

## **Some Notes Regarding Research Money**

### 1. Budgeting a Research Study

Generally research budgets are broken down into 5-6 categories: personnel, equipment, materials and supplies, services, travel and other expenses. This is a brief guide to setting up a research budget and is by no means is the definitive source.

#### *Personnel*

This includes salaries of any staff involved in the study. For McMaster employees who are members of CAW 555, the pay grid can be found in the collective bargaining agreement. Generally research coordinators or assistants are level 7, 8 or 9, depending on duties. When setting up a multiyear budget, do not forget to include the annual step increases and ATB (across the board) increases in salary. Fringe benefits must be included as well. These are money paid by the employer to cover such items as benefits, employer health tax, contributions by employer to CPP and EI etc. At McMaster, the fringe benefit rate is 35%, HHS and SJH have different rates which may be obtained from the HR departments. If the employee is a casual employee, then 4% is included in lieu of vacation.

Employees can be 1.0FTE (full time employee) or less, for example a 0.5FTE is 2.5 days, 0.25FTE is 1.25 days etc.

Other personnel hired to work on this project could include a statistician, technicians from various departments if dedicated services are going to be required, nursing staff etc. Consultation should be made with the managers of departments outside of Surgery, and with HR for the various institutions as several unions could be involved.

#### *Equipment*

This includes any equipment required by the study. Computers and associated hard and software generally can be purchased through McMaster or the hospital purchasing department. Often there are requirements for getting quotes for any capital equipment that needs to be purchased.

#### *Materials and Supplies*

This includes any physical item you might need. Examples of some items that might be included are: paper, office supplies, chemicals, glassware, blood tubes and needles, animals (purchase and board), telephone and/or fax charges, photocopying etc.

#### *Services*

This category covers other protocol-driven expenses that you must pay for from other departments. For example, if your study requires extra bloodwork beyond normal care, you may have to arrange for Laboratory Medicine to take the blood and process it or send it to another lab if your local lab doesn't do that particular test, plus paying for any tests not covered by OHIP. You may have to pay Diagnostic Imaging for protocol-driven CTs. They may charge a set amount which covers the technical and radiologist fees for the test. Pharmacy has a set fee they charge for dispensing study-related medications. In cases such as this, talk to the manager of the departments involved to get the amounts.

#### *Travel*

Many grants include provision for an investigator to go to a meeting to present results or an investigator meeting if the project is multi-site.

### *Other*

Anything that doesn't have a specific category can go in here. For example, the REBs charge \$3000 (as of May 1<sup>st</sup> 2009) to review a industry-sponsored REB application. There is an institutional overhead of up to 35% levied on some incoming funds, depending on the source. Information regarding this overhead can be obtained from Health Research Services. Some journals will charge a fee to print colour images in an article. You could also include the cost of printing a poster for a meeting. Payments to participants would also fall in this category.

### 2. Health Research Services

All grant applications where the money will be held at McMaster University must be also submitted to Health Research Services at the time of application using the HRS Application Checklist/Request to Open a Research Account Form, which must be signed by the Chair, Dr. William Orovan. The budget must be included.

Applications to all Tricouncil Granting Agencies (ie CIHR, NSERC) and some other granting agencies will require the application to be signed off by a representative of the University (Dr. Stephen Collins). This is arranged through HRS by contacting the Grants Officer for Surgery, Jennifer Snow, and sending her the application-it does not always have to be the final version of the protocol, although the budget should be the final version. HRS would prefer to see the application 2 weeks in advance of the due date.

A note about where research money can be held: generally, if a grant is coming from an agency (ie federal or provincial government, disease-specific agencies, specialty societies or associations etc), the money should be held by the University in the Faculty of Health Sciences. Health Research Services then administrates these grants. If the money is coming from an industry sponsor, either directly or through a Clinical Research Organization (CRO), then it should be held by the hospital corporation hosting the research. HRS Office of Integrated Research Services or SJH Research Finance would then administrate the funding.

### 3. Tricouncil Audit of Grant Money

Recently auditors from the Tricouncil Granting Agencies looked at the handling of research money in the University and found several important deficiencies which must be corrected. Please see the attached document that describes the specifics of their findings. Expenses must be compliant with agency guidelines and documented in the appropriate fashion. If you have any questions regarding a research-related expense please contact either Stephan vanBatenburg Stafford or Sue Graci.

### 4. Residents and Grants

Residents are not allowed to hold research accounts in their own names, they must be held under the faculty member supervising the project.