

RUTGERS BEGINS AAHRPP ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Looking to validate and strengthen its protections for its research subjects, Rutgers University has initiated the AAHRPP (Association for the Accreditation of Human Research Protection Programs) accreditation process.

AAHRPP promotes high-quality research through an accreditation process for organizations worldwide. In order to earn accreditation, organizations must provide tangible evidence of their commitment to scientifically and ethically sound research and to continuous improvement.

Benefits

In addition to its focus on our research subjects accreditation has benefits for our researchers, as AAHRPP seeks to improve the human subject protection enterprise throughout Rutgers entire organization. It requires cross department communication among research business units in order to improve effectiveness in areas such as: sponsored programs, corporate contracts, other compliance departments, and the IRB. The goal is reduced burden and increased flexibility for researchers while ensuring the highest human subject protections.

Accreditation has external benefits to Rutgers as well:

- Earn the respect and meet the expectation of our peer institutions. More than 60 percent of U.S. research –intensive universities and 65 percent of U.S. medical schools are either AAHRPP accredited or have begun the process.
- Play a leadership role in collaborative efforts. Increasingly a requirement for collaboration, AAHRPP-accredited organizations often insist that it be a determining factor in decisions on external IRB review.
- Gain a competitive edge with sponsors and other funders. Sponsors/funders recognize that accredited institutions have more efficient operations, provide more comprehensive protections and produce high-quality data.
- Reduce the risk of non-compliance. Accreditation signifies that the organization has built the necessary infrastructure for a quality human research protection program and generally has more streamlined policies, keeps better records and are more likely to avoid costly shutdowns.
- Enhance standing with U.S. federal agencies, which are more likely to target non-accredited organizations for inspections.
- Benefit from a common commitment to continuous quality improvement. AAHRPP-accredited organizations share innovative practices and collect data to help establish benchmarks and assess quality improvement.

Steps to Accreditation

The accreditation process proceeds in several steps:

- Rutgers submits the Step 1 application for AAHRPP certification
- AAHRPP reviews the application and sends results
- Rutgers then interfaces with AAHRPP representative to make any necessary revisions
- Rutgers submit the Step 2 application
- AAHRPP conducts a site visit and issues a report
- Rutgers responds to the report
- The Council on Accreditation reviews the final site visit report and makes its determination