

Panel on Research Ethics Research Data Retention Guidelines

The Panel on Research Ethics has issued guidance on retention of research data; posted at <http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique/interpretations/review-evaluation/> (see question # 5).

Below is an excerpt:

“5. What is the appropriate duration for data retention in TCPS 2?

[The second edition of the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans,]TCPS 2 does not specify the required length of time for retention of research data. Data retention periods tend to vary depending on the research discipline, research purpose and kind of data involved. TCPS 2 underscores the importance of data retention as a matter to be considered by research ethics boards in their review of studies that collect identifiable personal information about research participants (see application to Article 5.3) In TCPS 2, a number of factors are relevant to defining periods of data retention. Researchers' plans for preserving or destroying participants' data should be appropriate to the field of research in light of its best practices and professional, ethical and legal norms. For example, under Division 5 of the Health Canada Food and Drug Regulations which pertains to clinical trials of drugs, sponsors are required to maintain records for a period of 25 years.”

TCPS 2 can be found at: <http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique/initiatives/tcps2-eptc2/chapter5-chapitre5/#toc05-1c>