

Date: April 4, 2020

To: KSOM Faculty Members

From: Tom Buchanan, Vice Dean for Research, KSOM
April Armstrong, Associate Dean for Clinical Research, KSOM
Co-Chair COVID Clinical Research Committee
Mike Bowdish, Chair, Biomedical Research IRB
Darcy Spicer, Co-Chair, COVID Clinical Research Committee

Re: Approval of research involving COVID-19 biospecimens or access to patients with or at risk for COVID-19

We recognize the rapidly growing need for human-subjects research related to COVID-19. As an institution, we need to coordinate such efforts to optimize research opportunities for patients, minimize disruption of clinical care, engage care providers in research, and avoid duplication of research efforts. To that end, we have established a prioritizing process for human subjects' research in our health systems.

Effective immediately, investigators seeking to conduct research at sites governed by the USC Biomedical IRB and involving **patients with or at risk for COVID-19 or their biospecimens** must submit their requests to the COVID Clinical Research Prioritization Committee (CCRPC) through the [COVID-19 Proposal Submission Portal](#). Submission should occur before submission to the IRB. Protocols that use a central IRB must be submitted to the CCRPC as well, ideally before submission to the central IRB but ultimately before they can be considered for implementation.

The research proposals will be evaluated by the CCRPC for scientific merit, potential benefit to patients, operational feasibility (including funding) and competing studies. Each proposal will receive a letter from the CCRPC indicating whether or not it should be prioritized for further consideration. *The IRB will only review protocols that are recommended for prioritization by the CCRPC.* The IRB submission for those protocols must include the prioritization letter.

We realize that this is not business as usual, but these are unusual times. Our health systems are severely stressed. Our patients and our society desperately need organized, coordinated, high-quality research to identify treatments that can improve health outcomes for patients infected with the virus that causes COVID-19.

We thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation with this new process.

C: Julie Slayton
Maja Mataric
Laura Mosqueda

