

CLINICAL RESEARCH - USE OF FRIDGES AND FREEZERS PROCEDURE[®]

DOCUMENT SUMMARY/KEY POINTS

- The purpose of this procedure is to ensure the standardised and safe use of fridges and freezers by clinical research personnel.
- The procedure must be followed by all personnel using fridges and freezers for clinical research.

CHANGE SUMMARY

- Minor typographical changes.

READ ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- Read Acknowledge Only – All personnel involved in the conduct of clinical research involving the use of fridges and freezer(s).

This document reflects what is currently regarded as safe practice. However, as in any clinical situation, there may be factors which cannot be covered by a single set of guidelines. This document does not replace the need for the application of clinical judgement to each individual presentation.

Approved by:	SCHN Policy, Procedure and Guideline Committee	
Date Effective:	1 st August 2021	Review Period: 3 years
Team Leader:	Clinical Trials Program Manager	Area/Dept: Kids Research Institute

Purpose/Scope

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure the standardised and safe use of fridges and freezers by clinical research personnel.

The procedure must be followed by all personnel involved in the conduct of clinical research involving the fridges and freezers.

Background

Fridges and freezers provide a secure, temperature-controlled environment for the storage of items, including bio specimens for clinical research.

SCHN has a variety of fridges and freezers available for clinical research use, including a -80 C freezer for the short- and medium-term storage of items in the Clinical Research Centre, Kid's Research.

The following procedure is common to all fridge/freezer(s). Users are required to refer to the manufacturer's instructions to obtain specific details of operating requirements for each model at SCHN.

Equipment and Supplies

- Fridge and/or Freezer
- Insulated Gloves (For -80 C freezer only)
- Lab gown

Procedure

The incorrect use of fridges and freezers can pose a risk to the user, compromise the integrity of items stored and prevent the equitable use of shared equipment for clinical research purposes.

All clinical research personnel are required to receive read and acknowledge this procedure prior to any use of fridges and freezers, documented in accordance with SCHN Procedure 2019-027 – Clinical Research - Personnel Qualifications and Training Records.

Safe Work Practice(s) are posted in the area(s) where fridges and freezers are located for easy-reference by users.

Use of Fridges and Freezers

- Don PPE including lab gown, insulated gloves (as required), goggles and enclosed footwear;
- Access and review the applicable SDS, noting any precautions;
- Identify the fridge or freezer suitable for the intended use;

- Inspect the fridge or freezer to confirm it is clean and in working order. If anomalies are identified, report the issue immediately to the Research Operations Manager or Delegate. Do not attempt any repairs.
- Ensure that there is adequate space available inside the fridge or freezer;
- Ensure that all items to be placed in the fridge or freezer are stored in an appropriate storage container to prevent any risk of spills, leakage, odours and spoilage;
- **Note:** Under no circumstances are food and beverages for human consumption to be stored in fridges and freezers for clinical research use.
- Ensure that any storage containers to be used are in good condition, appropriate for storage of the item(s) and use in the required storage conditions (e.g. freezer-proof);
- Ensure the storage container is labelled using a permanent freezer-proof marker pen to identify the protocol, Investigators and SCHN SSA reference number to which the item(s) relate;
- If chemicals are being stored, ensure that labelling complies with the requirement of the SCHN Procedure 2019-015 – Clinical Research - Storage of Chemicals;
- Open the fridge or freezer;
- Place the items in the fridge/freezer, taking note of the exact location;
- Ensure that bottles, tubes, and containers with a cap or top are stored in an upright, stable position;
- If the alarm activates during operation or other anomalies are noted, close the fridge or freezer door immediately and notify the responsible Head of Department or Delegate, in accordance with local instructions;
- Once the item(s) are placed, close the fridge or freezer, ensuring that the door is sealed and secure;
- Minimise the movement of items in and out of the fridge or freezer once placed;
- Complete the Freezer Shelf Allocation Log on the front of the fridge or freezer detailing the location of the items stored (if applicable)

Abbreviations and Definitions

C	Celsius
NSW	New South Wales
PD	Policy Directive
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
SCHN	Sydney Children's Hospitals Network
SDS	Safety Data Sheet
SSA	Site Specific Application

Related Documents

1. NSW Health PD2017_013 - Infection Prevention and Control Policy - http://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/ActivePDSDocuments/PD2017_013.pdf
2. SCHN Policy – Clinical Research [DRAFT]
3. SCHN Policy 2019-021 – Clinical Research - Use of Laboratory Facilities - <http://webapps.schn.health.nsw.gov.au/epolicy/policy/4643>
4. SCHN Practice Guideline 2016-9029 - Personal Protective Equipment for Infection Control - <http://webapps.schn.health.nsw.gov.au/epolicy/policy/2609>
5. SCHN Procedure 2019-012 – Clinical Research - Bio Specimen Collection, Processing and Shipment - <http://webapps.schn.health.nsw.gov.au/epolicy/policy/4626>
6. SCHN Procedure 2019-010 – Clinical Research - Equipment and Supplies – Maintenance and Calibration - <http://webapps.schn.health.nsw.gov.au/epolicy/policy/4622>
7. SCHN Procedure 2019-027 - Clinical Research - Personnel Qualifications and Training Records - <http://webapps.schn.health.nsw.gov.au/epolicy/policy/4623>
8. SCHN Procedure 2019-028 – Clinical Research – Personnel Roles and Responsibilities - <http://webapps.schn.health.nsw.gov.au/epolicy/policy/4624>
9. SCHN Procedure 2019-145 – Clinical Research - Record Keeping - <http://webapps.schn.health.nsw.gov.au/epolicy/policy/4661>
10. SCHN Procedure 2019-015 – Clinical Research - Storage of Chemicals - <http://webapps.schn.health.nsw.gov.au/epolicy/policy/4641>

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