



NATIONAL HEALTH RESEARCH AUTHORITY

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Paediatric Centre of Excellence, University Teaching Hospital, P.O. Box 30075, LUSAKA

Tell: +260211 250309 | Email: director@nhra.org.zm | znhrasec@nhra.org.zm

Date: 18th June, 2021

To all Researchers, heads of research institutions and research establishments

C.C:

Permanent Secretary Technical Services, Ministry of Health

NHRA Council Chairperson

NHREB Chairperson

Director General, ZNPHI

Chairpersons of all Research Ethics Committees

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Temporal Suspension of COVID-19 Risky Research Activities

Reference is made to the above captioned subject matter.

As you are all aware, Zambia is currently experiencing an unprecedented third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, with an exponential increase in the daily number of cases, number of severe cases, and number of deaths. The Zambian government has recently responded by tightening public health measures that have included closure of schools, restriction of tertiary education to virtual only, suspension of workshops, among others.

While the National Health Research Authority (NHRA) appreciates that research is part of the COVID-19 response and part of NHRA mandate is to promote and advocate for research, the safety of both the researchers and research participants cannot be compromised in the pursuit of knowledge.

In the light of the above, the National Health Research Authority (NHRA) in line with its mandate to regulate health research in Zambia as provided for under the Health Research Act No. 2 of 2013, and in consultation with the Zambia National Public Health Institute (ZNPFI) and other stakeholders, has decided to **suspend all research activities that involve direct interaction or contact with research participants with effect from 18th June, 2021 for two weeks.** This measure will be reviewed in two weeks' time as we monitor the COVID-19 situation.

In situations where suspension of direct interaction or contact with research participants compromises patient/participant safety, such as might be the case in clinical trials, Principal Investigators must provide **full personal protective equipment** (PPEs, full donning) to the research team that would have direct contact with patients/participants. Should you have any questions regarding the implementation of this guideline or should you need further guidance, please contact Prof. Victor Chalwe on 0979883237 or you may contact me directly on 0974770293.

Thank you for your cooperation and stay safe. Yours sincerely,



Prof. Godfrey Biemba

Director/CEO

National Health Research Authority
