



Provincial Health Services Authority

ETHICS & ELEMENTS

BC CANCER RESEARCH ETHICS

REB OFFICE NEWS & UPDATES



We have a new Officer !

We are pleased to introduce our new Research Ethics Officer, **Melissa Riding!** Melissa has a BSc in Food Science and Nutrition from Carleton University and was previously working at Health Canada as a Regulatory Affairs Officer. She is excited to dive into the world of research ethics and learn more about the research being done at BC Cancer specifically. When Melissa is offline, she can be found on her bike, in the ocean swimming or running on the Stanley park seawall!

RESEARCH ETHICS EVENTS IN 2023

Keep your eyes out for our events and talks as we continue to create opportunities to engage with research teams and to better disseminate research ethics education. The first event this year was our **Open House** on March 17th at the BC Cancer Research Centre where insightful thoughts, ideas, and suggestions were exchanged between research teams at BC Cancer and the research ethics team (together with St. Patrick's Day themed refreshments!). Thank you very much to those who were able to come by and chat with us. Remaining connected to researchers and research teams is valuable and key to ensuring that our team provides adequate support and guidance where needed by learning about the issues your teams face in the field.

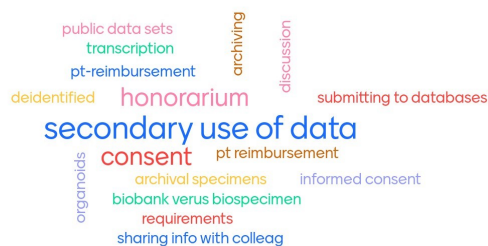


So far this year, we have delivered **two virtual information sessions.**

April 27th was our **Spring Information Session**, where we presented the TCPS2 2022 updates summary and the Ethics Education Survey results. Attendees were invited to share which research ethics topics they would like more support with, the secondary use of data as the most popular topic, followed by honorarium and consent. We hope to deliver another session in the near future, focusing on these areas.

The May 12th session was an overview of our research ethics review structure and process, tailored towards **Bioinformatics** graduate students. If you were unable to attend and missed these talks, do not worry! — The slides and recordings are available under the Resource tab on our [website](#).

Which Research Ethics topic(s) do you feel you'd like more support in?



Coming up — Mark your calendars!



We will be part of the **BC Cancer Research Day** event on September 29, 2023 at the Holiday Inn. Come by our poster with any questions, concerns, or ideas you would like to share with us. We look forward to seeing you there!

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: CHAT GPT



As AI becomes increasingly adopted into different workplaces, the potential use of ChatGPT (Generative Pretrained Transformer) is being explored by many fields, including healthcare and research. While ChatGPT may prove useful for some tasks, it also has issues such as producing errors and misinformation, along with various ethical issues. This new tool is sparking debate and creating divides in some workplaces, as some people are fast adopters and others approach ChatGPT cautiously. While your workplace discusses the use of ChatGPT for tasks, we have listed a few things to keep in mind.

On May 25, the **privacy authorities for Canada**, British Columbia, Alberta and Quebec **announced a joint investigation into ChatGPT**, developed by OpenAI (1). The investigation is in response to the **alleged collection, use and disclosure of personal information without consent**. The privacy authorities will evaluate whether OpenAI obtained “valid and meaningful” consent with information sharing from ChatGPT users in Canada. A separate outstanding ethical concern with AI Chatbots **are safety concerns of incorporating historical biases into the output**, such as notions of cultural superiorities (2).

It is important to note that the high impact academic journal, **Science**, **refuses to publish research papers generated using ChatGPT**, as the criteria of “original” work cannot be satisfied (3). The editor-in-chief of *Science* reports that the journal is updating their license and editorial policies to specify no text or figures/images generated by AI tools, such as ChatGPT, can be used in any aspect of the research paper, and violation of this is deemed scientific misconduct. Other publishers, such as **Springer-Nature**, **are open to the use of AI tools**, such as ChatGPT, as long as they are **transparently disclosed and not listed as an author** (2, 4).

Recently, a paper about the use of GPT-4 for improving the readability of consent forms was published on MedRxiv (5). **GPT-4 was demonstrated to improve the readability and reduce the reading time of various surgical consent forms**. However, it is important to note that these measures were evaluated by standardized rubrics and were reviewed by surgeon and legal review, **not by participant end users**. Further, this research paper has **not yet undergone the peer review** process.

While the future of ChatGPT in healthcare and research is uncertain, it remains important to consider the various implications that this tool may have, both beneficial and detrimental.



References

1. Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada. Announcement: OPC to investigate ChatGPT jointly with provincial health authorities. 2023 May 25.
2. Stokel-Walker C, Van Noorden R. What ChatGPT and generative AI mean for science. *Nature*. 2023;614 (7947):214-6.
3. Thorp HH. ChatGPT is fun, but not an author. *Science*. 2023 Jan 27;379(6630):313.
4. Tools such as ChatGPT threaten transparent science; here are our ground rules for their use. *Nature*. 2023;613(612):10-38.
5. Ali R, et al. Bridging the Literacy Gap for Surgical Consents: An AI-Human Expert Collaborative Approach. *medRxiv*. 2023:2023-05

CONSIDERATIONS FOR USE OF AI TRANSCRIPTION SERVICE



PHSA Privacy Office has reviewed the use of Temi



This month, **PHSA Privacy Office** completed their **review of “Temi,”** a third-party service where users can upload audio or video **recordings for AI-automated transcription to text using speech recognition algorithm.** This privacy review was prompted by the increasing number of studies using Temi at BC Cancer and across PHSA, where recordings including participant identifiers are often uploaded for transcription. Personnel from Temi do not access the recordings uploaded by users, as the transcription is entirely generated by the AI-automated algorithm, and this may appear as a way of strengthening data security and privacy **as** compared to other transcription services using human input. However, the REB will need to consult with PHSA's Director of Research Integration and Innovation for activities that involves sharing of research participant information with third-party services to determine if additional reviews are necessary.

Moving forward, any PHSA researcher is permitted to use Temi's services provided they follow these **specific recommendations** and the REB deems it is acceptable for the study:

- 1) Ensure that both audio and text files are **deleted** off Temi Transcriptions as soon as the resulting text file is downloaded to limit the duration of time the files are stored on US servers.
- 2) It is recommended that the project team **assigns an individual(s)** to routinely check the Temi Transcription account (e.g. monthly) to ensure the audio files are deleted, as there is no automated deletion function. The longer the duration that files are held on the Temi Transcription servers, the higher the chance of inappropriate access, use, and disclosure (non-compliance with [FIPPA s. 30](#)).
- 3) Ensure that all users, prior to be provisioned access, have completed or are **up-to-date with PHSA's Privacy and Confidentiality course** on the Learning Hub, or provided appropriate privacy/confidentiality training to understand their obligations in handling personal information.
- 4) It is recommended that **all digital files be stored in encrypted/password protected folders on the PHSA network** to limit access.
- 5) If there are any additional changes to the use of Temi, please connect with PHSA Privacy to amend this review.

IN-COMING AND OUT-GOING REB MEMBERS

THANK YOU and CONGRATULATIONS!

We would like to thank **Dr. Heather Sutherland** who recently stepped down from the Research Ethics Board as a scientific reviewer. Dr. Sutherland joined us in 2014 and since has immensely contributed with her wisdom, thoughtful comments, and patient-oriented perspective. We will miss you and congratulations on your retirement!

WELCOME!

Please join us in welcoming **Dr. Shanee Chung** as a scientific reviewer. Dr. Chung is a Hematologist at Leukemia/BMT Program of BC and a Clinical Instructor at UBC. Her main research interests include treatment for myelofibrosis and acute leukemia and management of infectious complications of stem cell transplantation. We very much look forward to working with Dr. Chung. Welcome aboard!



QUESTIONS? CONTACT US!!

We are working a hybrid WFH/in-Office model.

Email us to set up a meeting!

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