



Statement of Policy on Conflict of Interest

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

CONTEXT and PURPOSE

As of April 1, 2019, the Dalla Lana School of Public Health at the University of Toronto (U of T) assumed all operational and scientific responsibilities for the Canadian Partnership for Tomorrow's Health (CanPath), previously managed by the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer (CPAC). CPAC is the main funder for CanPath (now through U of T), and consistent with CanPath's first ten years with continuing support from a national agency, CanPath's governing framework continues to be based on national standards for responsible conduct of research, as adopted by universities and health research organizations across Canada.

In particular, to provide pan-Canadian consistency with national research standards, CanPath's National and Regional Scientific Directors have institutional appointments requiring that they comply with Canada's Tri-Agency Framework for the Responsible Conduct of Research (<https://rcr.ethics.gc.ca/eng/framework-cadre-2021.html>), within which the official human research ethics policy is referred to as TCPS 2 (Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (2022 -https://ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique_tcps2-eptc2_2022.html)). Chapter 7 of TCPS2 refers to Conflict of Interest, which is defined as "the incompatibility of two or more duties, responsibilities, or interests (personal or professional) of an individual or institution as they relate to ethical conduct..., such that one cannot be fulfilled without compromising another."

In addition, CanPath leaders, staff and committee members (CanPath Representative(s)) are employed in organizations that may have their own policies related to the definition and management of conflicts of interest.

The goal of conflict of interest policies is to eliminate conflict of interest where possible, or alternatively, to identify and disclose real or perceived conflicts of interest, and to provide mechanisms to minimize or otherwise manage them (TCPS2).

All CanPath's leaders, staff and contributors in the context of their roles related to CanPath scientific and operational activities may have existing or other potential conflicts that will require disclosure and recusal from certain decisions, proceedings, projects, or votes. If an individual is subject to policies and requirements or has pre-existing relationships that create a perceived or actual conflict with the CanPath scientific or operational needs, the CanPath Operations Committee has the right to reject or remove such individual from such role.

STATEMENT OF POLICY ON CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A CanPath Representative must not engage in activities that create an actual or perceived conflict of interest.

The work of CanPath Representatives shall at all times be conducted under either the policy frameworks of the organizations for which they are affiliated, and/or TCPS2 for those involved in research. In this way, most aspects of potential conflict of interest will be addressed. For clarity, this policy statement stipulates that the same principles regarding conflict of interest, shall apply to all CanPath operational and scientific activities.

APPLICATION

To achieve the goal of eliminating conflicts of interest in decision-making processes for all CanPath operational and scientific activities, CanPath Representatives must self-identify any actual or potential conflict of interest. Such Representative shall report the actual or potential conflict of interest to the committee Chairperson and recuse themselves from the related decision (or be excused by the Chair). For example, a CanPath Representative must report situations where resource allocation decisions are made and the CanPath Representative has dual responsibilities or other competing professional or personal interests. Where a CanPath Representative has recused him/herself from committee decisions, for transparency, this will be reflected in the minutes.

While all CanPath Representatives are instrumental in maintaining CanPath's high standards of integrity, excellence and performance, the CanPath Executive Director is ultimately accountable, and as such, is to be informed and responsible for addressing any conflict of interest issues that require attention or more in-depth consideration. In situations where the Executive Director is in conflict, escalation of response is first to CanPath's other Executive Leads (National Scientific Director and National Scientific Co-Director), and if necessary, then to the Dean of the Dalla Lana School of Public Health.

Change and Approval History				
Version Date	Version Number	Summary of Changes	Approval by	Approval Date
August 24, 2020	1.0		OC	August 25, 2020
August 9, 2023	1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated the links related to Canada's Tri-Agency Framework for the Responsible Conduct of Research and the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans 	OC	August 16, 2023