Denmark

**Question 1**: What laws or regulations apply to an application for conducting a clinical trial in Denmark?


**Question 2**: Which government, legal or authoritative body or bodies is or are responsible for the establishment and/or accreditation of (research) ethics committees for IMPs, and for their supervision and quality? Are there different (research) ethics committees reviewing other projects?

According to the above 2003 law, the regional scientific ethical committees are set up by the regions on a geographical basis. The Danish National Committee on Biomedical research Ethics is set up by the Minister for Interior and Health.

**Question 3**: What is the process for achieving clinical trial authorisation from the competent authority in Denmark?

An application is made by the sponsor to the Danish Medicines Agency (Lægemiddelstyrelsen) on the EudraCT application form available at [http://www.eudract.emea.eu.int](http://www.eudract.emea.eu.int).

The website for Lægemiddelstyrelsen is: [http://www.dkma.dk](http://www.dkma.dk).
**Question 4:** What is the process for obtaining ethical review of a clinical trial protocol by a competent (research) ethics committee in Denmark?

An application (in Danish) is made by the investigator to the appropriate regional scientific ethical committee, depending on the location of the principal site for the clinical trial. Detailed guidance on the ethical review process is available in English on the website of the Danish National Committee on Biomedical Research Ethics at [http://www.cvk.sum.dk/English/guidelinesaboutnotification.aspx](http://www.cvk.sum.dk/English/guidelinesaboutnotification.aspx).

**Question 5:** Is there a single organisation to which to apply for ethical review of a clinical trial for an investigational medicinal product, regardless of whether this is for a single site or multiple sites?

Yes, the relevant Regional Committee on Biomedical Research Ethics (see 9. below).

**Question 6:** What is the website for the organisation that issues guidelines on the ethical review of a clinical trial for an investigational medicinal product?

The website for Lægemiddelstyrelsen (The Danish Medicines Agency) is: [http://www.dkma.dk](http://www.dkma.dk).

The website for the Danish National Committee on Biomedical Research Ethics is: [http://www.cvk.sum.dk/CVK/Home/English.aspx](http://www.cvk.sum.dk/CVK/Home/English.aspx).

**Question 7:** Is there a procedural interaction between the national or local competent authority and the (research) ethics committee during the approval process?

No, but the Danish Medicines Agency and the competent regional scientific ethical committee send a copy to each other of their respective approvals. No study can commence without both approvals in place.

**Question 8:** Does the application to the REC and to the competent authority have to be submitted in parallel, or, if not, in which order?

They do not have to be done in parallel, but they may be done so.

**Question 9:** How many (research) ethics committees are there in Denmark?

Eleven.
**Question 10:** How are RECs funded in Denmark? Do they charge fees? If yes, what is their scale of fees?

The regions finance the operation of the regional committees and they lay down a fee per project notified by the research institutions, etc. and by private undertakings and hospitals.

It has been agreed that the fee for notifying a project shall be DKK 4000 and for a supplementary protocol, DKK 1500.

**Question 11:** Who is responsible for submitting the request for ethical review to the competent (research) ethics committee for single-site and for multi-site clinical trials?

The investigator.

**Question 12:** How is a “single opinion” achieved for multi-site studies?

The co-ordinating chief investigator submits an application for a multi-site study to the Regional Committee on Biomedical Research Ethics for the area in which he/she is operating. This regional committee must make up its decision, which forms the basis for the “single opinion”, and then inform other regional committees for the investigators at the other sites involved.

**Question 13:** How many members serve on a REC?

Seven or eleven. If seven, four are lay persons and three are active in medical science. If eleven, 6 are lay persons and five are researchers.

**Question 14:** How many members constitute a quorum?

At least half of the members of the lay persons and at least half of the researchers.

**Question 15:** How are REC members appointed?

By the Region Councils. The laypersons are appointed amongst the regional politicians, and the researchers are appointed according to nominations by the Danish Medical Research Council.

**Question 16:** How is the independence of members ensured?

The committee as such is independent.

**Question 17:** How are conflicts of interest of REC members avoided?

There is a law on declaration of interest.
**Question 18:** What backgrounds and/or qualifications of members are actively sought?

See 15.

**Question 19:** How do RECs obtain specialist expertise?

The committee shall take advice from experts in cases where they do not themselves have the necessary professional expertise to evaluate projects submitted to the committee. Normally a written statement from specialists is requested.

**Question 20:** What are the training requirements for members of RECs?

The regional committees have the responsibility to educate their members.

**Question 21:** What training programmes are available for REC members in Denmark?

The Danish National Committee on Biomedical Research Ethics has established a 1 day educational programme for new members.

**Question 22:** What are the timelines for the assessment of single- and multi-site studies?

(1) The committee shall decide on the approval of a project within 60 days of receiving a valid application, however, cf. subsections (2) and (3) below.

(2) The time limit pursuant to subsection (1) above shall be extended by 30 days if the processing concerns an application for the approval of trials involving gene therapy or somatic cell therapy or medicinal products containing genetically modified organisms. The 90-day deadline shall be further extended by 90 days in case of consultation of public boards or commissions. No time limit shall apply to the authorisation period regarding the processing of an application for the approval of xenogenic cell therapy.

(3) The committee may within the processing period of the application send one request for information supplementary to the information already supplied by the applicant. The time limit pursuant to subsections (1) and (2) above shall be suspended until receipt of such supplementary information.

**Question 23:** How are substantial amendments submitted during the review process dealt with?

If submitted separately they are assessed accordingly.
**Question 24:** How does a REC assess the suitability of investigators and of sites?

By assessing the CV of an investigator, but sites are not assessed.

**Question 25:** How are the requirements for (research) ethics committees to review the contractual or financial arrangements in clinical trials for both investigators and hospitals handled?

These are required to be fully detailed in the application form and are then assessed.

**Question 26:** How are the requirements for (research) ethics committees to review the compensation arrangements for study subjects handled?

These are also required to be fully detailed in the application form and are then assessed. Remuneration and financing by the sponsor to the investigator/institution should also appear in the patient information sheet.

**Question 27:** Is there an ongoing quality assurance process (e.g. audits, inspections, internal SOP) for (research) ethics committees in Denmark?

No.

**Question 28:** Is there an appeal mechanism?

Yes, by the Danish National Committee on Biomedical Research Ethics.

**Question 29:** How do RECs deal with SUSAR reports and Annual Safety Reports?

In clinical trials with medicinal products the sponsor or the chief investigator shall once every year during the entire trial period submit to the committee a list of all serious adverse reactions and all serious events encountered during the period and shall provide information about the safety of the trial subjects.

**Question 30:** How are ‘substantial amendments’ defined?

As set out in Directive 2001/20/EC.

**Question 31:** What are the indemnity insurance requirements for research projects?

In Denmark the Danish Patient Insurance Act does cover most indemnities. The system is supplemented by private compensation and reimbursement schemes.
**Question 32:** What are the indemnity insurance requirements for (research) ethics committee members themselves?

Liability of EC members is not a realistic issue in Denmark. Only in cases where the member has acted grossly negligently or with intention.

**Question 33:** How is informed consent obtained from vulnerable subjects who are potentially to be involved in a clinical trial?

In trials involving medicinal products:

Surrogate consent shall mean a decision in writing, dated and signed, or in electronic form along with an electronic signature, cf. the Act on Electronic Signatures, to take part in a biomedical research project, such decision being made by the closest relatives and the general practitioner, alternatively The National Board of Health or the holder of custody / the guardian following satisfactory information about the nature, significance, implications and risk of the project and receipt of suitable documentation.

In emergency situations in trials with medicinal products:

Legal representative is an entity of two physicians who in emergency situations can give surrogate consent on behalf of the incapacitated trial subject. The legal representative shall attend to the interests of the trial subject and shall be independent of the trial subject's interests and of any interests in the research project in general.

**Question 34:** How do RECs assess the progress and outcome of research projects that they have approved?

Both negative and positive trial results shall be published as soon as possible and as soon as it is professionally justifiable. Publication shall be carried out in accordance with the Act on the Handling of Personal Information. A committee may follow the course of a project and request that the final research report or publication will be sent to the committee. The committee may request a reasoned statement from the investigator or the sponsor in cases where the project is not completed.

**Question 35:** How does the REC ensure reception of the Annual Safety Report and the Summary of the Final Report of a research project that it has approved?

According to the law a regional committee may follow the course of a project and request that the final research report or publication be sent to the committee. The committee will therefore send a request.

It is also laid-down in the law that once a year during the entire research period the sponsor or the investigator shall to the committee submit a list of all serious adverse reactions and all serious events encountered during the period and shall provide information about the safety of the trial subjects.
**Question 36:** Do national regulations in Denmark allow research on healthy volunteer children (subjects under 16)?

Yes.

**Question 37:** Do national regulations in Denmark allow payment, (other than expenses), to children taking part in research?

Yes, after a concrete evaluation.

**Question 38:** Do RECs invite or allow a) applicants or b) observers to attend committee meetings?

Applicants may be invited to the regional committees to clarify elements in the application. Observers are not accepted.

**Question 39:** Are the minutes of (research) ethics committee meetings made public?

No.

**Question 40:** Is there any scope for Chairman’s actions in between meetings?

Yes, to consider responses from applicants to queries and supplements to approved protocols. Any decision must be ratified by the Committee at its next meeting.

**Question 41:** Do (research) ethics committees ever appoint subcommittees for any specific purpose?

No.

**Question 42:** Is there a national policy on the registration of clinical trials before they start?

All clinical trials are registered in the research ethics data base which is used as an administrative tool for the regional committees.

**Question 43:** If the answer to Question 42 is ‘yes’, do (research) ethics committees have any role to play in reviewing such registration?

See 42.
**Question 44:** If the answer to Question 42 is ‘yes’, is this register of clinical trials made available to the public?

No.

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