PEDIATRIC EYE DISEASE INVESTIGATOR GROUP (PEDIG) POLICIES
Version 10.0 – Effective Date: June 1, 2026

I. Introduction

The Pediatric Eye Disease Investigator Group (PEDIG) is a collaborative clinical research network of academic and community ophthalmologists and optometrists dedicated to facilitating multicenter clinical research in strabismus, amblyopia, refractive error, and other eye disorders that affect children.

The organizational structure of the Pediatric Eye Disease Investigator Group (PEDIG) includes the Coordinating Center, the office(s) of the Network Chair(s), and the following: Executive Committee, Operations Committee, Steering Committees, Disease-Area Working Groups, and the Data and Safety Monitoring Committee. Each major protocol is developed by a Protocol Planning Committee and is then administered by a Steering Committee. Investigators, coordinators, examiners, and other research personnel at institutional or private practice-based Clinical Sites participate in PEDIG studies.

Details of the role and function of each of these entities are summarized in a separate PEDIG Organizational Structure document. PEDIG network policies are summarized within this document.

II. Funding

PEDIG is funded through a Cooperative Clinical Research Agreement from the Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, National Eye Institute to the Jaeb Center for Health Research Foundation, Inc. (Jaeb Center). Additional funding may be provided to the Jaeb Center by other NIH institutes, industry, foundations, or unrestricted gifts following approval of the NEI and the Executive Committee.

A. Funding Clinical Sites

Each clinical site must have a signed agreement between their institution or legal entity and the Jaeb Center. The agreement will indicate the payment schedule for participation in each protocol and the obligations of the investigators and other research personnel at the clinical site. A payment schedule will be established for each study, and payments vary depending upon the level of complexity of the study in terms of time necessary.

Clinical sites are compensated on a per-participant basis for their participation in a protocol. Generally, funding will be provided for each enrollment and each follow-up visit, or phone call/chart review data collection.

Some studies with greater time commitments or regulatory burdens, are more appropriate for a limited number of sites with dedicated funding for a set time period for the study site staff (generally the site study primary investigator and the coordinator).

B. Funding Committees

Committee members not already compensated for percent effort through a subcontract with the Jaeb Center may receive a consulting payment to partially compensate them for the time they devote to the committee in attending meetings, participating in conference calls, review of materials or other activities associated with the committee.

The policy will be reviewed for potential revisions at least annually by the Executive Committee.

A. Financial Disclosure Policy Overview

Based on U.S. Public Health Service regulations (42 CFR Part 50 Subpart F), the PEDIG Network has developed a policy to promote objectivity in research by establishing a policy that provides a reasonable expectation that the design, conduct, and reporting of PEDIG Network research is free from bias resulting from investigator financial conflicts of interest. For the purposes of this policy, the term "investigator" means any member of the PEDIG Network who is expected to disclose financial interests.

Investigators are expected to be discriminating in the selection of outside commitments in order to avoid impairment of the Network's reputation as a leading research entity. Investigators should avoid commitments that could compromise the basic scholarly independence and freedom of action that are central to the Network.

Investigators at an institution without a Financial Conflict of Interest Policy that have elected to follow the Jaeb Center for Health Research (JCHR) Financial Conflict of Interest Policy are required to be trained on the JCHR Financial Conflict of Interest Policy. The PEDIG Network policy is consistent with and complimentary to the JCHR IRB Conflict of Interest Policy (). Training must occur no less than every four (4) years and whenever the JCHR COI SOP is revised with major changes.

B. Definitions

1. Investigator Responsibilities

Investigator responsibilities refers to the responsibilities related to the investigators position. These may include professional responsibilities such as teaching, consulting, research, professional practice, institutional committee membership, and service on panels such as IRBs or Data and Safety Monitoring Boards.

2. Significant Financial Interest

A *significant financial interest (SFI)* consists of one or more of the following interests of the investigator (or those of the investigator's spouse and dependent children):

- With regard to any publicly traded entity, a *significant financial interest* exists if the value of any remuneration received from the entity in the 12 months preceding the disclosure and the value of any equity interest in the entity as of the date of disclosure exceeds $5,000.00. For purposes of this definition, remuneration includes salary and any payment for services not otherwise identified as salary (*e.g.*, consulting fees, honoraria, paid authorship); equity interest includes any stock, stock option, or other ownership interest, as determined through reference to public prices or other reasonable measures of fair market value.
- With regard to any non-publicly traded for-profit entity, a SFI exists if the value of any remuneration received from the entity in the 12 months preceding the disclosure exceeds $5,000.00. A SFI also exists when the investigator (or the investigator's spouse or dependent children) holds any equity interest (*e.g.*, stock, stock option, or other ownership interest) in a non-publicly traded entity.

- Intellectual property rights and interests (*e.g.*, patents, copyrights), upon receipt of income or potential future income related to such rights and interests.

In addition, an SFI exists whether remuneration is paid directly to the investigator OR to the investigator's institution/legal entity on the investigator's behalf.

The term *significant financial interest* does not include the following types of financial interests:

- Salary, royalties, or other remuneration paid by Jaeb Center for Health Research (JCHR) to the investigator if the investigator is currently employed or otherwise appointed by JCHR, including intellectual property rights assigned to JCHR and agreements to share in royalties related to such rights.
- Income from investment vehicles, such as mutual funds and retirement accounts, as long as the Employee does not directly control the investment decisions made in these vehicles.
- Income from seminars, lectures, or teaching engagements sponsored by
    - a Federal, state, or local government agency,
    - an Institution of higher education as defined at 20 U.S.C. 1001(a),
    - an academic teaching hospital,
    - a medical center, or
    - a research institute that is affiliated with an Institution of higher education.
- Income from service on advisory committees or review panels for
    - a Federal, state, or local government agency,
    - an Institution of higher education as defined at 20 U.S.C. 1001(a),
    - an academic teaching hospital,
    - a medical center, or
    - a research institute that is affiliated with an Institution of higher education.

2. Financial Conflict of Interest

An SFI is considered to be a *financial conflict of interest (FCOI)* if it could directly and significantly affect the design, conduct, or reporting of research. See section D below for PEDIG Network policy on avoiding FCOI.

3. Related Research

Related to PEDIG Network research means an entity that provides funding or support for PEDIG Network research or whose financial interest would reasonably appear to have the potential to be directly or indirectly materially affected by the outcome or conduct of the PEDIG Network research. Examples include, but are not limited to, companies that hold patent rights for discoveries, drugs or devices being studied in PEDIG Network protocols or companies that provide financial or in-kind support for research projects. This term includes companies that compete with any companies that collaborate with the PEDIG Network or compete with the manufacturer of the investigational product, if the PEDIG Network investigator knows that the financial interests of such a company would reasonably appear to be affected by PEDIG Network research. This term also includes any entity acting as the agent of a financially interested company (e.g., a contract research organization). If there is any ambiguity as to whether the company is related to PEDIG Network research, the company must be disclosed. In these cases,

by examining the company's business and the scope of research conducted by the PEDIG Network, the Network Chair/ and the Director of the Coordinating Center (or Executive Committee, where applicable) will judge whether the investigator's interest is with a "financially interested company".

C. Reporting Financial Disclosures

1. Personnel Required to Report

All PEDIG Network investigators, coordinators, committee members, and other individuals who are responsible for the design, conduct, or reporting of research (e.g., collaborators or consultants), are required to report financial interests according to this policy (note: throughout the remainder of this document, wherever the term "investigator" is used, it also should be considered as indicative of committee members and other individuals in the Network required to report this information). Being *responsible for the conduct of research* is not the same as performing a study procedure. For instance, a study staff member who conducts visual acuity testing on a study participant is not considered an investigator. Financial interest of an investigator's dependent(s), domestic partner, or spouse also must be disclosed.

In general, clinical site staff other than study investigators and study coordinators are not required to report financial interests according to this policy unless participating on a Network committee (e.g., Writing Committee, Executive Committee, etc.).

2. Financial Interests to Disclose

All significant financial interests (SFI) from an entity Related to PEDIG Network Research must be disclosed. Disclosure is required whether remuneration is paid directly to the investigator OR to the investigator's institution/legal entity on the investigator's behalf. Relationships unrelated to PEDIG Network research do not require disclosure.

3. Frequency of Reporting

Investigators are required to complete the PEDIG Network financial disclosure form:

1) annually, each January,
2) within 30 days of discovering or acquiring (e.g., through purchase, marriage, or inheritance) a new SFI or a substantial change to an SFI.
    - A substantial change is defined as when a previously reported SFI increases to a higher category level defined as follows: $10,000–$19,999; amounts between $20,000–$100,000 by increments of $20,000; amounts above $100,000 by increments of $50,000.

IRB requirements for reporting SFI prior to initiation of a new protocol will be followed.

4. Disclosure Process Details

Financial disclosures are completed on the PEDIG Network study website Financial Disclosure Form.

Financial disclosures are made separately for the following categories:

- Prospective Clinical or Epidemiological Research Grant – a grant from the entity paid to an organization for the conduct of a prospective clinical study or epidemiologic study that receives IRB approval
- Basic Science Laboratory Research Grant - a grant from the entity paid to an organization for the conduct of basic science laboratory research
- Other Research Grant – Investigator-initiated research not meeting criteria above that is conducted for scientific or public health purposes and not considered Work for Hire for the benefit of the company. A research grant in this category should be money that is paid for a specific research purpose with the intent that the results will be reported in a scientific publication. In general, this research would be investigator-initiated, would have a budget, protocol, statistical analysis plan, or similar document describing the research and would receive IRB review with either IRB approval of the activity or designation as exempt research.
    - Details (e.g., protocol, statistical analysis plan, IRB approval, or similar document) of activities conducted in this category may be requested for clarification of appropriate reporting.
- Professional Fees– monies paid to an individual or to an organization for services rendered, including honoraria, royalties, or fees for consulting, lectures, speakers' bureaus, expert testimony, employment, board membership, office positions, or other affiliations
- Patents (planned, pending, or issued)
- Stock/stock options
- Other including non-financial support –equipment, supplies, or anything else not covered in the above categories.

All classifications above are irrespective of whether receipt of the financial support is directly to the investigator or to the investigator's institution/legal entity. The investigator will indicate whether he/she has equity in the institution/legal entity.

Support paid to the investigator and support paid to the institution for research will be reported within the following categories: $5,000-$9,999; $10,000-$19,999; $20,000-$100,000 by increments of $20,000; amounts above $100,000 by increments of $50,000, a statement that a value cannot readily be determined, or a statement that the value cannot be disclosed (e.g., confidentiality agreement with entity). Only support that is an appropriate fee for service and not another type of support or gift should be counted as support paid for research, otherwise the value should be reported as not for research.

D. Managing Financial Disclosures

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of JCHR and the investigator's institution, if the institution has a FCOI policy conformant to 42 CFR 50 Subpart F, to manage financial interests; however, PEDIG Network has developed a policy to avoid FCOI within the Network.

1. Policy to Avoid Financial Conflict of Interest

The PEDIG Network policy on avoiding FCOI within the Network relates to non-research SFI paid directly to the investigator or to the investigator's institution/legal

entity on the investigator's behalf in which the investigator has equity. The Operations Committee reserves the right to assess all disclosures as to whether a potential FCOI exists. The Operations Committee also reserves the right to confirm for each protocol if this policy is appropriate.

The following describes PEDIG's policy to avoid any potential bias due to any FCOI within the group (a SFI is defined as an interest valued at $5,000 or greater):

- Investigators with a non-research SFI exceeding $20,000 with an entity related to PEDIG research are prohibited from enrolling more than 10% of the study participants in any applicable PEDIG study.
- The Director of the PEDIG Coordinating Center and the Network Chair/s are prohibited from having any non-research SFI with an entity related to PEDIG research.
- Members of the Operations Committee, Executive Committee, and Steering Committees are prohibited from having a non-research SFI exceeding $20,000 with an entity related to PEDIG research.
    - Any member with any FI (Financial Interest of any value) will declare their interest prior to any discussion related to that entity.
    - Any member with a non-research SFI with an entity related to PEDIG research will abstain from any voting related to that entity.
- No more than 50% of the members of any protocol development committee should have a non-research SFI exceeding $20,000 with an entity related to the work being conducted for the specific PEDIG research.
- Protocol Chair/s for a study is prohibited from having a non-research SFI with an entity related to the work being conducted.
- No more than 50% of the members of any writing committee should have a non-research SFI with an entity related to the work being conducted for the specific PEDIG research. No lead author on a PEDIG manuscript will have a non-research SFI of $20,000 or more with an entity related to the work being conducted for the specific PEDIG research.
- Members of the Data and Safety Monitoring Committee are prohibited from having a non-research SFI with an entity related to PEDIG research for which the DSMC is monitoring.

The determination of whether a FCOI exists in certain instances can be a matter of judgment involving all the facts of the situation. The Network Chair/s and Director of the Coordinating Center will oversee review of potential FCOI. If the investigator disagrees with the management plan proposed by the Network Chair/s and Coordinating Center Director, the investigator can make an appeal to the Executive Committee, which will delegate review of the disclosure to a sub-Committee of the Executive Committee. When necessary, the sub-Committee will provide final decisions on behalf of the Network.

2. Investigator Options When a Presumptive Prohibition is Identified to Avoid a FCOI

If a presumptive prohibition is identified, to avoid a FCOI, the following are examples on how unique instances might be managed.

- Preclude participation in the design or reporting of the study
- Divestiture – allow arrangements to go forward contingent upon the sale or disposal of specified financial interests to eliminate or reduce the financial conflict of interest by a certain date
- Severance of relationships that heighten or create actual or potential conflicts – investigators may be required, as example, to relinquish a seat on a board of directors or terminate a consulting arrangement with an outside entity to reduce the financial or fiduciary conflict of interest

The Network Chair/ and Coordinating Center Director, or the Executive Committee members (when cases are overseen by the Executive Committee) may recommend other conditions or restrictions on the proposed arrangements if such conditions or restrictions will contribute to the elimination, reduction, or management of the conflict of FCOI.

If an IRB determines that an FCOI exists, a management plan may be required.

E. Additional Requirements for Investigators Covered Under JCHR Financial Conflict of Interest Policy

Investigators covered under the JCHR financial conflict of interest policy must abide by this PEDIG Network policy as well as the JCHR policy (see policy http://publicfiles.jaeb.org/jaeb/ConflictOfInterest.pdf)

The following additional requirements are required for investigators covered under JCHR policy:

1. Travel Reporting

Investigators must disclose the occurrence of any reimbursed or sponsored travel (*i.e.*, that which is paid on behalf of the Investigator and not reimbursed to the Investigator so that the exact monetary value may not be readily available), not reimbursed directly by JCHR, whether related to their institutional responsibilities or not (e.g., travel related to consulting performed while the investigator has taken annual leave time must be reported); however, this disclosure requirement does not apply to travel that is reimbursed or sponsored by:

- a Federal, state, or local government agency,
- an Institution of higher education as defined at 20 U.S.C. 1001(a),
- an academic teaching hospital,
- a medical center, or
- a research institute that is affiliated with an Institution of higher education.

The JCHR FCOI policy requires that the investigator disclose the following for travel reporting: purpose of the trip, the identity of the sponsor/organizer, the travel destination and the duration of the trip. In accordance with the JCHR FCOI policy, the institutional official will determine if further information is needed, including a determination or disclosure of monetary value, to determine whether the travel constitutes an FCOI with the investigator's research.

The disclosure must be reported within 30 days of travel.

Policy Appendix II: PEDIG Industry Collaboration Policies

Version 1.3, August 16, 2023

The Pediatric Eye Disease Investigator Group (PEDIG) is a collaborative network dedicated to facilitating multicenter clinical research in strabismus, amblyopia, and other eye disorders that affect primarily children. PEDIG is committed to collaborating with companies in a manner that appreciates the needs of industry with regard to drug or device development while maintaining rigorous clinical trial design and implementation, and investigational ethics, consistent with academic standards.

The sections below outline the PEDIG guidelines regarding collaboration with a company (subsequently referred to as the Company). Depending on the type of collaboration, some of the guidelines below may not apply, while others might need to be developed. The Operations Committee will approve any collaboration with parameters that differ substantially from the guidelines below.

A. Protocol Development

1. PEDIG will develop the protocol according to PEDIG Network standards (including associated procedures, CRFs, statistical plan, etc.).

2. The Company may provide input, especially with regard to regulatory issues when the protocol is being conducted under an IND or IDE.

3. PEDIG will accommodate Company needs required for drug or device registration as long as they are feasible and clinical trial design and implementation consistent with academic standards is maintained.

4. If requested by the Company, PEDIG will consider expanding protocols with additional Company support to provide adequate size such that the Company can analyze data as two or more definitive trials according to FDA guidance.

5. Final decisions regarding the protocol design, development, and implementation will be made by PEDIG.

6. The PEDIG Executive Committee will need to approve the protocol design and implementation plan.

7. The protocol will be placed in the public domain at the start of the study. The protocol will be posted on the PEDIG public website and summarized on public websites such as clinicaltrials.gov.

B. Study Data

1. PEDIG will have ownership of the study data.

2. The final dataset will be placed in the public domain in accordance with NIH Data Sharing Policies.

3. At the completion of the study, PEDIG will distribute a final dataset to the Company for its needs regarding FDA submission (PEDIG does not intend to prepare FDA submissions) and its internal use. The dataset may not be used for any other purpose unless approved by PEDIG in writing.

C. Publications, Presentations, and Publicity

1. PEDIG is free to publish and present the study data without restriction.

2. PEDIG will provide the Company with the opportunity to review and comment on the primary manuscript and any secondary manuscript that provides information related specifically to the treatment under study that is not already in the public domain. This policy also applies to abstracts and presentations that are made prior to the information having already been publicly disseminated. Unless PEDIG and the Company agree on different time intervals, the Company will be given 14 days to comment on manuscripts and abstracts and up to an additional 60 days if there is a need for the Company to submit patent application materials to obtain patent protection.

3. PEDIG will have the opportunity to review and must approve in writing all press releases of the Company related to the study prior to their release.

4. The Company may not publish, present, or otherwise release any study results or information about the study that has not already been publicly disseminated by PEDIG.

D. Data Integrity

1. The PEDIG Coordinating Center will oversee data collection, data cleaning, data lock, data maintenance, etc. PEDIG utilizes electronic data capture as the source documentation for most data.

2. PEDIG will provide the Company with details of these procedures for the Company to verify that these procedures meet regulatory requirements.

3. The Company may conduct a site visit of the PEDIG Coordinating Center to evaluate database maintenance and other Coordinating Center procedures as they pertain to meeting regulatory requirements.

E. Clinical Sites

1. PEDIG will select participating sites and establish the procedures for site certification and be responsible for certification of the sites. Certification includes the review and approval of regulatory documents such that the clinical site is approved to receive investigational product and subsequently enroll patients.

2. The Company may review these procedures to verify that they are in accord with regulatory requirements.

F. Site Monitoring

1. PEDIG will determine the monitoring needs it deems critical for the study and provide the support needed for such monitoring.

2. The Company may review the PEDIG site-monitoring plan to verify that it meets regulatory requirements.

3. If the Company determines that additional monitoring is needed for regulatory purposes, PEDIG will consider this request but will have the right to reject the request. Support for any additional monitoring will be provided by the Company.

4. Site monitoring will be overseen by the PEDIG Coordinating Center.

5. The Company will not be permitted to contact the clinical sites, request data, or conduct monitoring visits without approval from PEDIG. Permission may be granted in the event of a pending FDA audit.

G. Adverse Event Reporting

1. PEDIG will establish a system for adverse event reporting, review, and coding.

2. The Company may review this plan to verify that it is in accord with regulatory requirements and will meet the Company's needs for its FDA submission.

H. Efficacy and Safety Reviews, and Stopping Decisions

1. PEDIG will be responsible for developing the statistical analysis plan.

2. The Company may review this plan to verify that it is in accord with regulatory requirements and will meet the Company's needs for its FDA submission.

3. An independent Data and Safety Monitoring Committee (DSMC) will review all data (masked or unmasked) as appropriate and make recommendations to PEDIG regarding protocol modifications and stopping a study for efficacy or safety. The Company will not be provided with the study data until either the end of the study or the DSMC's decision that such data can be provided (other than data needed for FDA annual updates and/or submissions agreed upon between PEDIG and the Company as defined in G above).

4. PEDIG will provide the Company with monitoring reports related to study progress (e.g., recruitment, protocol deviations, and retention reports) at mutually agreed upon intervals.

I. Investigational Product

1. The Company will be responsible for providing the investigational product and related materials, placebos (when applicable), packaging of the investigational product, and all necessary manufacturing information for preparation of the IND or IDE and any related materials.

2. Investigational drug will be manufactured in accordance with Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) and Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) standards. Investigational devices will be manufactured in accordance with GMP standards.

3. PEDIG will develop procedures for supplying the investigational product to the clinical sites, maintaining accountability of the investigational product at the site, and disposal or return of the investigational product. The Company will pay for the costs of a pharmacy to store and ship the investigational product, supplying investigational product to the clinical sites and returning investigational product for disposal, if required. At the Company's request, PEDIG will

consider allowing the Company to supply the investigational product and related materials directly to the clinical sites.

4. For device studies, the Company will provide technical support for the duration of the study.

J. Laboratory Measurements

1. PEDIG will determine laboratory tests or procedures deemed necessary for the study and the selection of a central laboratory if needed.

2. The Company may identify additional laboratory tests or procedures required for regulatory or other purposes. PEDIG will attempt to accommodate these needs as long as they do not adversely affect the conduct, data validity, or safety of the study. Support for any additional laboratory tests or procedures will be paid for by The Company.

3. PEDIG will have the final decision on the selection of a central laboratory.

K. FDA Registration and Submission

1. PEDIG will hold the IND or IDE for the study, unless agreed upon otherwise with the Company.

2. Should there be a need to conduct a second trial specifically for the purpose of the FDA submission, the Company will have the option of conducting the second trial independently from PEDIG or the Company may contract with PEDIG to conduct the second trial as long as PEDIG agrees that such a trial is an appropriate use of PEDIG resources at that time.

L. PEDIG Policies

1. The Company will be provided with a copy of PEDIG policies and the Terms and Conditions of the NEI Cooperative Agreement.

M. Study Committees and Oversight

1. The Company is expected to appoint an individual to serve as the Company liaison to PEDIG.

2. The Company liaison will receive monitoring reports on the progress of the study.

N. Legal Agreements

1. A legal agreement will be established between the Company and the Jaeb Center.

2. The legal agreement will contain an indemnification section that specifies the situations in which the Company will provide indemnification, a confidentiality section agreeable to both parties, and an intellectual property section agreeable to both parties.

3. A legal agreement will be established between the Jaeb Center and each participating site for the site's participation in the study.

O. Cost Sharing

1. In general, the Company will be expected to provide funding for:
   - All costs for the clinical sites to conduct the protocol, through a subcontract with the Jaeb Center, including IRB costs.
   - All costs involved with the manufacture, labeling, distribution, and disposal of investigational product and any other related costs associated with the intervention.
   - All costs associated with image grading or other protocol-approved analyses (e.g., pathology, genetic, pharmacokinetic).
   - All laboratory costs.
   - Site monitoring costs for site visits and other activities over and above what PEDIG would be typically performing.
   - All costs involved related to FDA and other regulatory agencies.
   - All costs involved for pharmacokinetic study, or other preclinical or ancillary studies mutually agreed upon by PEDIG and the Company.
   - Proportional Coordinating Center and other infrastructure costs associated with the study.

2. PEDIG funding, in general, will provide for the Network chairs, Protocol Chairs, Steering Committees, Executive Committee, Data and Safety Monitoring Committee, and certain infrastructure costs.

3. PEDIG will usually only support clinical trial costs that are necessary for optimal clinical trial design and implementation (e.g., not fund additional monitoring, special laboratory analyses, etc.). Costs associated with additional patient numbers required by the Company (e.g., to have enough power to analyze data as two definitive trials according to FDA guidance) or to conduct a second parallel trial will not be covered by PEDIG.

C. Participant Costs

Grant funds are intended to pay for clinical and other procedures that are purely for research and otherwise would not have been performed on the participant. Most PEDIG protocols will be established to conform to standard medical care as closely as possible. The per-participant funding provided for the site is expected to cover the additional time necessary on the part of the investigator and their office staff to perform study-related activities. This per-participant funding is also expected to cover the costs of maintaining an internet connection and usage time and study-directed time on the part of the investigator in areas such as promoting recruitment, screening participants who would otherwise not be examined, educating the parents or guardians of eligible participants about the study and obtaining informed consent, responding to calls from the parents or guardians during the study, and addressing edits and queries from the Coordinating Center.

When a care provider performs services that would be considered standard of care independent of the study, it is appropriate to bill the participant's insurance company for these services.

Research funds will be used to pay for supplies, medications, spectacles, etc. that would not be required as part of the participant's routine care.

In some studies, participants may be compensated to cover visit-related costs. Generally, a distinction will be made between usual-care visits for which compensation is not typically provided and protocol-required visits for which compensation for the study visit per se will be provided.

III. Participation of Investigators in 'Competing' Studies

Competing studies are defined as those with overlapping eligibility criteria. To ensure that human subject issues are appropriately addressed, if a PEDIG site is involved in competing studies, the site should submit a brief statement to the Operations Committee (OC) that summarizes the studies and describes how their site will manage both studies. For example, which participants will be offered enrollment into one study versus the other? Participation in the PEDIG study will be contingent on OC approval.

IV. Financial Disclosure Policies

The PEDIG Network has developed financial disclosure policies (as summarized in a separate Policy Appendix I: PEDIG Financial Disclosure Policies) to promote objectivity in research by establishing financial disclosure policies that provide a reasonable expectation that the design, conduct, and reporting of PEDIG Network research is free from bias resulting from financial conflicts of interest.

V. Selection of Protocols

A process has been developed for evaluation and prioritization of protocols within the PEDIG network and is summarized below:

- Any PEDIG investigator may propose a protocol.
- The protocol proposal form is available on the PEDIG website.
- A formal solicitation to the study group for new study ideas is made annually in preparation for review of new study ideas at the Winter PEDIG Study Group meeting.

- Disease-Area Working Groups may assist investigators and review new study ideas as defined in the PEDIG Organizational Structure document.
- Open discussion of ideas occurs at PEDIG investigator meetings (i.e., American Academy of Ophthalmology, American Academy of Optometry, American Academy of Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus [AAPOS], and both the Summer and Winter PEDIG Investigator meetings)
- Each winter, the PEDIG Executive Committee selects up to 10 of these potential studies for further development, based on public health impact and investigator group interest.
- Members of the Operations Committee, in consultation with the Coordinating Center and primary proponents of each proposal, will oversee the creation of a brief protocol proposal (5-7 pages each) that addresses the following:
    - Background, significance, and public health importance
    - Protocol outline (including flow diagram, if applicable)
    - Outcome measures
    - Sample size and statistical considerations
    - Recruitment potential
- The PEDIG Executive Committee will meet for one day each spring to evaluate these protocol proposals and to determine which studies should have full protocols developed and the timeline for their development.
- Feedback will be given to the proponents of each protocol. Those protocols that were not selected may be brought back to a Working Group to help the proponent continue to refine the idea for consideration in future cycles. A planning committee will be formed to develop a full protocol for each protocol selected.
- Each fully developed protocol will be circulated to all PEDIG investigators for input prior to final review and approval by the PEDIG Executive Committee and the Data Safety and Monitoring Committee (DSMC), if applicable. An additional step of external review may be necessary prior to review by the DSMC, at the discretion of the NEI.
- The cycle of study idea solicitation, discussion, Executive Committee review, protocol selection and development is repeated yearly.
- If a previously prioritized protocol is not launched during the preceding year, the protocol idea will be brought back for re-consideration at the next EC prioritization meeting, because other new protocol ideas may be deemed to be more important for PEDIG to pursue.

Occasionally, a protocol proposal may have extremely high importance to public health and may be prioritized by the Executive Committee for rapid development and implementation outside the yearly cycle described above.

VI. Participant Protection and Data Quality

A. Institutional Review Board (IRB)

All network sites in the United States will be required to use the central JCHR IRB located at the Jaeb Center as their IRB of record in order to comply with the NIH policy to use a central IRB of record for multi-site research. The site must abide by all requirements of the JCHR and local IRB.

Each site must obtain approval from the JCHR IRB for each protocol in which it participates before participants can be enrolled. All changes in research activities, significant deviations, and all unanticipated problems involving risks to participants must be reported immediately. Significant protocol changes require IRB approval before implementation, except when required to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants. Modifications to study procedures that do not constitute a meaningful change in the protocol and do not impact in any way on participant safety do not require prior IRB approval.

IRB coverage must remain current. The Coordinating Center will send a reminder to each site approximately 2 months prior to the expiration of IRB coverage for a protocol (a protocol update for the IRB will be included). If IRB coverage lapses, the site cannot enroll any new participants, cannot perform study specific procedures on enrolled subjects, and cannot submit data forms to the Coordinating Center for any established study participants until IRB coverage is back in effect.

B. Policy for Website Use

All study personnel must log onto the PEDIG website only using their individually created password and must not share their password with others. Under no circumstances may an investigator delegate signing of study forms to an assistant who logs in using the investigator's password.

C. Electronic Signature

An electronic signature on an electronic case report form indicates that the data have been reviewed and accepted by the signatory. Electronic signatures will consist of the combination of the individually assigned PEDIG personnel identification number and password. It is unlawful to forge an electronic signature.

D. Data Quality

Each site is monitored for adherence to the protocol and good clinical practices. Sites or study group members with excessive protocol deviations and/or quality issues may be placed on probation for a period and/or dismissed from PEDIG at the discretion of the Executive Committee.

Site visits will be conducted to ensure quality. The site visit policy may vary from study to study and will be determined by the Operations Committee. In general, a site visit will be performed annually, but may occur more often when: (1) there are concerns about data integrity; (2) a site enrolls or is projected to enroll at least 10% of the participants in a study; or (3) a site enrolls a subject into a study covered by an IND. All sites are subject to site visits and, to participate in PEDIG, they must agree to cooperate for site visits.

E. Study Participant Retention

The goal of the PEDIG Network is to reduce the loss of participants to follow up as much as possible. A study participant has the right to withdraw from a study at any time. If a study participant is considering withdrawal from a study, the investigator must attempt to speak personally to the study participant about the reasons and make every effort to accommodate the study participant. The Coordinating Center will assist in the tracking of study participants.

F. Good Clinical Practice Training

Good Clinical Practice training is required when joining the network and then every three years by active investigators, coordinators, and Coordinating Center personnel.

G. Scientific Fraud

Scientific fraud refers to the situation where data are fabricated and/or falsified. Examples include (1) altering information collected from a participant that would have excluded the participant so that the participant appears to be eligible for the study, (2) randomization of participants prior to obtaining informed consent and changing the date on the informed consent form to conform with the randomization date, (3) changing examination dates so that they appear as being in the time windows specified in the protocol, and (4) altering outcome measurements.

It is expected that clinic personnel will make mistakes. Unintentional errors that occur in data collection are not scientific fraud. Repeated mistakes may be a sign of poor clinic performance, and these are tabulated by the Coordinating Center, but they do not imply fraud. Errors become a concern when a clinic is making more mistakes than expected, particularly major ones (e.g., enrolling ineligible participants).

An investigator has the responsibility of assuring that the protocol is carried out properly at their site and assumes responsibility for the staff involved in the care of and data collection for study participants. An investigator who suspects data irregularities should report this to the Coordinating Center immediately.

Study group members are expected to remain in good standing with their profession. If a study group member fails to adhere to the ethical standards of their profession, the Executive Committee may revoke study group membership.

H. Confidentiality

Individual participant medical information obtained for a study is considered confidential and disclosure to third parties other than those noted below (or on the informed consent) is prohibited. Such medical information may be given to the participant's personal physician or to other appropriate medical personnel responsible for the participant's welfare. Data generated for studies are to be available for inspection upon request by the Coordinating Center, the NIH, and auditors of other regulatory agencies.

All sites and PEDIG units must conform to HIPAA regulations.

Study data are considered confidential until presented at a national meeting or published as an abstract or manuscript.

VII. Retention of Study Records

Each clinical site will archive all relevant study data and keep them on file for the period specified by the Coordinating Center, US law, or by the center's institutional requirements, whichever is greater. Per NIH requirements, study records must be kept for at least three years following the end of the grant cycle during which a study is completed. Additional record retention requirements may apply to studies conducted under an IND or IDE, which will be

documented via a document retention plan.

VIII. Communications

For most protocols, real-time internet access will be required for data entry of case report forms.

IX. Study Group Meetings

Study group meetings are planned each year for participating study group members. These meetings may be used to develop and approve primary study manuscripts, help refine protocols in development, and review procedures and issues of ongoing protocols. The PEDIG Operations Committee will define which study group members are invited, but in general study personnel from sites that meet the networks policy on site activity (see section VII. A.) will be eligible for invitation. The travel expenses of their attendance will be reimbursed, including hotel, airfare and per diem.

General PEDIG meetings may be held in conjunction with national meetings such as the American Academy of Ophthalmology, American Academy of Optometry, and AAPOS meetings. Each investigator is expected to attend at least one of these meetings yearly. Generally, there will be a meeting for all PEDIG investigators at which the status of current and planned protocols will be discussed and topics for possible future studies will be presented. Separate meetings on the same day may be held for investigators participating in specific protocols as needed.

X. Editorial Policy

A. Manuscripts

PEDIG aims to produce one or more manuscripts for each protocol conducted by the network. Investigators retain ownership of the data collected; however, these data are confidential and may not be presented or published by individual investigators without permission from the Executive Committee. If an investigator wishes to include data from PEDIG study subjects in their own research publication or presentation, there cannot be overlap with respect to PEDIG study objectives, which are stated in study protocols that are available on the PEDIG web site. If there is possible overlap with respect to PEDIG study objectives, a request should be submitted to the Executive Committee.

The network sponsor, the National Eye Institute (NEI) of the National Institutes of Health, will be provided with an opportunity to review and comment on each primary manuscript, but will have no authority to restrict publication or presentation of study results. Should the network become involved with other entities that serve as co-sponsors with the NEI, this same policy will be in effect.

All manuscripts to be written and all national/international presentations to be made related to any aspect of the project, including but not limited to study protocols, study results, and study conduct, must receive the approval of the Operations Committee. The topic of the manuscript may be initiated by the Executive Committee, Steering Committee, Operations Committee, or by an investigator.

The topic of any PEDIG publication or presentation may be proposed by any individual, whether

inside or outside of PEDIG, utilizing the PEDIG Secondary Data Analysis Idea Form. The topic is submitted to the Operations Committee, which is responsible for prioritizing work on abstracts, presentations, publications, and secondary data analyses.

B. Writing Committees

Because every investigator cannot have an active role in writing every paper, a Writing Committee for each abstract, presentation, or publication will be defined by the Operations Committee.

For each primary study abstract, presentation, or publication, the lead author is usually the protocol chair (or one co-chair if there are two protocol co-chairs with the lead author decided between the two), followed by the protocol co-chair (if applicable), followed by the CC lead investigator, the CC statistician, and a Network Co-Chair as last author. For each co-primary or secondary abstract, presentation, or publication, the lead author is defined by the OC and is usually the protocol chair (or co-chair who did not lead the primary manuscript) or a top recruiting investigator or proponent for a secondary analysis idea. The CC statistician will be listed as second author, and a Network Co-Chair is typically listed as last author.

In addition, each manuscript Writing Committee will generally consist of additional study group members (investigators and coordinators) nominated by the Operations Committee based upon level of recruitment into the study, participation on the planning/steering committee, and/or expertise in the area of interest. A Leadership Development Program (LDP) Fellow may also be invited to participate on a Writing Committee. As with every appointee, inclusion on the paper's byline is dependent on participation in the process.

The CC Director, CC Senior Statistician, and Network Co-Chairs will be members of all Writing Committees.

With Operations Committee approval, the lead author or Operations Committee member may add or remove authors to or from the writing committee based upon level of contribution.

For primary manuscripts, PEDIG will be listed as the author on the title page, if this meets with journal approval; or "Study XXX Investigators for PEDIG", if the journal does not allow PEDIG as the author. The Writing Committee will be listed with primary authorship order as defined above. Writing Committee members (other than primary authors) will be listed based upon level of contribution to the manuscript, and then by order of number of subjects completing primary outcome exam for the study as applicable.

All investigators who participated in the protocol (1) will be given an opportunity to review and comment on the draft manuscript, (2) will be listed in the manuscript participant appendix, and (3) may include the manuscript on their CVs as a co-author. Each manuscript will acknowledge the NIH funding and any other sources of funding.

For a secondary manuscript, the Writing Committee involved in writing the paper will be listed by name (ordered as described above) followed by "for the Pediatric Eye Disease Investigator Group."

For studies conducted within PEDIG by a subset of sites, the Writing Committee will usually contain all enrolling investigators and will be listed as authors followed by "for Pediatric Eye Disease Investigator Group" as long as the number of authors does not exceed the journal limit. If the subset of sites is a named group (e.g., COMET2), the group will be listed as the author followed by "for Pediatric Eye Disease Investigator Group". The definition of "subset of sites" will be decided by the Operations Committee on a case-by-case basis.

For a manuscript describing the major results of a randomized clinical trial, the DSMC must approve prior to submission. The DSMC may be sent secondary manuscripts for comment as determined by the Operations Committee, but approval will not be required.

C. Abstracts

All abstracts must be approved by the Operations Committee prior to submission. Abstracts summarizing randomized trial study results require DSMC approval.

For an abstract associated with a manuscript, the entire Writing Committee will be listed as authors, if possible. If not possible, the presenter will be listed as the first author, followed by lead authors including the statistician if applicable, on behalf of the Pediatric Eye Disease Investigator Group.

D. Presentations

1. PEDIG Authored Presentations

When PEDIG is listed as an author for any presentation at any meeting, investigators or coordinators **must** forward their presentation for review by the Operations Committee at least 4 weeks before the presentation.

2. Other National and International Presentations

When investigators or coordinators present new PEDIG data (not previously published or presented) at any national or international meeting, they **must** forward their slides to the Operations Committee for review at least 4 weeks before the presentation.

When investigators or coordinators present publicly available PEDIG data (previously published or presented) at any national or international meeting, they **may** (at their own discretion) forward their slides to the Operations Committee for review, and, if they do so, this should be at least 4 weeks before the presentation.

3. Institutional, Local, and Regional Presentations

Investigators or coordinators presenting published PEDIG data at institutional, local, and regional meetings are strongly encouraged to use the slides available on the PEDIG website but are not required to submit their slides for approval to the Operations Committee, if the presentation is to an institutional, local, or regional group.

4. Providing Slides to the Trade Press

PEDIG-authored slides, and slides approved by the Operations Committee, should **not** be provided to the trade press. If the trade press elects to report the results from a PEDIG presentation, and informs the investigator or coordinator of their intentions, the investigator or

coordinator may review the draft text for factual errors but should avoid allowing the journalist to report "in collaboration with…. or reviewed by…." Any press release or publicity about a specific study is subject to review and approval prior to release as described in the following section.

E. Publicity

For publicity timed with publication of primary study results, the Executive Committee must give approval prior to any press release or other publicity about the study. For NEI-funded studies, the DSMC and NEI also must approve release of study findings to the media.

Requests for comments or press releases on behalf of PEDIG on results already published or presented require review of the protocol chair(s) responsible for the study; and the Network Co-Chairs if the protocol chair is not a member of the Operations Committee.

PEDIG investigators may develop mailings to promote study recruitment. These mailings must be approved by the IRB and the PEDIG Operations Committee. Participation in the PEDIG network may be mentioned in other mailings, web-postings, and publicity materials to the extent that involvement is accurately portrayed. It is important that such mailings not be construed as citing PEDIG involvement for self-promotion and that such mailings do not include remarks that might be considered disparaging by other investigators in the network.

Any letter, flyer or other such promotional material must be reviewed by the Operations Committee prior to distribution. If PEDIG provides funds for distribution of such mailings, we will inform any nearby sites and give them the right to be included in the mailing or offer them the opportunity to distribute something similar. However, if PEDIG is not funding the distribution of such mailings, we would check the mailing for accuracy but cannot require other sites to be listed.

XI. Maintenance of Active Status

A. Site Status

The Executive Committee will evaluate the types of active protocols before the end of each year to define for the following year the minimum amount of activity with respect to enrollment and/or follow-up each site is expected to complete to maintain active site status within the network.

Sites that have not met the activity requirement in a 12-month period will be made inactive and their investigators and coordinators cannot attend expenses-paid group meetings. Once a site is made inactive, the site must reapply for PEDIG site status.

New sites must be certified for their first protocol within 12 months of being accepted as a PEDIG site. Certification efforts at the Coordinating Center will end after 12 months.

XII. Industry and Other Entity Collaborations

PEDIG collaborates with related industries and other entities in a manner that appreciates the needs of those industries or other entities with regard to drug, biologic, or device development while maintaining clinical trial design, investigational ethics, and rigorous implementation

consistent with academic standards. PEDIG has policies related to these collaborations, including protocol development, study data, publications, presentations, and publicity, data integrity, clinical sites, site monitoring, adverse event reporting, efficacy and safety reviews, investigational product, laboratory measurements, FDA or other regulatory registration and submission, study committees and oversight, legal agreements, and cost sharing. (See Policy Appendix II: PEDIG Industry Collaboration Policies for detailed information.)

XIII. Appendices

Appendix I: PEDIG Financial Disclosure Policies

Appendix II: PEDIG Industry Collaboration Policies