**Charter, NHLBI Data and Safety (Observational Study) Monitoring Board for the** [**insert protocol title, or Network title**]

**Date**

1. **Introduction**

This Charter is for the Data and Safety**[Observational Study**] Monitoring Board (DSMB)**[OSMB**] for the [**insert protocol title, or Network title**]

The DSMB**[OSMB**] may wish to review this Charter at regular intervals to determine whether any changes are needed.

1. **Responsibilities of the DSMB [OSMB]**

The DSMB**[OSMB]** is responsible for safeguarding the interests of study participants, assessing the safety and efficacy of study procedures, ensuring data quality, and for monitoring the overall conduct of the study [**or studies, in the case of a Network**]. In order to do this effectively in a trial, the DSMB is expected to review the data in an unmasked fashion in closed session.

The DSMB**[OSMB]** is an independent group providing recommendations to the Office of the Director, NHLBI, and is required to provide recommendations about starting, continuing, and stopping the study [**studies**].

In addition, the DSMB**[OSMB]** is asked to make recommendations, as appropriate, to the NHLBI about:

* Efficacy of the study intervention (DSMB only)
* Benefit/risk ratio of procedures and participant burden
* Selection, recruitment, and retention of participants
* Adherence to protocol requirements
* Completeness, quality, and analysis of measurements
* Data and statistical analysis plan
* Amendments to the study protocol and consent forms, including whether any new data from other sources affect the equipoise of the study being monitored
* Performance of individual centers and core labs
* Participant safety, including review of consent form
* Notification of and referral for abnormal findings
* Participant safety and parent study burden of proposed ancillary studies, including whether the total burden of ancillary studies might compromise the parent study.
1. **Organization and Interactions**

The following [**separate diagram or description**] illustrates the relationship between the DSMB**[OSMB]** and other entities in this study [**Network**].

Communication with DSMB**[OSMB]** members will be primarily through the NHLBI Program Office and the Data Coordinating Center (DCC). It is expected that study [**Network**] investigators will not communicate with DSMB**[OSMB]** members about the study directly, except when making presentations or responding to questions at DSMB**[OSMB]** meetings or during conference calls.

If requested, this charter and accompanying list of Board members may be sent to an IRB. In the case, this charter will be marked as not for dissemination, and be sent by the Principal Investigator (PI) to the IRB Chair, with a cover letter, [per NHLBI policy](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/funding/policies/dsmpolicy.htm). NHLBI does not release Board members’ names in response to media inquiries until after publication of the main results of the study.

1. **DSMB [OSMB] Members and NHLBI Program Staff**

DSMB**[OSMB]** members and their expertise are listed in Appendix A. NHLBI [**and other federal, if applicable**] Program Staff involved in the study, and their responsibilities are listed in Appendix B. Consistent with NHLBI policy, each DSMB**[OSMB]** is assigned an Executive Secretary (ES) to provide an unbiased staff interface between the DSMB**[OSMB]** members and other meeting participants, especially during closed and executive sessions. The ES is responsible for assuring the accuracy and timely transmission of the final recommendations and DSMB**[OSMB]** minutes.

1. **Roles of NHLBI staff in DSMB meetings**
* NHLBI program staff members involved in the day-to-day conduct of the study may attend the open sessions of DSMB meetings. These Program staff may attend portions of a closed session as needed, but not when post-randomization outcome data by treatment group will be discussed.
* NHLBI’s Office of Biostatistics Research has assigned one or more statisticians to this DSMB. The statistician(s) will not be involved in the day-to-day operations of the study, but will be involved in statistical aspects of protocol development, monitoring safety and efficacy data in an unmasked fashion, as well as working with the DCC on analytic plans and publications. The NHLBI study statistician(s) will also serve as a resource to the DSMB as needed.
* The NHLBI ES will be a federal employee or contractor with appropriate expertise and training who has no other involvement in the conduct of the trial and does not report directly to the lead program official.
* The ES is the only NHLBI staff member who can routinely be in the executive session. The DSMB can opt to have an executive session without the ES, but then will be responsible for minutes for that portion of the meeting. The DSMB can request to have other staff members attend the executive session to provide additional information as needed.
* The NHLBI ES and statistician(s) are expected to report issues of substantive concern to the NHLBI Division Director responsible for the trial. The NHLBI Division Director will communicate with the Office of the Director, NHLBI. Under special circumstances, and with the concurrence of the DSMB Chair, the Division leadership and Director and Deputy Director of the NHLBI may see unmasked data presented at DSMB meetings.
* There may be occasions when it is appropriate for new staff not involved in the study to attend a DSMB meeting as a training opportunity. This will be discussed with the DSMB Chair before the meeting; the new staff member(s) would attend only the portions of the meeting outlined in the first bullet above.
1. **Scheduling, Timing, and Organization of Meetings**

DSMB**[OSMB]** meetings are usually held by conference call, or in the Washington, DC area when an in-person meeting is required.

The purposes of the first meeting are to:

* Convey NHLBI’s expectations for DSMB**[OSMB]** operations
* Conduct additional training in Good Clinical Practice for board members
* Review this Charter
* Provide an overview of study [**Network**] activities
* Review and accept the protocol or make recommendations for changes related to human subjects safety and ethics **[Modify this item depending on whether DSMB or OSMB].**

Meetings are usually held approximately twice a year, with additional meetings or conference calls scheduled as needed. After the first DSMB**[OSMB]** meeting, conference calls are appropriate for conducting meetings, if the agenda permits. Meetings and conference calls will be scheduled by the DCC in collaboration with the NHLBI Program Office.

* For this DSMB**[OSMB]**, meetings will be held \_\_\_\_ per year, and calls will be held \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

The agenda for DSMB **[OSMB]** meetings and calls will be drafted by the DCC in consultation with NHLBI staff. The ES will finalize the agenda after consultation with the DSMB**[OSMB]** Chair. The agenda and meeting materials should be distributed by the DCC \_\_\_\_\_\_week**[s]** before each meeting or call.

At the time that the agenda is sent out, and again at the beginning of the meeting, the ES will ask all DSMB**[OSMB]** members to state whether they have developed any new conflicts of interest since the last formal annual report to NHLBI. If a new conflict is reported, the Chair and staff will determine if the conflict limits the ability of the DSMB**[OSMB]** member to participate in the discussion.

The DSMB**[OSMB]** will review adverse event data, other safety data, quality and completeness of study data, and enrollment data at each meeting to ensure proper trial conduct. Study personnel should provide any new literature particularly pertinent to the trial, along with their recommendation as to whether it affects the trial conduct or design. The DSMB **[OSMB]** will review the informed consent form when it reviews the protocol. The DSMB **[OSMB]** will review the consent periodically and/or as needed and consider whether the consent form requires revision in light of any new findings or amendments. At intervals, as noted above, the DSMB will also review formal interim analyses of the primary end point.

In addition to regular meetings, it may be necessary to convene the DSMB urgently on an *ad hoc* basis to discuss new data or other information that raises questions about equipoise, safety, or anything else in the trial.

It is expected that all DSMB**[OSMB]** members will attend every meeting and conference call. However, it is recognized that this may not always be possible. A quorum for voting is half of the standing members plus one. The Board may wish to decide if particular expertise is needed within the quorum for a particular meeting. All standing Monitoring Board members are voting members. The Board may decide in advance whether *ad hoc* members can vote.

[**Complete as needed:** A quorum of this DSMB**[OSMB]** is considered to be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. **[Include statement if participation of any specific member (e.g., ethicist or statistician) is essential to a quorum.]**

1. **Discussion of Confidential Material**

DSMB**[OSMB]** meetings and calls will be organized into open, closed, and executive sessions.

* During the **open sessions**, information will be presented to the DSMB**[OSMB]** by the DCC, study investigators, and NHLBI staff as appropriate, with time for discussion.
* During the **closed sessions**, the DSMB**[OSMB],** DCC unmasked statistician, and unmasked NHLBI statistician(s) will discuss confidential data from the study [**studies**], including information on efficacy and safety by treatment arm. NHLBI’s expectation is that the DSMB will review unmasked data. If the closed session occurs on a conference call, steps will be taken to ensure that only the appropriate participants are on the call, and to invite others to re-join the call only at the conclusion of the closed session.
* The DSMB**[OSMB]** may hold an **executive session** in which only the DSMB**[OSMB]** members are present. The NHLBI ES may attend the executive session at the invitation of the DSMB Chair. If the ES does not attend the executive session, the DSMB Chair will be responsible for summarizing the DSMB’s discussion and recommendations to the ES.

Voting on recommendations will follow [Robert’s Rules of Order](http://www.robertsrules.com/).

At the conclusion of the closed and executive sessions, the DSMB**[OSMB**]chair may provide a summary of the preliminary recommendations to the lead investigators and masked NHLBI staff to provide an opportunity for study investigators, the DCC, and NHLBI to ask questions to clarify the recommendations. Recommendations that would unmask results, such as a recommendation to close a study prematurely, should not be disclosed until approved by NHLBI leadership. The meeting is then adjourned.

1. **Reports of DSMB [OSMB] Deliberations**
* Formal minutes: The NHLBI ES is responsible for preparation and transmission of the formal DSMB**[OSMB]** minutes to the Director of the applicable Division within 14 calendar days of each meeting or call. Minutes will document whether there is conflict of interest on the part of Board members and will summarize the key points of the discussion and debate, requests for additional information, response of the investigators to previous recommendations, and the recommendations from the current meeting.
* Following division and DCC review, the minutes are sent to:
* DSMB**[OSMB]** Chair, who approves them on behalf of the DSMB
* Appropriate Division Director, NHLBI, for the specific Board for final Institute

approval

* Once the appropriate Division Director, NHLBI has approved the minutes, they are considered final.
* Recommendations of the Board are sent to the DCC and the primary study investigator(s) and are to be included in the materials for the subsequent DSMB **[OSMB]** meeting.
* Reports to IRBs: The NHLBI program office will prepare a [Summary Report of Board Recommendations](https://intranet.nhlbi.nih.gov/tools-resources/forms-templates-checklists/irb-summary-report-template)  and submit it to primary study investigators(s) and DCC within 30 calendar days of each meeting. Primary study investigators(s) or DCC will forward the Summary Report to each participating research site.
* If the DSMB does not identify any safety or other protocol-related concerns, the Summary Report will state that:
* a review of outcome data, adverse events, and information relating to study

performance (e.g., data timeliness, completeness, and quality) across all centers took place on a given date

* the observed frequency of adverse events did not exceed what was expected and indicated in the informed consent;
* a review of recent literature relevant to the research took place, and;
* the DSMB recommended that the study continue without modification of the protocol or informed consent
* If the DSMB does identify concerns, the NHLBI staff will distribute, as soon as feasible, preferably within 7 calendar days of the DSMB meeting, the Summary Report as outlined above, outlining the concerns and the basis for any recommendations that the DSMB has made in response to the concerns. Adverse event reporting will be consistent with [NHLBI policy](https://intranet.nhlbi.nih.gov/tools-resources/policies-procedures/nhlbi-adverse-event-and-unanticipated-problem-reporting-policy).
* The **[DCC, NHLBI Program Office]** will distribute the Summary Report to study investigators. It is the responsibility of each clinical center to forward this information to the local IRB.
1. **Reports to the DSMB [OSMB]**

For each meeting, the DCC, with input from NHLBI staff, will prepare summary reports and tables to facilitate the oversight role of the DSMB**[OSMB]**. The DSMB**[OSMB]** should discuss at the first or subsequent meetings what data they wish to review and how the data should be presented.

1. **Statistical Monitoring Guidelines**

The DSMB**[OSMB]** will review the adequacy of the statistical monitoring plan. The final plan, whether part of a research protocol or separate document, will be maintained as an appendix to this Charter. **[Insert the following for DSMB only]** The DSMB should discuss the statistical monitoring procedures that will be followed to guide recommendations about termination or continuation of the trial. These procedures could include guidelines for early termination for benefit, termination for futility, and termination for safety reasons.