

Wednesday, May 6, 2020

Subject: Guidance for Research Reboot

Dear Research Colleagues:

As restrictions surrounding coronavirus begin to ease, it is now time to consider rationally expanding laboratory and human subjects research activities, including clinical trials and observational studies. We anticipate a **gradual resumption of laboratory and human subjects research activity on May 18th**, in line with the Governor's directive.

At the same time, a return to "normal" activity is unlikely for many months or longer. ***We must understand that the practice of research will not be the same as it was, and that we need to develop new ways of reducing physical interactions until this pandemic has receded.***

The ramping-up process will be guided by these principles:

- **Protect the health and safety** of our study volunteers, clinical patients and human research participants, and equally of our research community (emotional as well as physical).
- **Follow local, state, and national public health directives** to stay at home and implement social distancing.
- **Allow safe access to clinical trials for our patients** including new measures to insure study access.

Other important considerations:

- The top priority is public health: not just the health of UR staff but the health of the city and region. Premature restart of laboratory and human subject research that increases contact within our buildings and clinical research areas to an unsafe level could increase the risk of a rebound in infection rates that threatens the lives of Monroe county residents.
- New waves of infection may occur in the coming months; if they do, we must be prepared to return to lower levels, or even pause research.
- The ramp up of human subjects research (i.e. clinical trials, observational studies) must use additional mitigation, above those required for laboratory research procedures.
- We understand that these directives may not fit all circumstances – but ***we ask that faculty and staff carefully consider the spirit of the policy and keep everyone's health and safety as their top priority.*** Try to resist the natural tendency to stretch the rules to squeeze in one more person: think instead about the health of that person and the health of the community.
- ***We encourage faculty to be flexible, generous and supportive in addressing the concerns of those who may express anxiety about an immediate return to the research environment during this period of transition.***

You can view guidance on the web for [laboratory research](#) and [human subjects research](#).

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