

Research Versus Quality Improvement (QI) Screening Tool

The following document was adapted from the McGill University Health Centre (MUHC), Centre for Applied Ethics. It is designed to help you determine if your project is classified as research and requires Research Ethics Board (REB) review or if it is QI project or evaluation that is exempt from REB review and approval.

Item	Question	Y	N
1	Does the project involve the use of an experimental medical device, drug or natural health product that requires approval from Health Canada OR does it involve an off-label use of an existing drug?		
2	Is the project funded by or being submitted to a research funding agency, a research grant or award opportunity that requires research ethics review?		
3	Is the goal of the project to generate new, generalizable knowledge, by answering a question or testing a hypothesis using methods recognized by the scientific community?		
If YES to <u>any</u> of the questions 1-3 above, then the project is research and should be submitted to an REB.			
4	Does the project seek to control for variables or confounders to promote generalizability?		
5	Will you determine the number of participants via formal statistical justifications, power calculations, or expected thematic saturation levels?		
6	Is the project a pilot study or proof of concept designed to support a future, larger research project?		
7	Does the project impose any additional risks to participants beyond what would be expected through standard care or interactions?		
If YES to <u>any</u> of the questions 4-7 above, then the project is suggestive of research and should be submitted to an REB.			
8	Is the project the result of a department-wide or strategic initiative at NH?		
9	Is the immediate goal of the project any of the following: - To improve a process, program, or system at NH? - To improve NH performance against comparative practice standards? - To evaluate or implement a best practice at NH?		
10	Do you anticipate that the results of your project will be quickly integrated into local practices at the NH?		
11	Would the project still be done even if there were no opportunities to publish the results or if the results might not be applicable anywhere else?		
If YES to questions 8–12, then the project is suggestive of a QI project or program evaluation and likely does not require REB approval. *			
*If YES to questions 8-12 plus any of the questions in 4-7, your question may fall in the continuum of Research-QI that is less clear to define. Please reach out to the NHKI for additional guidance.			