



CIRCULAR NO. 2 OF 2020.

TO: ALL RESEARCHERS
FROM: THE MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL OF ZIMBABWE
DATE: 18 APRIL, 2020
SUBJECT: MRCZ COVID-19 PROTOCOL SUBMISSION



The National Health Research and Development Committee of the MRCZ (National Ethics Committee), recognises the need for robust and fast ethical and regulatory reviews of all protocols submitted during the current outbreak and COVID-19 research in particular.

In addition to recommendations in Circular No 1 of 2020 (measures to minimise transmission of COVID-19) sponsors, researchers should take note of the following regarding submission of COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2) studies for Ethical/Regulatory Review:

- 1) Whilst efforts and steps have been taken to harmonise activities and conduct joint reviews by all relevant bodies, we currently do not have such a platform and therefore recommend parallel submission of studies for a quick turnaround.
- 2) Researchers whose Institution Review Boards (IRB) are on lockdown, can submit their COVID-19 protocols straight to MRCZ, to avoid delay, for expedited review. Protocols can then be submitted to IRB for regularisation after lockdown period
- 3) It is recommended that studies be submitted for pre-submission consultation by the Medical Research Council of Zimbabwe to facilitate expedited ethical reviews in the current COVID-19 outbreak (No fees for this consultation)
- 4) Risks and potential individual benefits of off-label use of approved/registered medicines (within a clinical trial) must be realistically assessed (including early phase products) in a situation where there is no currently approved treatment for COVID 19.
- 5) Individual Informed Consent of All participants must be obtained at all times regardless of circumstances unless conditions for a waiver of informed consent are met and approved by the Ethics Committee.

- 6) All new studies are subject to the relevant levies (normal, expedited, etc). Requests for waivers for payments will be reviewed on individual basis. There is recurrent need to build ethics review capacity even in disease outbreaks. Amendment requests associated with compliance to Covid19 regulations will be expedited with no levy as stated in previous circular.

ALWAYS REMEMBER PRIORITY IS TO MINIMISE SPREAD OF INFECTION, AND ALLOCATION OF THE SCARCE MANPOWER AND RESOURCES FOR CARE AND TREATMENT FOR THOSE AFFECTED.

FOR MORE DETAILS PLEASE CONTACT MRCZ ON THE FOLLOWING:

General Enquires	Sithembile.Ruzario
Serious Adverse events	E-Mail - sruzario@mrcz.org.zw
New submissions	Cell: 077 2 838 984
Extensions	
Payment Issues	Tinashe Dube E-Mail – tdube@mrcz.org.zw Cell : 077 3 640 981
Executive Secretary	TendayiKureya E.Mail: tkureya@mrcz.org.zw Cell : 071 2 713 139
NHRDC Chair	Dr.E.Shana E-Mail: dreshana@mweb.co.zw Cell: 077 2 211 632

All Correspondences:Dr.S.Munyati
Cell: 077 2 128 048
E-Mail: smunyati@brti.co.zw

