**Process for Requesting Research Trans Thoracic Echocardiograms**

**Stage 1: Getting approval to access the service**

* The NI Clinical Research Facility (NICRF) is the first point of contact to agree access to the NICRF ECHO service for research studies.
* The per-patient charge for an ECHO should be agreed with the NICRF prior to completion of the Protocol Impact Assessment Form (PIAF).
* A Study PIAF must be completed and should be sent to NICRF for approval and sign-off for submission to Research Governance.
* The PIAF must be signed off by NICRF prior to submission to Research Governance.
* The NICRF will organise relevant invoicing for ECHO’s.

**Stage 2: Ordering ECHO’s**

1. Although we do not need copies of relevant approvals, ECHO’s can only be ordered through this service once an appropriate Research Start Certificate or relevant approvals have been obtained.
2. To order an ECHO, the requestor must provide a completed Trust “REQUEST FOR ECHOCARDIOGRAM” form, see Appendix, this can be downloaded from NICRF website: [www.qub.ac.uk/nicrf](http://www.qub.ac.uk/nicrf)
3. It is essential that this form includes details of the study name, the study identifier used on PIAF and the date that the ECHO is required. This information should be inserted into the box “What clinical question would you like this ECHO to answer?”.
4. It is essential that the notice period within the study is detailed with submission of PIAF to NICRF so that the ECHO Dept is aware of the study and the possible notice period for ECHO’s that needs to be facilitated. As much notice should be given to allow written confirmation of appointment to reach the patient.
5. If there are specific ECHO requirements above a standard BSE (British Society of Echocardiography) ECHO it is the responsibility of the requestor to ensure that the ECHO Department are informed of specific requirements otherwise a standard BSE echo will be performed. Any additional requirements outside the standard BSE format should be made available to the ECHO Department in the form of a study protocol/template prior to commencing study.
6. All **Outpatient** Research ECHO requests should be forwarded to: [BCHechocardiography@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:BCHechocardiography@belfasttrust.hscni.net)

Summary/Protocol should be provided to ECHO Team to establish requirement of the ECHO and throughput.

1. All **Inpatient** requests should be brought to the ECHO Department at the site the patient is an Inpatient and should be brought to the attention of the Echocardiography Staff.
2. All reports will be available on NIECR.
3. The NICRF have an agreement with the ECHO Department for a specific number of ECHO’s per annum (840 ECHO’s across the Trust). The NICRF will monitor usage quarterly.
4. Any issues identified with this service should be referred in the first instance, for the attention of NICRF Staff, via email to [nicrf@qub.ac.uk](mailto:nicrf@belfasttrust.hscni.net).