

Research St. Joseph's – Hamilton (RSJ-H)		Pages 1 of 2	Number 014-RSJ-H
Policy Title Research Communications to the General Public		Date 01 April 2014	
Supersedes New policy	Cross Reference	Issuing Authority RSJ-H Scientific Director	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Charlton Campus	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> West 5th Campus	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> King Campus	

Position responsible for developing and maintaining the policy: RSJ-H Scientific Director

1.0 PURPOSE AND GOALS DESCRIPTION

As an academic health sciences centre, research is a critical aspect of the mission and vision of St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton (SJHH). The scale and international impact of the SJHH research enterprise is often understated by our staff and community. Research is entirely dependent on external funding making public awareness and support critical to its success. The purpose of this policy is to define the protocol for research communications within Research St. Joseph's – Hamilton (RSJ-H).

2.0 DEFINITIONS

"Research communications" refers to the dissemination of research information to hospital stakeholders in lay terms, including both internal and external audiences.

"Embargo" refers to a request that the information provided by a source not be published until a certain date, or until certain conditions have been met.

3.0 POLICY

It is in Research St. Joseph's – Hamilton, St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton and the researchers' best interest to inform the general public of any advances in research. Public awareness of research and its value to society increases participation and builds goodwill towards the researcher and associated institutions. Federal funding as well as donor contributions are critical to funding the research enterprise, both of which require public support. The importance of raising public awareness must be balanced with the researchers' academic need to publish results. At no point will the institutions objective of communicating results take precedence over a researcher's ability to publish their work. Embargoed information will never be released prior to an agreed upon disclosure timeline.

4.0 PROCESS

- 4.1 Researchers should periodically contact the Research Communication Officer in order to keep him/her informed of research being conducted. This is essential for the Research Communication Officer to assess the likelihood of general interest in the research. In preparation

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of a press release by a third-party regarding research conducted at Research St. Joseph's - Hamilton, the researcher must notify the Research Communication Officer.

- 4.2 After an initial interview has been completed, the Research Communication Officer will discuss the current project with the researcher and request any documents needed regarding the research study (i.e. abstracts, published journal articles etc.). It is imperative that the researcher define the parameters of which information is allowed to be shared publicly and which is confidential.
- 4.3 The Research Communication Officer will then draft content (written and/or visual) for editing and review.
- 4.4 Research Administration and Public Affairs are conscious of concerns regarding research results becoming public and compromising scientific publication rights, and will therefore provide researchers with the opportunity to review content. The researcher will have the opportunity to provide feedback, make suggestions, conduct editing, and work together with the Research Communication Officer to ensure scientific accuracy and confidentiality parameters are being maintained. The researcher will have a specified time period to review the content. If the researcher successfully reviews the content, does not review the content in the specified time period, or chooses to not review the content, the Research Communication Officer will update the content and proceed to the next step.
- 4.5 The Research Communication Officer will send the reviewed content to St Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton Public Affairs. The Public Affairs Representative may choose to trim or make minor revisions to the content in order to ensure cohesiveness with other St. Joseph's communications. Public Affairs will then disseminate the content through internal and external media channels.

5.0 EMBARGOED CONTENT

Researchers must contact the Research Communication Officer when they would like to prepare embargoed content, or if they would like to restrict publicizing certain parts of in-process content until a later time. The Research Communication Officer and Public Affairs will refrain from releasing the content until the specified conditions have been met. Researchers should contact the Research Communication Officer if conditions on the embargoed content change, and inform the Research Communication Officer if the timeline of the embargo has changed.