



To: Interested Investigators
Subject: Required Readings for Cross-Cultural Research Competencies
Date: April 8, 2008

Thank you for your interest in the National Center for Deaf Health Research (NCDHR). The NCDHR is a CDC-funded Prevention Research Center that conducts health promotion and disease prevention research in a community-participatory fashion. We collaborate closely with the Deaf community in carrying out our mission.

NCDHR's goals, activities, and objectives are guided by a "cultural model" that views Deaf people as minority group who share a common language – American Sign Language – and a common culture. The cultural model stands in contrast to the "clinical model," which views deaf people as suffering from a medical condition that should be prevented or treated. The cultural model is consistent with the views and values of the Deaf community, including members of the Deaf Health Community Committee, a key partner of NCDHR.

Accordingly, we view research involving the Deaf community as cross-cultural research. Cross-cultural research involves special ethical obligations. Understanding and abiding by contemporary cross-cultural ethical principles, including those that are unique to Deaf community research, is an imperative at the NCDHR. Establishing a cross-cultural research ethics policy and a mechanism for teaching these unique obligations to NCDHR researchers and collaborators was one of the first actions taken by the NCDHR.

We require all investigators who collaborate or propose to collaborate with the NCDHR to read the enclosed articles and complete the enclosed attestation form. Please return your completed attestation form to NCDHR Office at (585) 424-1469 Fax. We also have included a list of recommended readings and videotapes on the subject of Deaf culture. We hope you will consider reading or viewing some of this additional material. We would appreciate your thoughts regarding this cross-cultural ethics education process. Please provide your feedback using the enclosed evaluation form.

Sincerely,

Steven Barnett, MD
Associate Director
NCDHR

Julia Aggas
Chair
Deaf Health Community Committee