

March 17, 2020

Dear members of the McMaster research community,

The provincial declaration of emergency and other rapidly developing circumstances in the pandemic are impacting research at McMaster, and I wanted to bring you up to date on what we need to do to meet new social distancing and other measures introduced by government, and to ensure the health and safety of our community both on and off campus.

McMaster's research is not closing down, but we do need to think about what research needs to continue at this time and how can we make sure our research staff is well-informed and know that their well-being is of the utmost importance.

After consulting with the Associate Deans of Research (ADR) and other university and hospital leaders, the university is issuing the following directives:

1. No research with subjects that require face-to-face contact, unless these are on-going interventional or clinical studies that impact human health.
2. No new animal-based research; completion of current, on-going animal studies to continue with some adaptations, in consultation with the Central Animal Facility.
3. No initiation of new research experiments that require campus access, unless they are associated with emergency COVID-19 funding or involve activities focusing on patient health and safety. Please discuss such plans with your ADR and the VPR before proceeding. Research that can be completed remotely (e.g. on line) that is not impacted by social distancing policies may continue.
4. Researchers and groups must develop plans to close down existing research within university facilities on short notice, including plans for waste disposal and identification of essential services to maintain research samples, facilities and infrastructure where appropriate.

#### SPECIAL DIRECTIVES FOR HOSPITAL-BASED RESEARCH:

For those whose labs and facilities are physically located in hospital settings, hospitals will be restricting personnel to those deemed essential.

Hamilton Health Sciences and St. Joseph's Healthcare will be screening at the entrances of all their sites. Your McMaster University identification will be required to gain entry.

As the need to ensure the health and safety of patients and hospital staff is a top priority, research within labs and facilities on hospital property will be restricted to research associated with emergency COVID-19 funding or involving activities focusing on patient health and safety,

at the approval of the appropriate VPRs (McMaster University, Dr. Karen Mossman; Hamilton Health Sciences, Dr. Ted Scott; St. Joseph's Healthcare, Dr. Jack Gauldie).

For clinical trials and patient-based research, active accrual should be interrupted until further notice and no new studies should be started. Trials with scheduled interventions that have already begun should be allowed to continue as long as the individuals registered in the trial pass the active screening that will be in effect at our host hospitals until further notice.

We appreciate your support during these unprecedented times. Further updates will be shared as the situation develops. FAQs will soon be posted on-line to further assist the research community.