

HREC Standard Operating Procedure

5.2 Composition of Committee

Statement of Intent and Outcomes

The St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne (SVHM) Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) is committed to fulfilling Section 5.1 of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2023) by ensuring that the composition of the Committee remains compliant with relevant standards.

Procedures

The SVHM HREC is constituted and functions in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans (2023) and in accordance with NHMRC Act 1992.

The minimum membership of an HREC is eight. As far as possible there should be equal numbers of men and women, at least one third of the members should be from outside the institution for which the HREC is reviewing research.

Furthermore, for a meeting to meet quorum, the minimum membership must include:

1. A Chairperson, with suitable experience, whose other responsibilities will not impair the HREC's capacity to carry out its obligations under this National Statement;
2. At least two lay people, one man and one woman, who have no affiliation with the institution and do not currently engage in medical, scientific, legal or academic work;
3. At least one person with knowledge of, and current experience in, the professional care, counselling or treatment of people; for example, a nurse or allied health professional;
4. At least one person who performs a pastoral care role in a community, for example, an Aboriginal elder or a minister of religion;
5. At least one lawyer, where possible one who is not engaged to advise the institution.
6. At least two people with current research experience that is relevant to research proposals to be considered at the meetings they attend. These two members may be selected, according to need, from an established pool of inducted members with relevant expertise.

SVHM holds two HREC meetings per month and has appointed two Chairpersons who alternate each meeting. Additionally SVHM may appoint one Deputy Chair from the above list of members to act in the capacity of Chair during periods of absence.

The Committee must also operate according to ICH Good Clinical Practice Guidelines and applicable regulations.

If a member of the HREC is an investigator listed on a project under review, the member must declare a conflict of interest and must not be involved in the review/approval process.

Documentation confirming the Composition of the Committee must remain publicly available via the internet at all times, whilst the names of Committee members must be published in the annual research report of the institution.


Associated Procedures/Instructions

Procedure 5.12 – Conflicts of Interest

Reference Documents

- The National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2023)
- Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities: Guidelines for researchers and stakeholders (2018)
- Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018)

Authorised by: Dr Megan Robertson, Director of Research



Megan ROBERTSON (Jul 1, 2024 09:47 GMT+10)

Author: Alexandra Braun, HREC Executive Officer

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