



Women Dental College, (WDC)

Murree Road, Abbottabad KPK, Pakistan

Ref. No. *WDC/720*

Date: *21/05/26*

Research Ethics Committee (REC)

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs):

1. Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this protocol is to establish a rigorous, transparent and ethically sound mechanism for the review of research involving human participants. The Research Ethics Committee (REC) ensures that all studies adhere to the principles of beneficence, non-maleficence and autonomy, protecting both the participants and the reputation of the institution.

2. Terms of Reference (ToR)

- **Advisory Role:** To guide researchers on ethical considerations in dental and public health research.
- **Review Authority:** To evaluate, approve, or request modifications to research proposals.
- **Compliance Monitoring:** To ensure data collection follows the approved timeline and ethical safeguards.
- **Conflict Resolution:** To mediate in cases where ethical breaches are reported or suspected.

3. Submission Requirements (Mandatory Checklist)

To initiate the review process, the Principal Investigator (PI) must submit a complete Ethical Review Dossier consisting of:

- **Application for Ethical Approval:** The formal institutional form signed by the PI and Head of Department.



Women Dental College, (WDC)

Murree Road, Abbottabad KPK, Pakistan

- **Research Proposal:** A full protocol including introduction, literature review, rationale of the study, methodology and clearly defined objectives.
- **Gantt chart:** A visual project timeline explicitly defining the duration of data collection and key milestones.
- **Institutional Permission:** Formal approval from your specific department or home institution to proceed with the study.
- **Research Instruments:** A final version of the information sheet, questionnaire, survey or interview guide.
- **Informed Consent Form:** Documentation (in English and Urdu/local language) outlining risks, benefits and the voluntary nature of participation.

4. Procedural Mechanism for Approval

Step 1: Submission & Preliminary Audit

The researcher submits the dossier to the Research Cell. The Secretariat conducts a preliminary audit to ensure all six mandatory documents are present. Incomplete submissions are returned without review.

Step 2: Formal Committee Review

Once the dossier is complete, the Committee will convene to review the scientific validity and ethical integrity of the study. The review focuses on:

- The clarity of the research objectives.
- The appropriateness of the questionnaire for the target population.
- The feasibility of the timeline as presented in the Gantt Chart.

Step 3: Determination & Communication

Upon review, the committee will issue one of the following:



Women Dental College, (WDC)

Murree Road, Abbottabad KPK, Pakistan

- **Unconditional Approval:** Research may commence immediately.
- **Provisional Approval:** Approval is granted pending minor, non-ethical revisions.
- **Request for Explanation:** If the committee finds deficiencies or requires further explanation of the purpose, the applicant will be called for a formal presentation to clarify the protocol.
- **Rejection:** The study is deemed ethically or scientifically unsound.

Step 4: Issuance of Approval Letter

Once all criteria are met and the committee sees fit, a formal Letter of Approval will be granted.

5. Applicant Obligations Post-Approval

- **Adherence to Timeline:** Significant deviations from the Gantt Chart must be reported to the REC.
- **Reporting Adverse Events:** Any unforeseen harm to participants must be reported within 24 hours.
- **Final Report:** A summary of findings and confirmation of data destruction/archiving must be submitted upon completion.

Note to PI: Failure to obtain REC approval before data collection begins will result in the research being declared Unsanctioned.

DR AZEEM GOHAR KHAN
Manager Research Cell
Women Dental College

Secretary

Ethics Review Committee