Policy on AHNA Member Solicitation for Research Purposes *

I. INTRODUCTION

AHNA is an association comprised of holistic nurses with various educational and experiential backgrounds. It offers a rich source of data for individuals who wish to learn more about holistic nurses and holistic nursing practice. There are multiple ways to contact and solicit involvement of AHNA members for approved research projects (e.g. developing web data-based approaches to surveys, questionnaires, and narratives). Additionally, the Annual AHNA Conference brings a large group of holistic nurses from diverse practice settings together. Thus it provides an opportunity to obtain data from members for approved research investigations. AHNA supports the development of research and is responsible for protecting members from being overwhelmed or burdened with research requests and to advocate on their behalf. Therefore, any research that is conducted with AHNA members and under the auspices of AHNA through the web, at conference, or other AHNA venues, must be approved by the Research Chair, Executive Director, or their designees. This policy also applies to special research projects or studies generated by the Research or other AHNA committees.

II. POLICY

A. To protect AHNA members, to ensure that proposed research is congruent with the mission and standards of AHNA as well as accepted standards for nursing research, research proposals are submitted to the Research Committee Chair who will assign review/approval responsibility to members with the appropriate research background (III.A). Upon determining that the proposed research study meets established criteria, the investigator(s) will be notified of approval by the Research Chair and Executive Director. A provisional letter of approval may be given if the investigator(s) require AHNA agreement to recruit AHNA members as study participants in order to obtain Human Subjects Investigational Protection (IRB) approval. Following receipt of IRB approval, investigator(s) may announce the study and recruit participants via the AHNA website, AHNA mailing list, or at conferences or meetings.

B. At the completion of the research study, the investigator(s) will provide a brief written summary of findings to AHNA. The report will include: study purpose, number of participants recruited and number who dropped out (along with reasons for stopping), major findings, conclusions/implications, and unanticipated problems (e.g., injuries, breach in confidentiality, data storage, or safety problems). The summary of findings is due to AHNA within six months of completion of data collection (contact the Research Committee Chair for time extensions).
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C. All requests will be recorded and monitored as part of AHNA’s data safety monitoring plan and for evaluation purposes.

III. RESEARCH PROTOCOL

A. The AHNA Research Chair will appoint a subcommittee (chairperson and at least 2 additional members with credentials and experience that ensures their knowledge of the research methods proposed and ethical conduct of research) to review the proposal for the following elements and to contact the investigator(s) as needed:

1. Evidence of IRB approval for project or IRB exemption status, including informed consent as applicable.

2. A 1-2 page abstract that includes:
   a. A brief background of the study
   b. Study purpose
   c. Statement explaining how the study relates to the mission of AHNA
   d. Study Design and specific procedures for data collection and analysis:
      1. Target population
      2. Interview guide, survey, or proposed study instrument(s)
      3. Data analysis methods
      4. Comments about how the data will be used

3. Copy of the approved consent form.

4. Copy of all recruitment materials (electronic versions are acceptable, but with IRB stamp when approved), including:
   a. announcements that will be posted on the website,
   b. all materials that will be given to members either through mailings that use the AHNA membership mailing list through face-to-face contact.

5. A signed conflict of interest form if requested by the Research Committee or AHNA.

6. Investigator(s) must provide copies of all documents for review 30 days prior to the time the researcher desires to begin data collection, i.e., 30 days prior to the annual conference.

7. The investigator(s) will be notified by the Research Chair and Executive Director that approval of the project has been granted. A copy of the approval will be filed by the AHNA staff and retained for seven (7) years.

8. Investigator (s) may be charged a fee, determined by AHNA, to cover the costs, such as posting and removing the research link to the survey on the AHNA website or the cost AHNA membership mailing list.

9. In the event a study investigator (s) wish to collect data from participants on more
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than one occasion (e.g., at 2 annual conferences), the primary investigator must
provide AHNA’s Research Committee Chair and the Executive Director an updated
annual report of the project until the study is completed. This report must contain an
updated IRB permission; a summary of the study progress; and a plan to complete
data collection within the established period of time.

10. When a research project has been in progress for one year and the study data are
remaining in analysis, an annual summary of the status of the project must be
submitted to Research Chair and Executive Director.

11. AHNA reserves the right to refuse research studies if the investigator(s) have
not meet all stated requirements in previous studies (i.e., a summary of a previous
study was not submitted).

12. AHNA recommends that investigators acknowledge AHNA’s support in
their research related publications and presentations.

AHNA RESPONSIBILITIES

1. AHNA will provide links to outside studies that have received prior approval.

2. Visitors to the AHNA Research web page will locate a navigation icon that
connects/links to a comprehensive web page that contains links to all studies that
AHNA has approved, with text indicating “The following studies are approved by
AHNA.”

3. The researcher must use that web page address in communications with AHNA
members.

4. AHNA will not advertise research studies with members or post links to studies
with members other than those that have been approved by AHNA Research
Committee.

*Because AHNA is unable to control all research by outside parties that might solicit
membership (e.g., through paid advertising) it is the responsibility of individual members
to decide if the project is ethical and if they want to participate. If a member has a
question or concern regarding a request for research participation they should contact the
Research Chair.

Approved by the AHNA Board of Directors
[April, 2016]

Original December, 2008; updated 2011, revised 2016