

List of research protocols approved or exempted by the WHO *ad hoc* Ethics Review Committee for COVID-19

and

Templates and Guidance Documents

In May of 2020, the WHO established a branch of the WHO Research Ethics Review Committee dedicated to reviewing research related to COVID-19.

The list of protocols approved or exempted by this committee (Table 1) is provided to ensure that member states and partners can easily determine what studies under local consideration have been approved or exempted by the WHO ERC. This approval or exemption does not replace the need for submission to and review by the appropriate local authorities in the country where the research will take place. The list of protocols approved or exempted by the standing WHO Research Ethics Review Committee will be provided separately.

Table 2 lists WHO template and guidance documents for which the COVID-19 ERC branch has provided advice. These documents support countries and institutions in developing site-specific research studies. These templates or guidance documents are not considered research and, therefore, are not reviewed formally by the WHO ERC.

Table 1: Protocols approved/exempted by the WHO ERC

As of 25 June 2021

Protocol (CERC Number)	Project Title	WHO responsible unit	Current Status	Current Status date
CERC.0002	A study to develop a quarantine guideline for medical and public health personnel who have been exposed to COVID-19	SEARO, Health Systems Development, Essential Drugs and Medicines	Approved	07.07.2020
CERC.0003	An early health technology assessment of target product profiles for COVID-19 vaccines: data for supporting R&D for better vaccine and selecting the right vaccine for maximizing public health impact	SEARO, Emergency Programme, Emergency Preparedness and Operations.	Exempt	29.05.2020

CERC.0004	ANTICOV: An open-label, multicentre, randomised, adaptive platform trial of the safety and efficacy of several therapies, including antiviral therapies, versus control in mild / moderate cases of COVID-19	UNITAID	Approved	24.11.2020
CERC.0005	COVER: A multi-center, randomized, open label study of nitazoxanide or sofosbuvir and daclatasvir (SOF/DCV), compared to no pharmacological intervention for the prevention of COVID-19 disease in healthcare workers at high risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2	UNITAID	Approved	19.08.2020
CERC.0006	COVID-19: Harnessing AMANHI Infrastructure to Assess the Direct Impact on Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (AMANHI: Alliance for Maternal and Newborn Health Improvement)	HQ, Newborn Health Unit, Department of Maternal, Newborn, Child, Adolescent Health and Aging	Approved	30.09.2020
CERC.0007	A cross-sectional study to assess the presence of Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) in tears of moderate to severe COVID 19 patients	SEARO, Health Emergencies Programme, Infectious Hazard Management Department	Approved	14.07.2020
CERC.0010	The First Few X cases and contacts (FFX) investigation protocol for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)	HQ, Department of Global Infectious Hazards Preparedness	Exempt	30.06.2020
CERC.0013C	Prevalence of COVID-19 Antibodies, Chronic Hepatitis B and C Virus Infections and Associated Risk Factors, and Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices on COVID-19 and Other Infectious Diseases in Armenia	EURO, Health Emergencies Programme, Infectious Hazard Management Department	approved	25.05.2021
CERC.0016	Global survey: One Health networks and workforce response to COVID-19	SEARO, WHO Emergency Programme, Emergency Preparedness and Operations.	Exempt	07.07.2020
CERC.0017	Global COVID-19 Clinical Data Platform for clinical characterization and management of hospitalized patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19	HQ, Health Care Readiness, Country Readiness Strengthening Department	Exempt	02.07.2020
CERC.0021	ApartTogether – assessing the public health social impact of COVID-19 on refugees and migrants	HQ, Health and Migration Programme	Approved	16.09.2020
CERC.0022	RE: NFR RRC 20.16 - Evaluation of integration of AYUSH into the public health system for combating COVID-19	SEARO, Health Systems Development, Essential Drugs and Medicines	Approved	14.12.2020

CERC.0023	Implementation of social and Behavioural Data Collection and Analysis Integrated in the COVID-19 Response: WHO AFRO region	HQ, Behavioural Insights Unit, Department of Communications	Approved	20.12.2020
CERC.0025	Evaluation, Integration, and Adaptation of Evolving Evidence in COVID-19 Resposne and Recovery Decision-making: Research protocol	HQ, Community Readiness and Resilience Unit, Country Readiness and Strengthening Department	Approved	13.11.2020
CERC.0026	AGILE Seamless Phase I/IIa Platform for the Rapid Evaluation of Candidates for COVID-19 treatment	UNITAID	Approved	24.11.2020
CERC.0027	Health systems analysis and evaluations of the barriers to availability, utilization and readiness of selected sexual and reproductive health services in COVID-19 affected areas	HQ, Contraception and Fertility Control unit, Department of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Research	Approved	23.11.2020
CERC.0028	Consolidating an innovative COVID-19 RCCE intervention conducted among migrant workers in Singapore for scale up and spread: Proposal and planning document	HQ, Community Readiness and Resilience Unit, Country Readiness and Strengthening Department	Approved	09.11.2020
CERC.0029	Qualitative Research on Pregnancy, Pregnancy Prevention and Induced Abortion in the Context of COVID-19 in China	HQ, Prevention of Unsafe Abortion Unit, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Research Department	Approved	20.11.2020
CERC.0030	Understanding public perception of digital contact tracing, monitoring devices and vaccination measures for international travel: An online survey	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	18.11.2020
CERC.0032	Adapting national research review process during Covid-19: Reviewers' perspectives from Pakistan	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	10.11.2020
CERC.0033	How have South African Research Ethics Committees coped with reviewing health research during the COVID-19 pandemic?	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	20.10.2020
CERC.0034	Experiences of Malawian REC members in reviewing research protocols during the COVID 19 pandemic	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	20.10.2020

CERC.0036	Assessment of the effects of COVID-19 Pandemic on Research Regulation: The Case of the Scientific and Ethics Review Unit, Kenya Medical Research Institute	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	04.12.2020
CERC.0037	Severe SARS-CoV2 related disease in low and middle income country children aged 0-19 years: a multicountry observational study in a network of hospitals	HQ, Newborn Health Unit, Department of Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health and Ageing	Approved	15.12.2020
CERC.0038	Perceptions of healthcare workers regarding local infection prevention and control procedures for COVID-19 in Palestine	HQ, Community Readiness and Resilience Unit Country Readiness and Strengthening Department	Approved	16.11.2020
CERC.0039A	Rapid Anthropological Assessments of COVID-19 Impacts on Trust & Behaviours in Communities of the UK	HQ, Community Readiness and Resilience Unit Country Readiness and Strengthening Department	Approved	08.12.2020
CERC.0039B	Rapid Anthropological Assessments of COVID-19 Impacts on Trust & Behaviours in Communities of Sierra Leone	HQ, Community Readiness and Resilience Unit Country Readiness and Strengthening Department	Approved	17.12.2020
CERC.0040	Oxygen requirements in patients with COVID-19 in LMICs: A WHO study	HQ, Health Care Readiness, Country Readiness Strengthening Department	Approved	18.05.2021
CERC.0042	Perceived mental workload using separate (FFP2 respirator and face shields) and integrated (Powered Air Purifying Respirator) personal protective equipment for respiratory protection.	HQ, Health Care Readiness, Country Readiness Strengthening Department	Approved	04.05.2021
CERC.0044	Does reuse and or disinfection of N95 masks effect fit	HQ, Health Care Readiness, Country Readiness Strengthening Department	Exempt	26.01.2021
CERC.0045	Efficacy and Impact of Methylene Blue + Light Decontamination and its Potential Uses in the Field Setting	HQ, Health Care Readiness, Country Readiness Strengthening Department	Exempt	15.02.2021

CERC.0048	COVID-19 Droplet Protection Using Face Shields: Development of methods to measure effectiveness of face shields for local production and adoption in low resource settings	HQ, Health Care Readiness, Country Readiness Strengthening Department	Approved	23.02.2021
CERC.0050	Assessing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on nosocomial transmission of Carbapenem-resistant organisms (CRO) using integrated whole genome sequencing (WGS), clinical epidemiology, and environmental surveillance	HQ, Quality of Care Unit, Integrated Health Services Department	Exempt	03.12.2020
CERC.0052	Ethics review committee members perceptions of broad consent for future use in clinical trials – a protocol for a mixed methods study in Bucaramanga, Colombia	HQ, the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR), Global Engagement Unit	Exempt	22.10.2020
CERC.0054	Analysis of diagnostic data from routine clinical care at Kara Tepe Refugee Camp, Lesbos	HQ, GOARN & Global Health Emergency Workforce	Exempt	24.11.2020
CERC.0057	Qualitative formative research to inform policies for engaging health workers to ensure successful uptake of covid-19 vaccination	EURO, Vaccine-preventable Diseases and Immunization, Division of Country Health Programmes	Exempt	25.11.2020
CERC.0057A	qualitative formative research to inform COVID vaccine preparation for HCW in Georgi	EURO, Vaccine-preventable Diseases and Immunization, Division of Country Health Programmes	Exempt	16.12.2020
CERC.0057B	Qualitative Formative Research to Inform Policies for Engaging Health care workers to Ensure Successful Uptake of COVID-19 Vaccination in Estonia	EURO, Vaccine-preventable Diseases and Immunization, Division of Country Health Programmes	Exempt	16.12.2020
CERC.0057C	Qualitative Formative Research to Inform Policies for Engaging Health care workers to Ensure Successful Uptake of COVID-19 Vaccination in Romania	EURO, Vaccine-preventable Diseases and Immunization, Division of Country Health Programmes	Exempt	16.12.2020
CERC.0057D	Qualitative Formative Research to Inform Policies for Engaging Health care workers to Ensure Successful Uptake of COVID-19 Vaccination in North Macedonia	EURO, Vaccine-preventable Diseases and Immunization, Division of Country Health Programmes	Exempt	12.03.2021

CERC.0057E	Qualitative formative research to inform policies for engaging healthcare workers to ensure successful uptake of COVID-19 vaccination in Ukraine	EURO, Vaccine-preventable Diseases and Immunization, Division of Country Health Programmes	Exempt	05.03.2021
CERC.0057F	Qualitative formative research to inform policies for engaging healthcare workers to ensure successful uptake of COVID-19 vaccination in Moscow (Russia)	EURO, Vaccine-preventable Diseases and Immunization, Division of Country Health Programmes	Exempt	25.03.2021
CERC.0058	Protocol for Sero-epidemiological Cross-sectional investigation on COVID-19 virus infection in Georgia	WHO Country Office, Republic of Georgia	Exempt	27.11.2020
CERC.0060	Policy Implementation and Communication Lessons from Alberta's Acute and Primary Care Environments During the COVID-19 Response	HQ, Quality of Care Unit, Integrated Health Services Department	Approved	21.01.2021
CERC.0061	The Lived Experience of Participants in COVID-19 Clinical Studies in Gaborone, Botswana	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Approved	12.01.2021
CERC.0062	Comparative Analysis of the Digitalization of Public Health Interventions in India and China	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	01.03.2021
CERC.0063	The Ethics of Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response: Migrant Workers' Health and Covid-19	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	23.02.2021
CERC.0064	International migrants in quarantine facilities in Chile during the COVID-19 pandemic: towards an ethical response to deeply rooted challenges	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Approved	11.01.2021
CERC.0065	Fostering global conversations around COVID-19 clinical research with ethics committees: exploring the utility of the Nuffield Council's Ethical Compass in supporting ethics review (GUINEA application)	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	12.01.2021
CERC.0066	Do No Harm Framework for Future Quarantine or Lockdown Consideration in Public Health Emergencies	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	11.01.2021

CERC.0067	Qualitative formative research to inform COVID vaccine preparation for HCW and HPV vaccine preparation in Kazakhstan	EURO, Vaccine-preventable Diseases and Immunization, Division of Country Health Programmes	Approved	04.01.2021
CERC.0068	Accessing barriers to NCD services in the current COVID-19 context, for adults with chronic conditions in vulnerable rural communities in the occupied Palestinian territory	HQ, Gender, Equity, and Human Rights, Office of the Director-General	Approved	28.01.2021
CERC.0069	From Theory to Practice: Integrating Ethics into Scarce Resource Allocation for COVID-19	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	18.01.2021
CERC.0070	Situating Communities at the Centre of Shaping a Sustainable Ethical Response to COVID-19: a Case of Botswana	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Approved	01.02.2021
CERC.0071	Preparing International Recommendations for Ethics Committees (IECs/IRBs) When Reviewing Vaccine Clinical Trials During Public Health Emergencies	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	22.12.2020
CERC.0072	An Investigation of ethical issues in long-term care (LTC) during COVID-19: A Survey of stakeholders in low, middle, and high income countries	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	23.12.2020
CERC.0073	A Review of COVID-19 Regulation: Research Ethics Review and Oversight in Latin America	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	15.12.2020
CERC.0074	Palliative care in poor resource settings – the ethical questions and challenges faced during a global pandemic	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	11.01.2021
CERC.0075	Exploring ethical challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic in Malaysia	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Approved	29.01.2021
CERC.0076	Solidarity Model: Community's Ethical Response for Managing COVID-19 epidemic in Kampala Uganda	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	02.02.2021

CERC.0077	Emergency care during a global pandemic: Experiences and lessons learnt from frontline clinicians in low- and middle-income countries in the Indo-Pacific region	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	05.02.2021
CERC.0078	Racing to respond: Race and resource allocation in the COVID-19 pandemic	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	23.12.2020
CERC.0079	Responsibility for public health in the Lusophone world: doing justice in and beyond the Covid emergency	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	28.01.2021
CERC.0080	Developing Recommendations for Ethics Committees and Policy Guidance for Eastern European / Central Asian Countries to Support Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	15.01.2021
CERC.0081	Ethical challenges and considerations in the rationing of health commodities and provision of high-risk clinical services in resource-limited settings: Adjusting conventional pillars of medical ethics to guide services during COVID-19 pandemic	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Approved	16.02.2021
CERC.0082	Strengthening the ethics review capacities in the Democratic Republic of Congo, with focus on preparedness for research conducted in the context of outbreaks and other public health emergencies	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Approved	13.01.2021
CERC.0084	The Ethics of Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response : Uganda	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	06.04.2021
CERC.0085	Who Gets the Last Ventilator? Disability, Discrimination and Distributing Resources	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	22.12.2020
CERC.0086	Pandinference: How do values and evidence interact with policy discourse in the SARS-CoV-2/ COVID-19 pandemic?	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	18.12.2020
CERC.0087	Decolonizing COVID-19 vaccine distribution through a CommunityFirst approach: prioritizing vulnerable and isolated communities	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	12.01.2021

CERC.0088	Development of Clinical Ethics Framework (CEF): A participatory approach to deliver evidence based ethical guideline for COVID19 care	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Approved	15.03.2021
CERC.0089	Assessing health system readiness/preparedness and ethical concerns in implementation of COVID-19 interventions in Zambia	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Approved	15.02.2021
CERC.0090	Citizens' perceptions on moral issues in the COVID-19 crisis in The Netherlands and Indonesia	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Approved	26.04.2021
CERC.0091	Community Responses to COVID-19 restrictions and Containment Measures in Kenya	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	04.02.2021
CERC.0092	The Ethics of Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response : McGowan	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	12.02.2021
CERC.0093	Strengthening research ethics governance and regulatory oversight in Central America and the Dominican Republic in response to the COVID-19 pandemic	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Approved	15.03.2021
CERC.0094	Strengthening Community Engagement to Ensure Effective and Equitable Implementation of Strategies Involving Socially Vulnerable Populations in the Response to Covid-19 in Myanmar: A Qualitative Study	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Approved	19.01.2021
CERC.0095	Challenges to Global Equitable COVID-19 Vaccine Access through the COVAX Facility (Luna/Holzer)	HQ, Global Health Ethics & Governance Unit, Research for Health Department	Exempt	15.01.2021
CERC.0096	Asymptomatic and Pre-symptomatic transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in a community congregant setting: A study to understand how infection control practices can mitigate exposure risks - phase 1 (pilot)	HQ, Health Care Readiness, Country Readiness Strengthening Department	Approved	07.02.2021
CERC.0097A	Cohort study to measure COVID-19 vaccine effectiveness among health workers in Albania	EURO, High Threat Pathogens Team, Health Emergencies Department	Approved	01.03.2021

CERC.0097B	Cohort study to measure COVID-19 vaccine effectiveness among health workers in Georgia	EURO, High Threat Pathogens Team, Health Emergencies Department	Approved	26.03.2021
CERC.0097C	Cohort study to measure COVID-19 effectiveness among health workers in Azerbaijan	EURO, High Threat Pathogens Team, Health Emergencies Department	Approved	06.04.2021
CERC.0102	Hospital financing in COVID times: research protocol for the National Health Service Provider Organizations	HQ, Health Financing Unit, Health Systems Governance and Financing Department	Exempt	22.01.2021
CERC.0103	Standardized protocol: Health systems analysis and evaluations of the barriers to availability, utilization and readiness of sexual and reproductive health services in COVID-19 affected areas	HQ, Contraception and Fertility Control Unit, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Research Department	Approved	20.02.2021
CERC.0105	To pilot the efficacy of using Electrolyzed Water (EW) to reduce the spread of environmental contamination in an African hospital context	HQ, Quality of Care Unit, Integrated Health Services Department	Exempt	11.02.2021
CERC.0108	COVID-19 Antibody Detection Test Kit Performance Evaluation Protocol SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19)	HQ, Global Infectious Hazards Preparedness, WHO Health Emergencies Programme	Approved	16.03.2021
CERC.0111	Asymptomatic and Pre-symptomatic transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in a community congregant setting: A study to understand how infection control practices can mitigate exposure risks - phase 2	HQ, Health Care Readiness, Country Readiness Strengthening Department	Approved	26.04.2021
CERC.0114	Solidarity Trial PLUS: An international randomised trial of additional treatments for COVID-19 in hospitalised patients who are all receiving the local standard of care	HQ, R&D Blueprint for Action to Prevent Epidemics	Approved	23.06.2021
CERC.0117	Development and Validation of an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Model to Analyze Breathing, Cough and Voice Sounds Recorded Through a Smart Phone for Identification of Asymptomatic COVID-19 Infected Individuals	SEARO, Digital Health and Innovation unit, Department of Programme Management	Approved	26.05.2021
CERC.0119	WHO Mobile phone Survey on COVID-19 Impact	HQ, Survey, CRVS and Health Service Data Unit, Department of Data and Analytics	Exempt	26.05.2021

CERC.0120	Qualitative research to inform policies and interventions to ensure successful uptake of COVID-19 vaccination in Georgia	EURO, Vaccine-preventable Diseases and Immunization, Division of Country Health Programmes	Approved	04.06.2021
CERC.0121	Preferences for COVID-19 contact tracing in the WHO SEARO region: A discrete choice experiment	SEARO, Emergency Programme, Emergency Preparedness and Operations	Exempt	04.06.2021

Table 2: Template and guidance documents for which the ERC was consulted on the ethical considerations

As of 25 June 2021

CERC Number	Title	WHO responsible unit
CERC.0009	Surface sampling of coronavirus SARS-COV-2 A practical “how to” protocol for health care and public health professionals	HQ, Department of Global Infectious Hazards Preparedness
CERC.0013	Population-based age-stratified seroepidemiological investigation protocol for coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) infection	HQ, Department of Global Infectious Hazards Preparedness
CERC.0018	Schools and other educational institutions transmission investigation protocol for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)	HQ, Department of Global Infectious Hazards Preparedness
CERC.0056	Standardized Protocol: A prospective longitudinal cohort study of COVID-19 patients to measure the persistence of SARS-CoV-2 in body fluids	HQ, Sexual Health and Reproductive Cancers unit, Department of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Research
CERC.0097	Cohort study to measure COVID-19 vaccine effectiveness among health workers	EURO, High Threat Pathogens Team, Health Emergencies Department
CERC.0098	COVID-19 vaccine effectiveness against hospitalised SARI patients with laboratory-confirmed SARS-CoV-2	EURO, High Threat Pathogens Team, Health Emergencies Department
CERC.0101	Cohort Event Monitoring for safety signal detection after vaccination with COVID-19 vaccines	HQ, Pharmacovigilance Unit, Regulation and Prequalification department
CERC.0106	Standardized protocol for Qualitative Research on Women’s Reproductive and Psychosocial Health related to Pregnancy, Pregnancy Prevention and Induced Abortion in the Context of COVID-19	HQ, Prevention of Unsafe Abortion Unit, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Research Department
CERC.0109	Sentinel Surveillance of Adverse Events of Special Interest (AESIs) after vaccination with COVID-19 vaccines	HQ, Pharmacovigilance Unit, Regulation and Prequalification department