Overview of the IRB Submission Process

Please note: *This document is the text of an email sent to dental students who are working on their first research project. It is meant to provide general, overarching information on the process, but is not a definitive guide. The CWRU faculty member who will be the PI of the project (for students/residents/interns, this will be your faculty mentor) should be the primary point of contact for any questions regarding the IRB submission and the overall project.*

Please feel free to contact me, Tricia Mehosky Ribeiro (pam17@case.edu), with any questions or comments about this document. While it is intended that this will house the most recent information, please consult primary sources to confirm the information here.

IRB (Institutional Review Board) Submission

Below are the steps needed to submit for IRB consideration. Everything is done through the SpartaIRB system and your faculty mentor will need to be listed as the IRB Responsible Investigator. You can be listed as part of the study team (Case policy requires that a faculty member be the Responsible Investigator). There is some general information entered into the SpartIRB system, but the bulk of the information is uploaded on Word templates. You will complete a protocol template for your study and attach any other documents needed, needed such as an informed consent, surveys, copies of flyers, etc.

The single most important piece of advice I can give is that you include as much detail as possible in the template. Answer all of the questions, using "N/A" or "Not Applicable" as appropriate. Don't leave anything blank. Be sure to think through the entire process of your project. Once the protocol is submitted and approved, that becomes set in stone. Any deviation from that process must be approved by the IRB before the change is put into practice.

To get started, you should determine if you have access to the SpartaIRB system. Please navigate to the site https://spartairb.case.edu/ and click on the login button under the CWRU logo. Use your case ID and password to log in. If you cannot access the system, you can request access by going to the SpartaIRB Info site (https://case.edu/research/compliance/human-research-protection-program/cwru-institutional-review-board) and clicking on the "SpartaIRB New User Request" button on the right side of the page. Fill out the form and submit. The setup usually takes 24-48 to process. I'm fairly sure you will get an email saying that access has been granted, but you can also keep trying the site in a day or two and see if you can log in.

The bulk of information about your project will be uploaded into the SpartaIRB system using the templates housed in the SpartaIRB Library. The type of work you will be doing determines which form you should use. The Checklist of Common Mistakes document on the Dental School's IRB Submission information website (https://case.edu/dental/research/research-support/irb-submission) has a short guide to help you select the correct template. If you'd like to review any of the templates while you are waiting for access to SpartaIRB, please let me know which one you need and I can send a copy to you.

There is a Protocol Submission Guide for SpartaIRB in the SpartaIRB Help Center. Once you have access, please take a look to get a more complete picture of the process. This is a step by step guide that explains how to submit in the system. There are other guides in the SpartaIRB system under the Help Center tab in the IRB page that you can look at once you have access. Again, if you would like to look at these documents while you are waiting for system access, please email me and I can send you the documents.

Additionally, the CWRU IRB Office has a wealth of information on its website (https://case.edu/research/compliance/human-research-protection-program/cwru-institutional-review-board) including FAQs and an Investigator Manual.

Another point to consider is from where your subject pool/data is coming. If you are using patients/data from the CWRU Dental Clinic, you will be submitting to the Case IRB. If you are using patients/data from UH, you must go through the UH IRB. The SpartaIRB system is the portal for submission to both the Case and UH IRBs, but using UH patients/data requires additional credentialing and clearances which take additional time and require some fees to be paid. Please get in touch with me if there is any chance you'll be using UH patients or data for your project and we can figure out what needs to be done.

Human Research Protection Certification (formerly CREC)

Next, you will need to be trained in the protection of human subjects through CWRU's Human Research Protection (HRP) program. This is an online process that needs to be completed before the IRB approval can be issued. Details about the program and instructions on how to register and begin the training can be found at https://case.edu/research/training/hrp-certification.

Conflict of Interest (COI) Disclosure

You may be required to submit a COI disclosure in order to conduct research on campus. Once your protocol has been submitted, if a COI disclosure is needed, the IRB Office initiate that process with the COI office, which will reach out to you.