

**Northwoodcare Incorporated and Northwood Homecare  
Ltd: A Framework for the Process of Ethical Research  
Approval**

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## **Northwoodcare Incorporated and Northwood Homecare Ltd: A Framework for the Process of Ethical Research Approval**

An organization's success in the area of research is dependent upon the understanding of the ethical research process, the understanding of the relationship among all involved parties, the protection of the rights of human subjects and the benefits derived from the research for the organization, the participants and society. Maintaining ethical standards in the area of research is necessitating organizations such as Northwoodcare Incorporated and Northwood Homecare Ltd.(referred to in this document as Northwood) to carefully re-define and update current ethical research approval processes. The review of the current process is central to a portion of Northwood's Strategic Plan: Strategic Direction #3 – Knowledge Building, in particular, the goal to support and promote ethical research. This direction is deterministic in design and outlines the commitment Northwood has to the development and sharing of knowledge; its residents and staff; the promotion of research; and the building of partnerships within the industry ([www.northwood.ca](http://www.northwood.ca)). Successful implementation of the ethical research approval process requires a clearly defined framework for in-house use; incorporation of the organization's purpose, mission and values; and a commitment of the organization to diligently monitor consent, confidentiality, accountability and standards. An organization's cultural values are vital to the research process as they determine the guiding principles that govern the context of the process. An evaluation of Northwood's current process and protocol will be crucial to this discussion as it will allow recommendations for improvement.

### **The History of Northwood**

Northwood is a Halifax-based organization that has been assisting the population of aging adults in Nova Scotia for the past forty years by providing programs, services, care and support (Community Report 2004). The following timeline summarizes successes Northwood has accomplished since its conception. All information was taken from the Community Report 2004, *The Changing Face of Northwood*.

1960's

- Formation of Halifax Senior Citizens' Housing Corporation
- Northwood Towers construction - 73 units
- Northwood Manor construction – 146 apartments, 84 supervisory care beds and 198 personal care beds

1970's

- Northwood Centre construction – 297 nursing care beds and Multi-Purpose Centre
- On-site physiotherapy
- Adult Day Program for Alzheimer's Disease and dementia
- On-site occupational therapy
- Pastoral care department

1980's

- Meals on wheels
- Child Day Care Centre for staff
- Health Promotion Services
- On-site pharmacy
- Telecare Program
- Homecare Services Program/Incorporation
- Lifeline Program
- Broadcasting Centre
- Hospice Services
- Research Policies and Procedures formalized

1990's

- Development of Family Council
- Manor renovations for care residents
- Dining rooms redesign
- Community Health Clinics
- Board of Governors approves core values, mission and vision
- Partners with DND
- First Appetite for Life fundraising
- Purchases St. Joseph's Convent as home for Northwood Homecare

2000's

- Established an association with the Deaf Community
- Adopts a new organizational structure
- Amalgamates Dartmouth Community Homemakers Association, Home Support Central and Halifax Homemakers with Northwood Homecare
- Opens 9 units of Assisted Living

- Manor renovations
- Opens Isabelle Vardon Study
- Choices for Living established for apartments residents and community pilot program

Northwood's current organizational structure, which provides strong response to community needs, is comprised of three business units: Long Term Care/Assisted Living, Homecare and Active/Independent Living. The Administrative Support Services and Asset Management divisions provide support to the three business units. Each thrust is independent in scope, responsibility and program delivery but work together to achieve the strategic goals of the organization. Various research challenges are represented in each of the different business units; therefore, the development of a general research approval framework is fundamental for adaptations to be easily made if necessary.

Recent examples of past research that have followed the current process and protocol include:

1. The Oral Health of Seniors Project; and
2. Clinical Drug Trial with the Geriatric Medical Research Centre at QEII in association with Janssen Pharmaceuticals. This trial was related to a treatment for early stages of Alzheimer's Disease (Community Report 2004).

Northwood's decision to "foster new partnerships that benefit the client", a component of the strategic plan, allows the organization to refine the current research approval process to ensure that the benefits of the research are maximized and the harms as minimized.

### **Project Objectives**

The following project objectives will assist the development of the general research approval framework for Northwood:

1. To ascertain the need and/or desire Northwood has for knowledge building. What are the benefits that will drive the research? Is it a benefit to society as a whole or in particular, a specific group?

2. To understand the relationships that exists amongst the subjects, the client and the researcher in relation to rights and obligations.
3. To identify and develop the ethical guiding principles based on the already established purpose, mission and values of the organization.
4. To understand and define the guidelines for the protection and governance of the rights of human subjects.
5. To identify the purpose of the ethical research approval framework and outline a recommendation for the organization.
6. To identify gaps in the current process and protocols and make recommendations for an improved process.

### **The Benefits of Research at Northwood**

The diversification of the Northwood organization allows for the term ‘research’ to have a very broad connotation. Future research opportunities for the organization will only serve to broaden the knowledge base for the organization, its clients and the community. Northwood’s Strategic Direction #3, Knowledge Building (Appendix A) serves as the commitment the organization has to future research projects.

The Northwood organization held an initial meeting on May 13, 2003, to discuss Strategic Direction #3. The attendees included key members of the organization’s management team and the discussion topics were: why research is important to the organization; a SWOT analysis; building a capacity for ethical research; and organizational objectives that pertain to Strategic Direction #3, goal #1. Research benefits that were identified in the meeting included the gain of knowledge, the building of capacity, linkages with

academic institutions, enhanced care, the benefit to the residents, the staff and the industry and the possibility of financial benefit to the organization. These benefits acknowledged by the management team are comparable to those defined by The National Council on Ethics in Human Research. NCEHR identifies the need for research involving human subjects, by three distinct categorical benefits:

1. The basic desire for new knowledge and understanding.
2. Research that may provide a direct benefit to subjects by improving treatment processes; information discovery; identification of historical, written, oral and cultural traditions; or the contribution to society.
3. Research that may provide a benefit to specific groups and the whole of society by indirectly influencing policy; improving public health; providing changes to social reform; and illuminating past and present realities ([www.ncehr-cnerh.org](http://www.ncehr-cnerh.org)).

Conversations with the various Business Unit Leaders at Northwood revealed areas of research interest for the organization. They are as follows:

#### *Long Term Care and Assisted Living*

An analysis of the cost of care and how money can be best spent so there is a maximization of resources.

#### *Homecare*

An evaluation of the 'relationship-building process' that exists between Northwood staff and clients that could potentially provide evidence to define a direct correlation between prolonged health and the established patient-staff relationships.

#### *Active and Independent Living*

Research of the current fundraising initiatives. Currently only seven percent of clients are care clients, so are the initiatives benefiting the Northwood community in the best possible way? Should fundraising

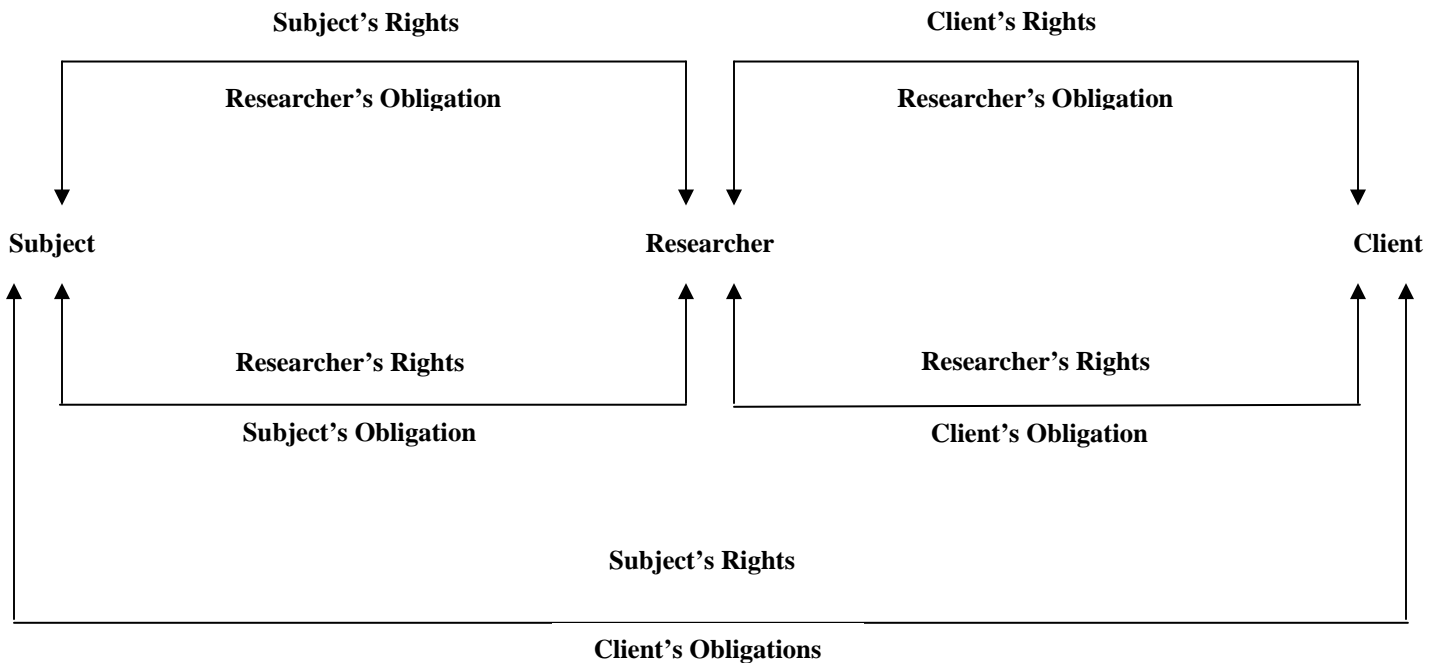
initiatives have more focus on providing better opportunities for independent living to allow for these residents to “age in place”?

Research conducted in association with the Northwood organization has the potential to benefit, promote and protect the well-being of its residents. It would play a role for the Northwood community as a whole and its members as individuals by contributing to the planning and delivery of services in each of its separate business units.

### The Relationship Among Subjects, Clients and Researchers

An overview of the relationships that exist in research situations is vital to the discussion of a research approval framework because it ties together expectations of behavior in relation to the organization’s ethical guiding principles. Figure 1 diagrammatically portrays the inclusive relationships that exist amongst the three most common groups of participants in a research project.

**Figure 1.** Interaction of Rights and Obligations of Parties in Research, (Zikmund, 2003, p.78)



The subject, commonly referred to as the respondent, is defined as “the person who answers the researcher’s questions or provides answers to written questions” (Zikmund, 2003, p.741) or those participants agreeing to take part in the study; the researcher is the person(s) or organization conducting the research; and the client is, most commonly, the end user of the research or the body which will reap the benefit of the research conducted, and in direct relation to this project, the organization that is responsible for providing care to the subjects.

Zikmund’s diagram and explanation of the relationships is written in reference to research conducted in a marketing context but can be easily adapted for the purpose of this project. Zikmund believes that the interaction of the three parties raises ethical questions and “the parties, either consciously or subconsciously, expect certain rights and feel certain obligations toward the other parties” (2003, p.78).

#### *The Subject/Respondent and the Researcher*

Ethical issues that may arise on behalf of the subject are dependent upon the willingness of informed consent, which is the “implied acknowledgment of waiving an individual’s right to privacy when he or she agrees to participate in a research study” (Zikmund, 2003, p. 79). In response, the researcher maintains the responsibility to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the subject; to involve the subjects in all aspects of the research so they are fully informed; and to protect the rights and interests of the subject. Upon informed consent, the researcher has the right to collect data and the subject is obligated to provide honesty and truthfulness in response to the research questions and enquiries.

#### *The Client and the Researcher*

The Client has the right to be fully informed of all aspects of the research process and shall have the right to terminate research that may be considered to be more harmful than beneficial to the subject and the organization. The researcher is obligated to keep the client informed during the research process and to

follow the standards (such as a code of ethics) set out by professional affiliations. Zikmund (2003, p. 83) also believes that the researcher has the obligation to use all information collected for the sole purpose of the initial research and findings shall not be altered or misrepresented in any way.

#### *The Client and the Subject/Respondent*

The client is obligated to ensure that the rights, freedoms and best interests of the subjects are maintained by closely reviewing all research proposals and involving subjects in research projects that will maximize benefits for all involved. The subject has the right to ensure the client has taken all precautions so that any research project is devoid of discrimination or exploitation practices.

NCEHR also explores the relationships of the parties involved in the research project. The collaboration between the researcher and the subject may be vital and nurturing, meaning that both parties' interests are central to the research; may be subject-centered, meaning the harms and benefits of the project may be viewed differently by the various parties; or may not be in the best interests of the research subjects. ([www.ncehr-cnerh.org](http://www.ncehr-cnerh.org)).

The following section outlines the ethical guiding principles created for the Northwood organization. The relationship between the expected behaviour of the above described parties and the principles are clearly interconnected.

### **Ethical Guiding Principles**

An organization's strategic plan must incorporate the organization's mission, policies, objectives, and values (Ross, 1995). Ethical guiding principles are developed on the basis of these aspects of the organization's strategic plan. Organizations that want to implement an ethical research approval process must integrate strategic components into the guiding principles. Northwood's purpose, mission and values are detailed in Appendix B. These values are used to ascertain the Ethical Guiding Principles for Northwood's Research Approval Framework.

The guidelines were developed using various sources. Initially, Northwood's value statements were examined, and important concepts and terminology were extracted to provide a base for the guiding principles. The concepts and terminology were then presented to the leaders of Northwood's three business units, Sandra Bauld, Susan Dempsey and Michele Lowe, for feedback regarding ideas behind what the concepts and terminology meant to them and the organization they represent. To ensure continuity with the research community, common standards from NCEHR guiding principles were combined with the analysis of Northwood's value statements to obtain the Ethical Guiding Principles outlined in this document.

*Ethical Guiding Principles for Northwood*

*Respect for human dignity and vulnerability* – The organization ensures the protection of the multiple interests of the research subject. Those individuals with diminished competence and/or decision making capacity are entitled to special care against abuse, exploitation and discrimination.

*Commitment to the Research* – The organization assures the continued support and commitment to all research projects regardless of expected outcome and maintains and develops external relationships for future research opportunities.

*Commitment to Quality and Excellence* – The organization must continue to accept research proposals that will provide quality information that is beneficial for all parties involved in the research.

*Commitment to the Highest Standards* – The organization shall implement a research review process that has fair methods and standards. Justice, inclusiveness, fairness and equity must be existent to ensure subjects are not exploited for the advancement of knowledge.

*Accountability and Responsibility* – The organization shall ensure the maintenance of a favorable harms-benefit balance. A maximization of benefits shall be maintained so the subject(s) and society receive an obvious benefit from the research conducted. Research subjects shall not be subjected to harm and risk that is deemed unnecessary, and human participation in research must be considered essential to the increase of knowledge. The minimization of harm is imperative.

*Protection* - All safety policies and guidelines of the organization shall be followed for protection of all parties involved in the research.

*Trust* – The organization shall invoke strict guidelines of privacy and confidentiality for the access, control and dissemination of personal information. The full clarity of research objectives is essential to ensure research subjects understand the extent of the research and only at that time can they make free and informed decisions for consent.

### **The Protection and Governance of the Rights of Human Subjects**

A definition of ‘research involving human participants’ must be formalized prior to the discussion on the protection of the rights of human subjects. Guidelines for the practice of the conduct of research at Murdoch University define the above as “research involving human participants can be understood to include the investigation of any aspect of human life” ([www.research.murdoch.edu.au](http://www.research.murdoch.edu.au)). This definition encompasses all aspects of research including, but not limited to, verbal, psychological and physiological.

Research has been conducted on human subjects over an extensive period of time. History provides a variety of occurrences when human-related research has proven to be both beneficial and detrimental to society. Marie Hirtle (2003), President of Biotika, Research and Consulting, insists that human subject research is becoming increasingly complex today due to increased number of involved parties, international implications and competing and conflicting interests, which all have contributed to the increase of public scrutiny in countries such as Canada. The creation of research ethics boards (REBs) served to be the “primary oversight mechanism of research involving humans primarily based in the institutional setting” and the boards are used to review research proposals from an ethical perspective and promote ethical behaviour among the research parties (Hirtle, 2003). Hirtle insists that to address research ethics from the perspective of public governance, the elements of good governance - accountability, transparency, role definition, responsibilities, standards and processes- must be focused upon. REBs, according to Hirtle, are the core structure of the ethics review system and are expected to be independent,

local, multi-disciplinary, competent, efficient, consistent and accountable. However, reports have indicated otherwise. Deficiencies in terms of credibility and independence are in question and the concern is that REBs are doing nothing more than contributing to yet another layer of bureaucracy (Hirtle, 2003). The existence of an in-house REB does not eliminate the responsibilities of the other parties involved in the research project. The research institutions, sponsors, publishers, individual researchers and participants are key in “evaluating the overall acceptability of research” (Hirtle, 2003). Hirtle’s article reveals that “there is no specific legislation that covers research involving humans in Canada” and considers the Canadian regulatory approach as an “incomplete mosaic of rules that ranges from formal legal regulations to administrative policies and voluntary guidelines” (2003).

In Canada’s current research ethics guidelines, Tri-Council Policy Statement, Article 1.13, states “ongoing research shall be subject to continuing ethics review” that is “deemed appropriate for that project” ([www.ncehr-cnerh.org](http://www.ncehr-cnerh.org)). Charles Weijer (2001) stresses the importance of Article 1.13 by indicating that REBs must do continual reviews to ensure the research is being conducted as planned and proposed; that subjects understand the information presented; and risks and benefits remain acceptable. NCEHR reviewed Canadian research ethics boards over a 4 year period and its findings were as follows: only 53 percent required an annual report from researchers involved in on-going projects; only 18 percent performed an on-going review or audit of research and only 7 percent reported periodic review of patient charts (Weijer, 2001). Weijer indicates that the findings were consistent with similar studies carried out in Australia and Scotland. Strategies have been put in place by various REBs for improvements. These include questionnaires to project researchers, crosschecks of subject lists to determine if subjects are participating in more than one study and if so, assessing the possible risk to the patient and audits of patient charts.

Weijer indicates that the increased workload of REBs and cost of the programs are the reasons that challenges are faced for Article 1.13. Acceptable solutions must be developed to assist in providing protection of those individuals who participate in research projects.

### **Recommendations for a Research Approval Framework**

“Research is essential to the successful promotion of health and well-being... and must be conducted to high scientific and ethical standards. The proper governance of research is essential to ensure that the public can have confidence and benefit from health related research” (Lord Hunt of Kings Heath, <http://www.dh.gov.uk/Home/fs/en>).

The development of a research approval framework for Northwood must fit the strategic goals of the organization in relation to research. According to the Strategic Direction #3 (Appendix A) Northwood has a commitment to residents, staff, increased knowledge and building solid relationships with others in the industry. These commitments must be reflected in the research approval framework.

A SWOT analysis conducted by the organization identified four critical weaknesses in regard to promoting and supporting ethical research: a cumbersome approval process, lack of appropriate infrastructure, no coordination across units in the organization and inadequate resources. These weaknesses may be rectified by implementing a framework that is adaptable, supportive of the process and is in line with the strategic direction of the organization.

*The Framework: The Ethical Research Approval Process for Research Involving Human Participants in Association with Northwoodcare Incorporated and Northwood Homecare Ltd.*

*Overview:* The purpose of this framework is to support the highest level of ethical standards for research conducted at Northwoodcare Incorporated and Northwood Homecare Ltd. in accordance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement for the Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans; to define the

mechanisms to deliver those standards; to describe the monitoring and assessment of research projects; to ensure the quality of research associated with the organization by promoting good practice, preventing misconduct, enhancing ethical quality and reducing adverse incidents; and to identify the accountability and responsibility of all parties involved in research. The integration of Northwoodcare Incorporated and Northwood Homecare Ltd.'s ethical guiding principles into the standards of this document lend the direct connection to the organization.

*Research Requiring Ethics Review:* All research involving human living participants requires review and approval by a Research Ethics Board prior to the initiation of the research. This is in accordance with Tri-Council Policy Article 1.1. Parties that approach Northwood for the intention of conducting research within the organization would have had the research project approved by a REB within their home institution or an affiliated institution prior to forwarding the project specifications to Northwood. Therefore, the creation of an in-house REB would be redundant. However, a need exists for an in-house committee at Northwood so the project proposal is reviewed to ensure specifications are appropriate in relation with organizational goals, values, strategies and guiding principles.

**Recommendation:** The establishment of a Research Advisory Council (RAC) at Northwood to ensure its ethical guiding principles are applied to all research associated with the organization; the proposed research correlates to the strategic goals and values of the organization; and the proposed research brings maximum benefits and minimized harms to the organization and its residents.

#### *Research Advisory Council*

*A. Purpose of the RAC:* The purpose of the Research Advisory Council is to provide recommendations to the CEO/COO on research proposals and to serve as a resource to the organization for review of all requests for internal and external research applications.

*B. Responsibilities of the RAC:*

- Oversees the research proposal process to ensure all approved research is in the best interest of Northwood and corresponds to organizational goals, values, strategies and guiding principles.
- Reviews all research proposals according to the established process and makes recommendations to the CEO/COO.
- Contacts, in writing, the head investigator of the research proposal to provide approval feedback.
- Develops a reporting measure to ensure that all research is maintained according to the Northwood standard throughout the duration of the research project.
- Develops and establishes relationships with potential researchers.
- Identifies areas of desired research.
- Makes recommendations to the CEO/COO for RAC membership appointments.
- Provides leadership and education to the Northwood staff to allow the benefit of research activities to be understood and supported.
- Serves as the communication link between the organization and the research community.
- Offers a consultation process for staff in preparation of requests for research.
- Ensures that a research proposal does not bear a conflict of interest in relation to the organization, its residents or the RAC membership.
- Annually reviews goals and objectives of the RAC.

*C. Membership of the RAC :* RAC membership shall have a multidisciplinary component which would allow for expertise from various functional organizational units that will provide broad representation of the organization and the industry.

- Chair – appointed by the CEO/COO for a term position or elected as deemed appropriate by the membership for a term position
  - Responsible for the integrity of the RAC process
  - Promotes a positive working relationship with the RAC and the CEO/COO
  - Committed to the purpose and function of the RAC
- Secretary – RAC member appointed by the Chair for a term position or a member of the administrative support staff appointed by the Chair for a term position.
  - Responsible for taking meeting minutes and circulation of minutes
- Representative from each of the three business units: Long Term Care and Assisted Living , Homecare and Active and Independent Living.
- Health and Wellness Director
- Policy Analyst
- Board of Directors representative
- Family Council Representative
- Resident Society Representative
- Resident Advocate
- Director, Communications/Public Relations
- NSHRF Representative
- Health Law Institute Representative

*D. Operational Protocol of the RAC and Administrative Procedures*

- The RAC will meet, at minimum, twice annually to ensure all protocols are current and to establish the goals of the committee for the upcoming six month period.

- Additional meetings will be called, as required, by the Chair of the RAC (for example, when research proposals are received).
- Each RAC member shall have a single vote for approval of research projects, committee goal establishment and process protocol; the Chair shall have two votes if a tie exists.
- Meeting schedules, such as time, location and duration, will be determined by the Chair.
- The Chair and the Secretary will circulate agenda packages to all members of the RAC a week prior to the scheduled meeting to allow appropriate review time.
- Confidentiality of meeting agendas and minutes will be maintained unless otherwise indicated by the Chair of the RAC.

*E. Documentation Control:* The Chair and the Secretary shall be responsible for record keeping and record maintenance. Confidentiality is of the utmost importance.

**Please note:** Information for this section was taken from a variety of sources, thereby providing difficulty in referencing. The format for the RAC is a combination of ideas taken from councils in different industries in correlation with Draft #4 listed in the reference section.

#### *Review of the Current Established Process and Recommendations*

Recommending changes to a current process requires a close look at where the process is now and where one wants the process to be. One critical aspect of the SWOT analysis (referred to earlier) prepared by the Northwood organization made reference to the “cumbersome approval process”. It is obvious that the organization would like a process developed that is simple, easy to manage but yet covers all important aspects of research approval. The current process/protocol and follow-up processes are detailed in

Appendix C and D, respectively. The current process has most of the important criteria in place, however, each principle investigator submits a research proposal according to his or her standard; there is not a standard package that Northwood provides to the researcher.

**Recommendation:** Update the current process to include the channels the proposal application goes through rather than the required information needed for the research project to be approved. An updated version of the process is detailed in Appendix E and this is suggested to replace the two processes in Appendices C and D.

**Recommendation:** A standard ‘request for research approval package’ designed by Northwood that would encompass all aspects of the approval and review processes. This maintains consistency in the presentation of proposals and allows for easy adaptation for future changes to the package. Individual components of the package shall include an outline of the process, an application to request approval to conduct research at Northwood, a standardized letter template to provide approval feedback to the principal investigator and reporting guidelines to ensure research standards have been maintained throughout the duration of the project. Each package (and each individual component in the package) should be classified numerically to allow for easy record maintenance. This number shall be affiliated with all documents that are related to each project. An example application is provided in Appendix F.

### **Conclusion**

The component of Northwood’s Strategic Direction, Strategic Direction #3: Knowledge Building, is the motivating force behind the development of a improved research approval process. Increased research opportunities for the organization may provide extensive benefits for parties that are both directly and indirectly involved in the research project. The Northwood organization has a responsibility to ensure maximization of these benefits and the incorporation of the already established purpose, mission and values into the approval process will uphold the organizational value system. This allows the Northwood

identity to be attached to each research project. A framework for an enhanced standardized approval process will provide the Northwood organization with the opportunity to streamline the current process to improve process efficiency.

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### **Appendix A - Strategic Direction #3 – Knowledge Building**

Northwood is committed to enhancing the sharing, development and application of knowledge throughout the organization.

Northwood believes that the success of the organization is based on our commitment to those we serve and those who provide the services. When we invest in people, we invest in our future.

Northwood will continue to seek partnerships that enhance the knowledge of our industry, promote research and provide an environment that engages staff in the pursuit of lif-long learning opportunities.

1. Support and promote ethical research.
2. Promote a life-long learning environment.
3. Establish a process to gather information about our target markets and trends within the industry to make informed decisions for the future.

## **Appendix B – Purpose, Mission and Value Statements of Northwood Incorporated and Northwood Homecare Ltd.**

### **Our Purpose**

To help older adults make the most of life.

### **Our Mission**

To be the Atlantic Canadian leader in promoting quality services to older adults.

### **Our Values**

#### **People come first.**

We believe that all people deserve to be treated with dignity, honesty and respect. We are committed to supporting others in reaching their full potential.

#### **Everyone plays a part.**

We believe we are a vibrant community that includes everyone who is touched by our services. We are committed to our role as advocates for older adults.

#### **We can always do better.**

We believe in quality and excellence. We are committed to meeting challenges head-on, trying new things, learning from our mistakes and setting the highest standards.

#### **The future is in our hands.**

We believe we must be responsible stewards of our resources. We are committed to making effective use of the resources entrusted to us, to ensure the future of quality support and care services for seniors.

#### **Growth is built on trust.**

We believe that the success of our organization relies on our commitment to those we serve -- residents, clients, employees and volunteers. When we invest in people, we invest in our future.

#### **We are not alone.**

We believe in a power greater than ourselves to whom we look for support, guidance and inspiration.

**Appendix C - Research Application –Process, Protocol  
Doc # 016-a-120 C**

The application process for research:

- Must accompany all research requests;
- Follow the Northwoodcare protocol; and
- Must be completed and approved prior to any initiated research.

The application protocol includes:

1. A covering letter (maximum 500 words) summarizing the:
  - Research objectives;
  - Specific questions to be addressed;
  - Expected outcomes;
  - Time frame of the study;
  - Names and roles of the Principle Investigator and research staff; and
  - A description of the proposed involvement of the Northwoodcare residents and/or staff.
2. The curriculum vitae of the Principle Investigator and/or research staff.
3. The research proposal includes:
  - General goals and operational objectives;
  - A historical background of the subject being studied;
  - The design of the study, including methods of population sampling, methods of data analysis and specifications of the variables which can or cannot be controlled;
  - The proposed methods and procedures, for example, questionnaires and interview;
  - The relevance of the research to programs either here or in the community; and
  - The expected result of the project.
4. Evidence of support from external agencies (governments, universities, financial).
5. A statement confirming that the research project has been reviewed by the appropriate institutional (governments, universities or other) Ethical Review Committee for ethical acceptability.

**Appendix D - Research Application – Approval and Follow-Up Process  
Doc # 016-a-110 B**

Purpose:

1. To communicate to prospective researchers corporate standards for research.
2. To follow legal and ethical protocol when conducting research regarding research subjects, methods and personnel.
3. To protect confidentiality of information either written or verbal, when conducting research and in subsequent publishing reports.

Equipment: The Northwoodcare:

- Application Process – steps to follow
- Criteria for Research
- Research Topics of Interest
- Consent Form (Resident, Staff)
- Contract Agreement Form (Researchers)

Method:

1. The Researcher

- Submits a request for desired research to the President of Northwoodcare Incorporated (or delegate) in advance of commencement of the research project.
- Gives evidence of his/her qualifications.
- Completes the application process.
- Reviews the Northwoodcare research documents.
- If research is approved, researcher signs contract agreeing to comply with Northwoodcare guidelines including consent form for subjects.
- Provides Northwoodcare with three copies of the final report upon completion of research.
- Presents findings to Northwoodcare Administration and staff as deemed appropriate.

2. Administration:

- Reviews and screens applications for desired research.
- Gives priority to qualified researcher (university, faculty members, their research staff, students, others).
- Ensures research is of benefit to the operations of Northwoodcare Incorporated, the resident's quality of life and the staff's work environment.
- Presents to the Board of Governors for decision.
- Informs researcher of the Board of Governors decision.
- Ensures the researcher complies with the contractual agreement.

- Ensures the researcher has accessed appropriate consent form from subject.
- Designates relevant staff to assist in the coordination of the research project.
- Receives a progress report from researcher/designated staff.
- Approves the presentation, publication and distribution of the research findings.

Responsibility:

Key points:

1. A researcher must submit a research request via a Director who may then recommend and support the request for the consideration of Administration.
2. Researchers must conduct research at a time convenient to the facility, resident care routines and staff schedules.
3. Researchers are responsible for costs incurred during research.
4. Contributions by Northwoodcare are acknowledged by the researcher in any written or verbal reports, publications or communiqués.
5. The three copies of the final research report are for:
  - The Board of Governors;
  - The President of Northwoodcare Incorporated; and
  - A copy for the facility library.

**Appendix E – Procedure for Conducting Research at Northwoodcare Incorporated and Northwood Homecare Ltd**



**Procedure for Conducting Research at Northwoodcare Incorporated and Northwood Homecare Ltd.**

1. All research proposal applications shall be directed to the Chair, Research Advisory Council up to \_\_\_\_ weeks in advance of the commencement of the research project. The application must be filled out in its entirety.
2. Completed research proposal applications shall be circulated to all members of the Research Advisory Council \_\_\_\_\_ days prior to the next meeting called by the Chair (in accordance with the RAC guidelines). The RAC will be responsible for discussion and approval of the research project.
3. The RAC has the authority to have the proposal application directed back to the principle investigator for further clarification or additional information.
4. The RAC shall forward the proposal application to the CEO/COO with recommendations.
5. Upon final approval by the CEO/COO, the Chair of the RAC shall forward an approval letter to the principle investigator of the research proposal. This shall be received by the principle investigator within \_\_\_\_\_ weeks for proposal submission.
6. A copy of the research proposal and approval letter shall be retained in a research file.
7. All reports conducted during the duration of the research project shall be directed to the Chair, RAC for review and retained in a research file.
8. The final report shall be submitted to the members of the RAC and the CEO/COO for review and shall be retained in a research file until archived.

**Appendix F – Request for Approval to Conduct Research at Northwoodcare Incorporated and Northwood Homecare Ltd: Sample Application**



**Request for Approval to Conduct Research at Northwoodcare Incorporated and Northwood Homecare Ltd**

**Please note:** all responses to questions must be provided on this form. Applications that refer to an attachment will be sent back for re-writing. Only attachments asked for will be accepted with this application. All entries must be typed.

**1. Project Identification**

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**1.1 Project Title**

**1.2 Principle Investigator (please attach curriculum vitae with application)**

Name:	Phone Number:
Mailing Address:	Fax:
	Email:
	Affiliated University or Institution:

**1.3 Project Summary, Purpose and Objective**

**2.0 Summary of Activities**

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**2.1 Hypothesis to be tested**

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**2.2 Proposed research design and methodology**

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**2.3 Project Duration**

Start Date:	Completion Date:
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**2.4 Project Activity Location**

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**3.0 Subject Profile**

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**3.1 Number of Subjects**

Male:	Female:
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**3.2 Amount of time required for each subject to participate**

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**3.3 Subject Characteristics**

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**4.0 Risks and Benefits**

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**4.1 Describe the nature and degree of any risk or harm involved in the research project.**

**4.2 Describe the precautions that will be taken to minimize any risk to the subjects.**

**4.3 Justify the risk in terms of the benefits of the project outcomes.**

**5.0 Consent Documentation**

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**5.1 In relation to the actual data gathering, when will consent be discussed and documentation be obtained? Be specific.**

**5.2 Will the principle investigator be securing all of the informed consent? If no, please name specific individual(s) who will obtain informed consent and provide background information.**

Yes	No	Individual obtaining consent:

**5.3 What questions will be asked to assess the subjects' understanding?**

**5.4 Please attach a sample of consent form being used by this research project.**

**6.0 Research Project Relevance**

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**6.1 What is the relevance of the research to the programs at Northwood or in the community?**

**6.2 What is the expected result of the research project?**

**7.0 Signature of Principle Investigator**

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Signature:	Date of signing:
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