

To: VCH Research Community

August 12, 2020

**Re: VCHRI - Stage 2 Research Resumption Guidelines**

Thank you to all Institute/Centre Directors and Department/Division Heads involved with research at VCH for your efforts in coordinating and submitting your Stage 1 Research Resumption Plans. VCHRI is now ready to proceed with Stage 2 of the resumption process. You may be aware UBC recently shared their guidelines for Stage 2 Research Resumption on July 23, 2020. VCHRI's guidelines will largely align with that of UBC; however, due to the unique research and operational requirements for VCH's vast clinical and non-clinical facilities, VCHRI's process is specific to our sites.

Guidance for non-clinical and clinical requests, as well as key highlights for VCHRI Stage 2 Research Resumption are provided below.

**Non-clinical research resumption requests:**

- Stage 2 Research Resumption requests for wet lab, dry lab and animal-based research can be submitted to VCHRI beginning **August 13, 2020**.
- Submission of Stage 2 Research Resumption requests will follow the same process as Stage 1 – see [memo](#) or visit <https://www.vchri.ca/covid-19-information-and-faqs>.
- Any changes or new information (i.e. new personnel) for animal work must be added to the **VCHRI Animal Research Resumption Access Request** document and submitted by the research Centre head to Eric Liow ([eric.liow@vch.ca](mailto:eric.liow@vch.ca)) with copy to [research@vch.ca](mailto:research@vch.ca) for review.
- Any changes or new information for lab/non-lab/animal work must be added to the original **VCHRI-PHC Unit Level Research Access Summary Request** Submission coordinated/approved by your Centre/Department with all changes highlighted in **green**.
- All tabs within the spreadsheet must be completed. Please resubmit updated floor plans and safety plans with changes highlighted where applicable.
- To facilitate ease of review, we ask that submissions include changes highlighted in **green** directly on the forms and then summarized within the email. Additionally, use of the "comment" function in the spreadsheet is also encouraged.

**Clinical research resumption requests:**

- Stage 2 Research Resumption requests for human subject research can be submitted beginning **August 20, 2020** to provide adequate processing time.
- Submission of Stage 2 Research Resumption requests will follow the same process as Stage 1 – see [memo](#) or visit <https://www.vchri.ca/covid-19-information-and-faqs>.
- Any changes to unit-level information (i.e. new projects or amendments) must be added to the **VCHRI-PHCRI Unit Level Research Access Summary for Human Subject Research** spreadsheet and submitted by the research Centre head to Eric Liow ([eric.liow@vch.ca](mailto:eric.liow@vch.ca)) with a copy to [research@vch.ca](mailto:research@vch.ca) for review.

- All tabs within the spreadsheet must be completed. Please resubmit updated floor plans and safety plans with changes highlighted where applicable.
- To facilitate ease of review, we ask that submissions include changes highlighted in **green** directly on the forms and then summarized within the email. Additionally, use of the “comment” function in the spreadsheet is also encouraged.
- Research staff working at the Diamond Health Care Centre are asked to wear masks when using elevators.
- Requests for study sponsor onsite monitoring visits should be submitted to Eric Liow ([eric.liow@vch.ca](mailto:eric.liow@vch.ca)).

#### **A few key highlights for Stage 2 Research Resumption:**

- Approved Stage 1 Safety Plans from Units will remain in effect in Stage 2 however, Stage 2 will have allowance for some additional research personnel as long as it adheres to the Stage 1 safety plan as well as all safety measures and physical distancing requirements.
- Stage 2 at VCHRI is for the resumption of research activities only; teaching/education activities must be approved through the Dean’s Office, Faculty of Medicine.
- All researchers located at a VCHRI site are only required to submit a Stage 2 resumption request to Eric Liow ([eric.liow@vch.ca](mailto:eric.liow@vch.ca)) with a copy to [research@vch.ca](mailto:research@vch.ca) and do not need to submit to the Dean’s office (with the exception of DMCBH which must submit to both).
- All categories of research may be included in Stage 2. Individual faculty and the unit leads will determine the members of their team who have justification for return back into the buildings. Individuals who have concerns or personal circumstances that make returning to on-site activities challenging should discuss options with their supervisor, program director or manager.
- VCHRI’s position states that all work that can be done off site should remain off site. VCHRI, in conjunction with VCH, will review and approve all requests to resume research activities on VCH sites regardless of their priority.
- Faculty and researchers returning to work will not necessarily be based on % of building occupancy but rather on the approved Stage 1 safety plans. Staff should continue to work within those safety guidelines as occupancy increases. VCHRI will allow for gradual increases where onsite access is deemed necessary, up to a maximum of double the occupancy approved for Stage 1. Approval must be coordinated with the VCH operational site director to ensure physical distancing can be maintained with increased occupancy. Requests for increasing research capacity at Diamond Health Care Centre will be reviewed on a monthly basis.
- **Reminder that it is the Principal Investigator’s responsibility to supervise their team (staff, graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, etc.) and ensure they are following all safety protocols and guidelines, as well as ensuring they are on site only during their approved timeframe.**
- Those planning on returning to work will need to complete all required safety training for that location prior to returning. This includes mandatory UBC training, such as [Preventing COVID-19 Infection in the Workplace](#) , task specific training and building specific training. This will be determined by the Centre/Department Head and the safety plan in place.
- Centre/Department Heads will be responsible for compliance and monitoring within their locations.

- Staged resumption of onsite, in-person research activities may need to be reversed and stricter curtailment conditions imposed in response to public health guidance or changes to the situation at any particular building or site.

VCHRI is expecting to receive one consolidated, overall Centre/Department plan rather than individual PI plans. As some Centres may not yet have submitted Stage 1 research resumption plans, those Centres should follow the Stage 2 process, using the new guidelines and templates, effective immediately. If you have not submitted under Stage 1 there would be no changes to highlight in green. Templates for Stage 2 are attached and reviews will take place as they are received.

Please find attached/linked the following documents:

1. [UBC Research Resumption Stage 2 Recommendations](#)
2. Resumption of Non-clinical Research – [Stage 1 Memo](#)
3. [VCHRI-PHC Unit Level Research Access Summary](#) (for dry lab, wet lab and animal-based work)
4. [VCHRI animal research resumption access request](#)
5. Resumption of Clinical Research – [Stage 1 Memo](#)
6. [VCHRI Unit Level Research Access Summary for Human Subject Research](#)
7. [VCHRI DHCC Unit Level Research Access Summary for Human Subject Research spreadsheet](#) (applicable if DHCC is a study site)

Please note, Eric Liow is the lead contact for the VCHRI Research Resumption process replacing Amanda Chisholm. Please email your Research Resumption requests to Eric Liow at [eric.liow@vch.ca](mailto:eric.liow@vch.ca), in addition to copying [research@vch.ca](mailto:research@vch.ca). Feel free to contact us if you have questions.

We thank you for your continuing cooperation.



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