

## INTRODUCTION

This *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (TCPS) describes the policies of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). The document replaces SSHRC's *Ethics Guidelines for Research with Human Subjects*, as well as the guidelines produced by the former Medical Research Council of Canada<sup>1</sup>: *Guidelines on Research Involving Humans* and *Guidelines for Research on Somatic Cell Gene Therapy in Humans*.

These Agencies will consider funding (or continued funding) only individuals and institutions that certify that they comply with this Policy regarding research involving human subjects.

This joint Policy expresses the three Agencies' continuing commitment to the people of Canada to promote the ethical conduct of research involving human subjects. This commitment was first expressed in the publication of guidelines in the late 1970s. Work on the joint Policy began with the formation of the Tri-Council Working Group in 1994. The Agencies published three documents prepared by the Working Group: an issues paper in November 1994, a discussion draft in May 1996, and its Final Report (*Code of Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*) in July 1997. Each of these documents stimulated extensive discussion in the academic community. The present Policy Statement was prepared by the Agencies by revision of the Working Group's Final Report in the light of consultations held between mid-1997 and May 1998.

The Agencies believe that this Policy Statement will benefit research by addressing the paramount need for the highest ethical standards. The key is sensitive and thoughtful implementation of the spirit and requirements of the document. Nonetheless, the Agencies recognize that considerations around the ethical conduct of research involving human subjects are complex and continually evolving. We therefore welcome comment and discussion, and commit to regular updates of this document.

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> In 2000, the Government of Canada created the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and dissolved the Medical Research Council of Canada.