

## Steps for processing applications for expedited review of observational studies

1. When an application is received, the committee administrator and/or committee chairperson check the application in order to identify the particular issues, if any, that need addressing, e.g. Maori, technical/scientific, privacy, and to decide who should review the application.
2. The options for who can review the application are as follows:
  - a) chairperson only reviews and decides on the application;
  - b) chairperson delegates to the deputy chairperson to review and make a decision on the application;
  - c) chairperson co-opts others from the committee depending on the issues raised by the application (e.g. could be a health professional, Maori member or legal member);
  - d) chairperson refers the application to the full committee e.g. if the issues warrant review by the whole committee (unlikely to be common given that these activities are generally low-risk) or if this is likely to be quicker than delegating review of the application to one or more members outside the committee meeting.
3. The chairperson or deputy chairperson sign-off on final decision.
4. The administrator sends a letter to the applicant, which  
Either:
  - a) declines to review the application, and: **(i)** explains on the basis of the Ethical Guidelines for Observational Studies why no ethics committee review is needed: **or (ii)** explains on the basis of the Ethical Guidelines for Observational Studies why a full application to the ethics committee is instead appropriate; or
  - b) approves; or
  - c) approves with conditions, specifying the conditions, the grounds for these and the process for assessing whether these conditions are subsequently met; or
  - d) declines, stating the grounds for declining on the basis of ethical principles set out in the Ethical Guidelines for Observational Studies.