

February 26, 2019

RE: Use of Third Party Vendor Search Companies in Clinical Trials Undertaken at BC Cancer

The UBC BC Cancer Research Ethics Board (BCC REB) acknowledges the importance of obtaining followup information for participants in clinical trials, and the adverse impact that may result if subjects are Lost-to-Follow-Up (LTFU). The BCC REB also acknowledges that the use of third party vendor search companies may be commonplace and/or beneficial within the United States (US) given the contextual specifics of the US healthcare system.

However, the BCC REB takes the position that the use of third party vendor search companies is not appropriate within the Canadian clinical trials context because of the nature of our national health care system, as well as the limited number of oncology centres that participants may attend. These features mean that the possibility of losing contact with participants is negligible. In addition, the provision of participant personal information to third party vendor companies situated in the US for the purposes of searching for and tracking individuals within Canada, raises concerns about and increases the risk of violating the privacy rights of participants. Our clinical trials staff will endeavour to ensure participants are followed to the best of our ability.

Therefore, the BCC REB will not approve the use of third party vendor search companies in clinical trials being undertaken at BC Cancer or those that are under the auspices of the BCC REB.

We appreciate that previous informed consents have been approved with search party access but this policy will be applied going forward.

If there are concerns these can be raised with the BCC REB.



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