CMB) or equivalent is the appropriate authority to endorse as “Owner” for standing databases that straddle more than one department in his/her institution.

Custodian

The “Owner” should appoint a suitable staff (“Custodian”) to be responsible for the set up and maintenance (including security and access) of the Standing Database.



CTU: Therefore, Dr X is the Custodian for the data he wants to store for future use.



Note: Please refer to respective Institution’s policy and requirement for Standing Database registration.

References:

NHG Investigator’s Manual 4th Edition, Chapter 8: Standing Database
NHG OHRPP Website – [About NHG Standing Databases \(SDB\)](#)

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**Disclaimer: All characters appearing in this article are fictitious. Any resemblance to real persons is purely coincidental. Best practices may differ between institutions. Readers are encouraged to follow their institution’s policies/guidelines relating to the above scenarios/case study.*

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