



RESEARCH GOVERNANCE UNIT
St. Vincent's Hospital (Melbourne)
Caritas Christi Hospice
St. George's Health Service
Prague House

CHANGES TO RESEARCH TEAM

Statement of Intent and Outcomes

The St Vincent's Hospital (Melbourne) Animal Ethics Committee is committed to fulfilling the governing principles of the *Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes* (2013), by ensuring that all changes to research teams are subject to ethical review and approval, to ensure investigators are appropriately qualified, trained and/or supervised.

Definitions

Investigator: any person who uses animals for scientific purposes. Includes researchers, teachers, undergraduate and postgraduate students involved in research projects, and people involved in product testing, environmental testing, production of biological products and wildlife surveys.

Competent: the consistent application of knowledge and skill to the standard of performance required regarding the care and use of animals. It embodies the ability to transfer and apply knowledge and skill to new situations and environments.

Procedure

The AEC acknowledges that projects require amendment, for the purposes of reduction, refinement and replacement, and to account for any unexpected circumstances which impact upon the research, including changes to the research team.

Investigators must take steps at all times to safeguard the wellbeing of animals by avoiding or minimising known or potential causes of harm, including pain and distress, to the animals. These steps include ensuring that procedures are performed competently, and that the investigators are competent for the procedures they perform or under the direct supervision of a person who is competent to perform the procedures.

To ensure all members of the research team are competent, or under the direct supervision of a competent person, the AEC must review and approve research team members before they commence any research work on a current approved project. To facilitate a process of efficient and timely review, applications to change members of a research team are reviewed by AEC Executive.

All research team changes must be submitted using the St Vincent's Hospital (Melbourne) AEC Application to Change Members of a Research Team form; no other formats will be accepted. If the proposed new research team member is not known to the AEC a short CV, related to animal experience only, should accompany the application.

Once the submission is received by the AEC Secretary an acknowledgement email will be sent to the Principal Investigator (or person who completed the form). There are no closing dates for research team change requests, they can be submitted anytime.

The application is emailed to the AEC Executive for review and the AEC Executive retains the right to request clarification or additional information, or defer consideration to the full AEC as required. The Principal Investigator will be notified of the outcome in writing. A copy of correspondence must be retained on file by the Research Governance Unit. All research team changes are ratified by the AEC at the next scheduled quorate meeting.

Associated Procedures/Instructions

4.5 – Committee Executive

Reference Documents

- Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes (2013)
- Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018)
- Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (1986)
- Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations (2008)

Authorized by:



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