THOMSON HOSPITAL KOTA DAMANSARA

RESEARCH CODE OF CONDUCT AT THOMSON HOSPITAL KOTA DAMANSARA

- All research conducted at THKD are to be carried out with the highest integrity, and to the highest ethical standards.
- All research carried out at THKD must be granted ethical approval from the THKD Research Ethics Committee (REC) before commencement.
- All research conducted by researchers must follow codes of ethical guidelines for research involving human participants which include:

1) **Non-falsification of data**- Researchers must ensure data integrity by not manipulating questionnaire responses, experimental observations, or analyses, and exercise reasonable care in data processing to prevent errors that may affect results.
2) **Dissemination of research findings**- Researchers must disseminate research findings, give proper attribution of ideas, and offer participants and stakeholders access to a summary of findings involving human subjects. Clear, understandable reports must accurately reflect the study's significance and avoid plagiarism, copyright infringement, and theft of intellectual property.
3) **Ethics and research design**- Researchers must be open to diverse research methods and ensure no unethical sources are used, as failure to evaluate alternative methods may be considered biased.
4) **Authorship credit**- Authorship credit must be given to significant contributors to a research project, often the first author. Researchers must consider personal or commercial interests and ensure accurate information presentation without distortion, ideally agreeing on the order of authorship.
5) **Risk assessment**- Researchers must carefully examine study design, risks, benefits, and alternative methods to protect individuals by maximizing anticipated benefits and minimizing harms, while justifying risks based on potential benefits.
6) **Legal and professional code**- Researchers must carefully examine study design, risks, benefits, and alternative methods to protect individuals by maximizing anticipated benefits and minimizing harms, while justifying risks based on potential benefits.
7) **Personal data**- Researchers must obtain informed consent from participants before anonymize information unless there is a clear justification to the contrary. Researchers must be aware of the impact of dissemination

of their work, including that on any individual or group of individuals. If it is anticipated that it might cause distress, it is essential to demonstrate that the benefits outweigh this risk. Researcher must refer to THKD's Privacy Notice (https://www.thomsonhospitals.com/privacy-policy/) prior to obtaining informed consent from the participants.

8) **Data storage and disposal**- Researchers must incorporate data management into their planning, ensuring secure and accessible personal and confidential data. Researchers must adhere to data protection laws without limitation to Act 709 and best practices to meet both objectives.

9) **Conflict of interest**- Researchers must assess their vulnerability to conflict of interest for different topics and involvement levels. THKD expects researchers to maintain high standards of independence and impartiality, allowing them to objectively analyse data with an open mind, especially when emerging data contradicts previous professional results. Researchers shall put aside personal opinions, beliefs, and personal relationships.

10) **Non maleficence and beneficence-** The Hospital's ethical standards for research include a philosophy of do no harm (non- maleficence) and do good (beneficence) whenever possible. The risks involved in research must be weighed against potential benefits, with certain groups like children and vulnerable adults being particularly susceptible. Researchers must assess the well-being of participants and identify potential risks. They must justify their procedures and clearly state the potential benefits to participants, the scientific community, and society. Cultural, religious, and gender differences must be handled sensitively. Researchers also face potential risks to their own safety and must consider safety issues in the design and conduct of research projects.

11) **Informed consent**- Researchers must obtain voluntary informed consent from participants, ensuring they understand the study's purpose, nature, and benefits. They must provide clear information on procedures, risks, benefits, and withdrawal options. Participants should be given ample time to review the information sheet and consult relevant parties. Researchers must seek ongoing consent and allow participants to withdraw at any time. Individual consent may be unnecessary for non-intrusive research activities, such as public behaviour observation studies.

12) **Free from coercion for participation**- Participants shall not be coerced into participation, and inducements should be avoided. Reimbursement of expenses and gratuity can be reasonable but should not create a culture of expectation.

13) **Third party consent-** Third parties involved in participant care must provide informal consent which shall involve sharing of information about the project. If the research is likely to interfere with the treatment or care being provided by a third party, it is necessary that they be fully involved and give written consent to

participate. In certain situations, the affiliation of participants to organizations or special groups, such as educational institutions or hospitals, may necessitate the granting of permission to conduct the research project. In such cases any relevant policies or guidelines must be followed.

14) **Vulnerable participants**- Researchers must seek consent from vulnerable participants, particularly children, and their representatives, if necessary. In some cases, researchers may need to obtain informed consent directly from participants, considering gatekeeper interests and policies. Special care is needed when accessing children, particularly those with disabilities or physical or mental health issues. Researchers must also consider the quality of consent in dependent or pre-existing relationships. Photographs of children should only be taken with explicit consent and securely stored.

15) **Confidentiality and anonymity**- Researchers must uphold participant confidentiality and anonymity, obtaining consent before revealing their identities or information. Data should be managed without compromising participant dignity or privacy rights. Confidentiality guarantees must be honoured, unless there are clear reasons, like child abuse. In child protection research, researchers should consider disclosure and seek specialist advice. Personal identifiers should be explained and protected.

16) **Data protection**- Researchers must adhere to legal regulations without limitation to Act 709 and best practices when collecting and storing research data, ensuring anonymity, privacy, and confidentiality, and inform participants about data management and storage plans.

17) **Breach of the code of conduct:**

For violation of any provisions in this Research Code of Conduct, THKD REC shall take action depending on the nature and seriousness of the breach. The possible actions to be imposed on researchers include:

- **Before THKD REC approval;**

a) Request for modification of the research study

b) Disapprove the proposed research study

- **Upon THKD REC approval;**

a) Suspension of previously approved research study

b) Termination of previously approved research study

ACCEPTANCE AND AGREEMENT

I, _____ [Name of the Principal Investigator/Sponsor Representative/Academic Institution Representative] having read and understood the above-mentioned terms and conditions of this Research Code of Conduct hereby signify my agreement and acceptance of the same by placing my signature herein below.

_____

Name:

IC/Passport No:

Designation & Company/Institution:

Date: