


# HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE: (MEDICAL)

## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

### FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS, IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS, AUDIO CONSENT

SOP-HREC-008 (VERSION 1)

DATE: JANUARY 2025

<b>SUBJECT</b>	Procedure for approval of Focus Group Discussions, In-depth Interviews, Audio consent, use of photographs and filming, by the University of the Witwatersrand, Human Research Ethics Committee: (Medical)
<b>DIVISION / SCOPE:</b>	University of the Witwatersrand, Human Research Ethics Committee (Medical)
<b>REVISION:</b>	Ethics Secretariat
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	This procedure describes the process to be followed by the Wits HREC (Medical) for the review and approval of Focus Group Discussions, In-depth Interviews, Audio consent and the use of photographs and filming.
<b>PREVIOUS VERSIONS / (REASON FOR REVISION)</b>	First Version
<b>CONTENT:</b>	<b>INDEX</b> <b>1. POLICY STATEMENT</b> 1.1 Focus Group Discussions 1.2 In-depth Interviews 1.3 Audio consent 1.4 Photographs 1.5 Filming <b>2. A separate PIL/ICON for each</b> <b>3. DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATION</b> <b>4. REFERENCES</b>
<b>APPROVALS:</b>	Signature of Chair / Co-Chair of Wits HREC (Medical):  Date: 2025/01/13

# HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE: (MEDICAL)

## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

### FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS, IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS, AUDIO CONSENT

SOP-HREC-008 (VERSION 1)

DATE: JANUARY 2025

1. **Policy statement**

Procedure for approval of Focus Group Discussions, In-depth Interviews, Audio consent, use of photographs and filming, by the University of the Witwatersrand, Human Research Ethics Committee: (Medical)
- 1.1 **Focus Group Discussions**

A separate Participant Information Leaflet and Informed Consent Form (PIL/ICON) for Focus Group Discussions is required, which includes the following:

  - the duration of the discussion
  - how confidentiality will be maintained
  - a sentence that explains that 'although we will ask participants to maintain confidentiality there is no way to ensure this will be guaranteed'
- 1.2 **In depth Interviews (Individual)**

A separate Participant Information Leaflet and Informed Consent Form (PIL/ICON) for In-depth Interviews is required, which includes the following:

  - Duration of the interview
  - How confidentiality will be maintained
- 1.3 **Audio-Records**
  - HPCSA regulations: keep for 2 years after publication or 6 years if no publication
  - A separate signature line/consent for audio recording is required
  - A tick-box is not accepted; there must be a signature line to consent to the audio-recordings
- 1.4 **Photographs**

A separate Participant Information Leaflet and Informed Consent Form (PIL/ICON) for Photographs is required, which includes the following:

  - Include explicit description of what will be photographed
  - How photograph will be used
  - How confidentiality will be maintained
  - Where photographs will be shown
  - There must not be any identifiers, e.g. facial features, tattoos and birthmarks
- 1.5 **Filming Participants**
  - Participants who agree to have their face shown on camera must be made aware of the risks and possible long-term implications of being filmed.
  - Proper informed consent is required. The applicant must draft a Participant Information Leaflet and Informed Consent Form for review, to cover all eventualities.
2. The Wits HREC (Medical) policy is a separate PIL/ICON for each; a FGD, IDI, Photographs, Filming.

When there are audio recordings, a separate signature line/consent agreeing to this must be included in each form.
3. **Definitions and Abbreviations**

HREC	Human Research Ethics Committee
FGC	Focus Group Discussion
IDI	In-depth Interview
4. **References:**

# HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE: (MEDICAL)

## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

### FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS, IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS, AUDIO CONSENT

**SOP-HREC-008 (VERSION 1)**

**DATE: JANUARY 2025**

- ♦ **HPCSA Guidelines for Good Practice in the Health Care Professions, Booklet 13, September 2016, Section 13.2:** “Data, including tape recordings should be stored for a minimum of 2 years after publication or 6 years in the absence of publication.”
- ♦ **South African Ethics in Health Research Guidelines: Principles, Processes and Structures, 2024, 3rd Edition (NDoH 2024)**