

PETER MACCALLUM CANCER CENTRE HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

CONTEXT

The Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) is constituted in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2023* (and as amended) (*National Statement*).

The HREC is supported by sub-committees and review panels. The sub-committees and review panels each have their own terms of reference and operate within those terms.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The HREC has been established to review human research projects in accordance with the *National Statement* values of research merit and integrity, justice, beneficence, and respect for human beings.

The HREC can evaluate and recommend approval, request modification, reject, or withdraw approval of research projects.

FUNCTIONS

- a) Consider research proposals, submitted for consideration by affiliated or non-affiliated researchers for their ethical acceptability and compliance with the requirements of the National Statement
- b) Participate in and support national single ethical review processes for multi-site research.
- c) Consider and monitor ethical issues related to the conduct of research projects approved by the HREC.
- d) Establish, maintain, and monitor sub-committees and panels to assist in ensuring scholarly and scientific standards are met.
- e) Delegate to individual committee members, sub-committees and panels, and administrative staff the review of appropriate items; including project amendments, project monitoring reports, and lower risk research.
- f) Provide a forum in which staff, patient, carer, and student concerns regarding ethical issues in research can be considered and investigated.

MEMBERSHIP

The HREC shall include the categories a) to f) as specified by the National Statement:

- a) A chairperson with suitable experience, including previous membership of an HREC, whose other responsibilities will not impair the HREC's capacity to carry out its obligations under the National Statement;
- b) Two people who bring a broader community or consumer perspective and who have no paid affiliation with the institution;
- c) A person with knowledge of, and current experience in, the professional care or treatment of people; for example, a nurse, counsellor or allied health professional;
- d) A person who performs a pastoral care role in a community including, but not limited to, an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander elder or community leader, a chaplain or a minister of religion or other religious leader;

- e) A qualified lawyer, who may or may not be currently practicing and, where possible, is not engaged to advise the institution on research-related or any other matters; and
- f) Two people with current research experience that is relevant to research proposals to be considered at the meetings they attend.
and
- g) Chairpersons (or nominees) of any sub-committees that have recommended research for review by the HREC e.g., Chairperson of the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre Clinical Research Committee; Chairperson of the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre Tissue Research Committee

The HREC Chair is appointed by the Executive. All other members are appointed by the HREC Chair.

A HREC Deputy Chair is nominated as required from the HREC membership group.

For membership categories b) to f), a pool of members of may be appointed to draw on as needed.

Members cannot represent more than one of the categories a) to f) at any individual meeting but may fill a different category at a separate meeting.

Member appointments are reviewed at least every three years.

Members are not remunerated for their services to the committee.

Secretariat services and minuting is provided by the Human Research Ethics & Governance office.

ATTENDEES

Researchers and research project teams can request to attend a meeting to discuss project related matters.

Observers can request to attend a meeting to observe proceedings.

HREC may request attendance of a person with expertise needed to support its decision making.

CONVENOR

Chair of Committee

MEETING FREQUENCY

Meetings are held monthly, excluding January. Additional meetings may be held, as necessary.

QUORUM

A quorum shall consist of eight members and must include of each of category a) to f) above, constituting the minimum membership requirements for a HREC as prescribed in the National Statement.

Where a member is unable to attend an HREC meeting, their input is sought ahead of the meeting and review comments presented during the HREC meeting for the Committee's consideration.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Members are required to declare any actual or potential conflict of interest they might have in relation to items under review. If the Chair is conflicted, a Deputy Chair is appointed.

FEES

Fees are charged for review per fee schedule published on the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre website.

REVIEW

The Terms of Reference are reviewed by the HREC bi-annually.

The operation of the HREC is reviewed annually by the Manager, Human Research Ethics & Governance.

REPORTS TO

- a) The HREC reports annually to the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre Research Committee and via the Research Committee to the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre Board.
- b) The HREC also reports to the NHMRC and other government and regulatory bodies, as required.

REPORTS RECEIVED FROM:

- a) Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre Clinical Research Committee
- b) Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre Tissue Research Committee
- c) Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre Lower Risk Research Ethics Committee
- d) Divisional Review Panels