

Research Integrity Policy

Purpose

The SE Research Centre conducts impact-oriented health services research to synthesize, generate, translate, adapt and directly apply scientific evidence in the design, delivery and evaluation of person and family-centred health and social care services.

The SE Research Centre's team of diverse and passionate researchers work together and with a wide range of partners and collaborators to create positive health system change.

The SE Research Centre:

- Applies rigorous, evidence-based, multidisciplinary and participatory methods;
- Explores the interplay between social dynamics, financing systems, organizational structures and processes, health technologies, and personal behaviours; and
- Evaluates the impact these factors have on access to health care, the quality and cost of health care and ultimately people's health and well-being (1). The SE Research Centre conducts research with integrity and in an ethical manner, in accordance with the SE Research Ethics Procedure and the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS-2) on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (2) guidelines, which were developed with input from clients and families through a public consultation process.

The purpose of this policy is to describe SE Research Centre's processes of initiating research, conducting research, and reporting the results of research and to address conflicts of interest or perceived conflicts of interest by structuring and describing the decision-making processes for each of the phases of research.

The SE Research Centre also conducts many different kinds of evaluations, including formative, developmental, process, outcome, effectiveness, and impact evaluations of programs, processes, products, services, and other aspects of health services. Evaluations are conducted with integrity and in an ethical manner, in keeping with the principles and applicable processes in the SE Research Ethics Procedure and the TCPS-2 on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans guidelines.

Initiation of Research

It is the policy of SE Health and the SE Research Centre, regarding the initiation of research:

- a. To develop an annual research plan that establishes the research topics that the SE Research Centre will pursue and the criteria for decision-making about individual research studies according to SE Research priority areas and in alignment with the social impact mandate of SE Health;
- b. To state and record reasonable rationale, objectives, methods and deliverables using the SE Research Centre project planning documentation templates at the outset of each research study;
- c. Not to undertake research with the intention to reach a pre-determined conclusion, and to state reasonable hypotheses (where possible) about the anticipated results of research studies but to be open to unanticipated results from research and not to undertake research with the intention to reach a pre-determined conclusion;
- d. To avoid limitations on any research study, but if they are deemed necessary (e.g., sampling restrictions due to timing/scope), any anticipated or known limitations on the research will be made explicit at the outset of the research study.

Conducting Research

It is the policy of SE Health and the SE Research Centre, regarding the conduct of research:

- a. To commence a research study only after any necessary approval to proceed has been granted by a Research Ethics Board constituted under the TCPS-2 on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans;
- b. Never to permit fraud or fabrication in research;
- c. To maintain objectivity in data collection and analysis, and, whenever possible, to use measures and methods that are widely accepted and reproducible;
- d. To record the methods and measures of research and analysis, and to make research methods transparent and available to peers for replication or confirmation of results with this information available to persons making legitimate requests, such as those wanting to confirm or replicate the reported results.

Reporting Research

It is the policy of SE Health and the SE Research Centre, regarding the reporting of research:

- a. To permit and encourage SE researchers to report data and results after the research has concluded, and to disclose any restrictions on the timing of reporting;
- b. To report the true results of the research and not to make changes in the reporting of results that, in the opinion of a SE researcher and/or the Executive Director, SE Research Centre, distort or misrepresent the research findings;
- c. For SE researchers to explicitly identify who sponsored and financed the research, as well as their role and involvement in the research at any point;
- d. For SE researchers to explicitly identify any potential conflicts of interest when reporting results;
- e. For SE researchers to explicitly identify any perceived limitations of the research;
- f. For SE researchers to report how the results of the research contribute to new knowledge in a particular topic and/or contribute to the social impact mandate of SE Health.

Conducting Evaluations

It is the policy of SE Health and the SE Research Centre that evaluations will be conducted in accord with the principles and applicable processes laid out above regarding initiating, conducting and reporting research, with necessary changes to reflect the potentially different focus and purposes of evaluations.

Oversight/Review Process for Issues of Research Integrity

It is the policy of SE Health and the SE Research Centre to assign responsibility for ensuring compliance with this policy jointly to the Managing Director, SE Research Centre, and the Executive Director, SE Research Centre. They shall jointly produce a report at the end of each fiscal year outlining the accomplishments of the SE Research Centre and providing a statement of compliance with this policy for the fiscal year to the Senior Vice President, Knowledge and Practice.