

## Policy on Research Ethics

**ISSUE:** Research projects are a major component of the work and objectives of St. Leonard's Society of Canada (SLSC). As a result of the research conducted by SLSC, an official policy position concerning the ethical conduct of research is warranted.

**GOAL:** To establish criteria by which SLSC will conduct research ethically in accordance with the standards of the appropriate professional and scientific bodies in relation to ethical considerations, methodology, and scientific rigor.

**BACKGROUND:** The ethical conduct of research is critical to maintaining the integrity of the projects that are produced by SLSC, and to the rights of the research subjects who voluntarily participate and contribute to the body of knowledge pertaining to areas of interest for the organization.

In recent years, SLSC has completed research projects involving human research subjects. As such, every attempt should be made with the resources available to SLSC to be conducting ethical research that is in line with the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (December 2010). The *Tri-Council Policy Statement* (TCPS) is a joint policy of Canada's three federal research agencies – the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). These are also known as “the Agencies”.

The people of Canada, through Acts of Parliament, have created and funded the Agencies to promote and assist research within their respective legislative mandates. In discharging their mandates, the Agencies wish to promote research that is conducted according to the highest ethical standards. The Agencies have therefore adopted this Policy as a benchmark for the ethical conduct of research involving humans.

The TCPS is based on three core principles: Respect for Persons (which considers the intrinsic value of human beings and the respect and consideration that they are due); Concern for Welfare (aiming to protect the welfare of participants and if possible promote that welfare in light of any risks associated with research); and Justice (the obligation to treat people fairly and equitably with equal respect and concern).

SLSC believes in the importance of the TCPS and the standards it has set for conducting ethical research practices. In accordance with the TCPS, SLSC has developed procedures for conducting research with informed and voluntary consent, and maintains the privacy and confidentiality of all participants unless they have given permission to be identified. Research is also conducted in accordance with SLSC's privacy policies.

POLICY:

Whereas St. Leonard's Society of Canada affirms its commitment to the ethical conduct of research as set out in the *Tri-Council Policy Statement* (TCPS), and adhering to ethical research practices to the best of its ability based on available resources,

And whereas SLSC aims to conduct research in support of correctional policies and practices that increase community safety and successful reintegration,

And whereas the Society endorses ethical research practice for projects, particularly those involving humans,

Be It Resolved that the St. Leonard's Society of Canada:

Promotes the conduct of research in accordance with the core principles of the *Tri-Council Policy Statement* (TCPS) and other standards of appropriate professional and scientific bodies in relation to ethical considerations, methodology, and scientific rigour that enhances correctional practice and contributes towards knowledge of evidence-based approaches;

And will ensure that SLSC approved procedures for obtaining informed, voluntary consent from research participants will be maintained for all research projects and will be held in accordance with SLSC's privacy policy.

*Drafted:* November 2012 by Anita Desai, Research and Policy Advisor SLSC

*Approved and adopted at:* SLSC Board of Directors Meeting, November 8, 2014.