

Ethics Standards Values

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB)

Introduction

The year 2017 marked the beginning of a new era in the life of the NIMR –IRB. The Director General of the Institute, Prof. Babatunde Salako, based on the powers conferred on him as the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute by the National Health Research Ethics (NHREC) Code, reconstituted the Board. This was based on the fact that a large number of the board members of the last board have exceeded the term limit allowed by the constitution of NIMR-IRB. The new committee immediately hit the ground running to ensure that the lofty height attained by the NIMR-IRB is maintained. It is important to note that NIMR-IRB, in 2004, became the first in country ethics committee to have a Federal Wide Assurance number. It went further to obtain a grant with which it trained Chairmen, Secretaries and members of a number of ethics committee that were newly established all over the country. Since then, NIMR-IRB has remained a pacesetter and in the fore front of providing support for other ethics committees in the country. In this report, we project the 2017 activities, success and challenge with the stakeholders in the research enterprise. Professor Babatunde Lawal Salako, the Director General approved the reconstitution of the new NIMR-IRB and inaugurated it on the 1st Sept., 2016. The Board consists of sixteen (16) members including eight (8)

members of the previous board yet to complete their term and eight (8) newly nominated members who were to serve on the board. Dr. Oliver Ezechi, Obstetrician Gynaecologist and Public health expert was appointed the new Board Chairman and Mrs. Olayemi Nwogbe an Information Scientist as a Member/Administrative Secretary. In keeping with the bye laws of the Board, the members elected Dr. Agatha David, a Paediatrician and Dr. Tajudeen Bamidele, a Microbiologist as Vice Chairman and Assistant Secretary respectively on the 23rd March, 2017.

Activities

A total of fifty (50) protocols were submitted to NIMR-IRB in the year 2017 for review. Of the protocols forty-seven (47) were approved, one (1) dropped and two (2) are still ongoing. The research protocols were of four categories:

- i) NIMR staff protocols
- ii) Non NIMR staff (individuals) protocols
- iii) NGO/CSO and multinational organizations protocols
- iv) Students from various universities and polytechnics.

Collaborations

The Board was involved in a number of collaborative activities with the following organization and bodies;

- i. New HIV and Microbicides Advocacy Society (NHVMAS),
- ii. South African Research Ethics Training Initiatives (SARETI),
- iii. West African Bioethics Training Programme (WABTP),
- iv. National Health Research Ethics Committee (NHREC}
- v. WATERS, Senegal

Year 2018 goals

- i. Capacity-building for members of the Board
- ii. Appointment of new external reviewers
- iii. Training for Secretariat staff
- iv. Computerization of administrative/secretariat procedures

- v. Increase awareness on ethics of research and good research practice for stakeholders

Challenges

- i. Undue delay of protocol reviews
- ii. IRB Shopping
- iii. Poor knowledge of researchers on good research and ethics practices

Way Forward

- i. Renovation and equipping of the IRB secretariat
- ii. Automation of the IRB process
- iii. Training and retraining of IRB staff and members