



The Central Intelligence Agency had explicit guidelines for “human experimentation” – before, during and after its post-9/11 torture of terrorism detainees – that raise new questions about the limits on the agency’s in-house and contracted medical research.

Sections of a previously classified CIA document, made public by the Guardian on Monday, empower the agency’s director to “approve, modify, or disapprove all proposals pertaining to human subject research”. The leeway provides the director, who has never in the agency’s history been a medical doctor, with significant influence over limitations the US government sets to preserve safe, humane and ethical procedures on people.

CIA director George Tenet approved abusive interrogation techniques, including waterboarding, designed by CIA contractor psychologists. He further instructed the agency’s health personnel to oversee the brutal interrogations – the beginning of years of controversy, still ongoing, about US torture as a violation of medical ethics.

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