

10. RESEARCH INVOLVING DECEPTION OF PARTICIPANTS, CONCEALMENT OR COVERT OBSERVATION

As a general principle, deception of identifiable participants, concealment of the purposes of research or covert observation are not considered ethical because they are contrary to the principle of respect for persons and the obtaining of informed consent. In studies of human behaviour there may be exceptional circumstances when studies cannot be conducted without deception, concealment or covert observation of participants. Before approving a research proposal that involves any degree of deception, concealment or covert observation, a research ethics committee must be satisfied that:

- The provision of detailed information to prospective participants about the purpose, methods and procedures of the research would compromise the scientific validity of that research;
- The precise extent of deception, concealment or covert observation is defined;
- There are no suitable alternative methods, not involving deception, concealment or covert observation, by which the desired information can be obtained;
- Participants are not exposed to an increased risk of harm as a result of the deception, concealment or covert observation;
- Adequate and prompt disclosure will be made and de-briefing provided to each participant as soon as practicable after the participant's participation is completed;
- Participants will have the opportunity to withdraw data that was obtained from them during the research without their knowledge or consent; and
- Such activities will not corrupt the relationship between researchers and research in general, with the community at large.