



# Central Adelaide Local Health Network Human Research Ethics Committee (CALHN HREC) Terms of Reference

## 1. Title:

Central Adelaide Local Health Network Human Research Ethics Committee

## 2. Purpose:

Central Adelaide Local Health Network Human Research Ethics Committee (CALHN HREC) is responsible for the approval and monitoring of ethical aspects of research involving humans. In so doing the committee:

- Safeguards the rights, safety and wellbeing of all research participants and ensures that any research involving human subjects is underpinned by the basic ethical principles of respect for persons, non-maleficence and justice.
- Encourages research to the extent that it is judged to be both scientifically worthwhile and ethically satisfactory.

## 3. Scope:

The CALHN HREC undertakes ethical and scientific review of:

- Proposals for human research to be undertaken at or under the auspices of Central Adelaide Local Health Network (CALHN) and Northern Adelaide Local Health Network (NALHN).
- Proposals for human research received by the CALHN HREC in the exercise of its function as an accredited HREC within the streamlined ethical review of proposals of SA Health.
- Proposals for human research received by the CALHN HREC in the exercise of review processes accepted, accredited or certified for the purposes of any other system designed to eliminate unnecessary duplication of ethical review of human research in accordance with Chapter 5.3 of the National Statement, including the National Mutual Acceptance program operating in Australia.

The CALHN HREC shall consult with the Aboriginal Health Research Ethics Committee of South Australia or otherwise seek advice on the appropriateness of any research proposal which is specific to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

## 4. Responsibilities:

The CALHN HREC:

- Ensures that the proposed research will not expose participants to unacceptable risks and practices; and that the potential participants can evaluate the expected consequences of their involvement and decide for themselves whether to participate.
- Undertakes its role with due regard to cultural and social factors which may be important to research participants.
- Continuously monitors and reviews, at least annually, the progress of research to maintain satisfaction regarding compliance with contemporary ethical standards and requirements.
- Receives and responds to adverse event and other safety reports relating to approved studies.
- Undertakes an educational role with research in matters relating to ethics.
- Seeks and maintains certification under the National Certification Scheme.
- Works under the principles of the National Approach to Single Ethical Review (the National Approach).
- Maintains registration with the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC).
- Reviews and makes a determination whether to support applications made by Medical Practitioners to become Authorised Prescribers of unapproved therapeutic goods under Therapeutic Goods

The CALHN HREC's reporting obligations are to:

- Provide a ratified copy of the minutes of each meeting, signed by the Chair, to the Executive Director Medical Services of CALHN.
- Report annually, in writing, to the Executive Director Medical Services of CALHN and the NHMRC on activity and procedural changes including
  - Membership / Membership Changes
  - Number of Meetings held per annum
  - Number of protocols presented, approved and rejected
  - Monitoring procedures in place and any problems encountered
  - Complaints procedures and number of complaints received

External to the institution the CALHN HREC will:

- Establish and maintain communication with the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and provide access on request (without revealing the personal details of any research participant or responder) to information held by the CALHN HREC.
- Provide information from aggregated records as requested by the NHMRC.
- Make the CALHN HREC's Terms of Reference publicly available in accordance with Section 5.1.27 of the NHMRC National Statement.

## **5. Membership:**

Membership of the CALHN HREC shall comply with the requirements of sections 5.1.29 – 5.1.36 of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Human Subjects (2007).

The CALHN HREC will have a minimum membership of eight (8) members. As far as possible:

- there should be equal numbers of men and women; and
- at least one third of the members should be from outside the institution

**The minimum membership is:**

- (a) a Chair, with suitable experience, whose other responsibilities will not impair the CALHN HREC's capacity to carry out its obligations under this National Statement;
- (b) 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;
- (c) 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;
- (d) at least one person who performs a pastoral care role in a community, for example, an Aboriginal elder, a minister of religion;
- (e) at least one lawyer, where possible one who is not engaged to advise the institution;
- (f) 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.

### **Appointment of members**

- CALHN shall appoint members in a fair and transparent manner via the Office of the Executive Director Medical Services of CALHN.
- Members shall receive a formal notice of appointment and an assurance that CALHN will provide legal protection for their activity as members of the committee.
- Members shall be required to sign a confidentiality agreement and conflict of interest statement annually.
- Members of the CALHN HREC not employed by SA Health may receive an honorarium as gazetted in the SA Health Policy Directive, "Sitting Fees and Reimbursement for External Individuals".

### **Appointment of Chair and Deputy Chair**

- On advice from the retiring Chair, and following a competitive recruitment process, the new Chair will be appointed by the Executive Director Medical Services of CALHN.

- On advice from the current Chair, and with due consultation, one or more Deputy Chairs, from within the CALHN HREC membership, will be appointed by the Executive Director Medical Services of CALHN.

#### **Attendance at Meetings**

- Members shall make an attempt to attend all scheduled meetings. Where a member is absent for a meeting, they shall give an apology to the HREC Support Officer at least 2 weeks in advance of the meeting.
- To ensure quorum requirements are met in accordance with National Statement 5.2.28., the absent member should expect to receive all the relevant meeting papers and take the opportunity to contribute their views so that these can be recorded and considered (NHMRC National Statement 5.2.30).

#### **Tenure**

- The tenure of members is for three years and members may be reappointed for additional terms with the agreement of the Executive Director Medical Services of CALHN.
- One third of members will be appointed or reappointed at the beginning of each calendar year.
- The tenure of the Chair is for three years and the Chair may be reappointed for additional terms with the agreement of the committee and the Executive Director Medical Services of CALHN.
- In accordance with the National Statement 5.1.35 members are not appointed as representatives of any organisation, group or opinion.
- Appointments and tenure should take into consideration the need to maintain a high level of relevant skills and expertise within the CALHN HREC.

#### **Function of the Chair**

- To lead CALHN HREC and provide vision to meet stated objectives.
- Direct discussions to effectively use the time available to review research protocols.
- Ensure minutes/action plan accurately reflect discussions/decisions/issues
- Ensure CALHN HREC has the necessary information to undertake required actions
- Maintain liaison with CALHN Executive on activity.

#### **Member responsibilities**

In addition to the requirements outlined above for attendance at meetings, members are required to:

- Where relevant, ensure any objections to consensus decisions are formally documented.
- Treat all deliberations of the committee in the strictest of confidence.

### **6. Ways of working:**

- The CALHN HREC will hold meetings via a mixture of face to face and MS Teams. In response to directives from SA Health meetings may only be held via MS Teams.
- The CALHN HREC agenda, accompanied by all the required documentation for review of research proposals will be distributed not later than 5 working days prior to the CALHN HREC meeting.
- The CALHN HREC Chair may assign research proposals for review by CALHN HREC members with specific expertise prior to the review at the CALHN HREC meeting.
- A formal record of a meeting will be maintained and clearly identify date/time of meeting, name of chair and minute taker, list of attendees and apologies received. Minutes will identify decisions that are made at the meeting, and incorporate key discussion points that contextualise the decision making and be formally accepted as correct at the following meeting.
- A record of activity shall be maintained which allows tracking of progress relating to approval of studies.

- Decisions should be made upon consensus.
- In instances where full agreement is not reached, outstanding issues will be resolved with the investigator(s).
  - The CALHN HREC will decide whether to delegate authority to the Chair or a sub- committee of CALHN HREC members with specific expertise to adjudicate on investigator responses.
  - The CALHN HREC may request the advice of an expert to assist in assessing an application.
  - The CALHN HREC must ratify the review of decisions which have been delegated to the Chairman for consideration.
  - Observers may be present by invitation and agreement of the members present providing that they have signed a confidentiality and conflict of interest declaration.
  - Investigators may be invited to attend the meeting to support their application for ethical approval.

CALHN HREC members' behaviour is to be based on the principles of the South Australian Public Sector Code of Conduct and the relevant SA Health policies which include the following:

- Respectful Behaviors
- Organisational Development
- Communication
- Employee Relations
- Supportive Working Environments
- Occupational Health, Safety & Welfare

#### **7. Executive Sponsor(s):**

Executive Director Medical Services Reports to Strategic Executive

#### **8. Administrative Support**

Administrative support for the CALHN HREC and CALHN HREC Chair is provided by the CALHN Research Office.

#### **9. Frequency of Meetings:**

Twice a month (except January).

#### **10. Quorum:**

In accordance with NHMRC National Statement Section 5.2.28, quorum shall be at least one member from each category of the minimum membership. Where there is less than full attendance of the minimum membership at a meeting, the Chair should be satisfied, before a decision is reached, that the views of those absent who belong to the minimum membership have been received and considered (NHMRC National Statement Section 5.2.30)

#### **11. Business Papers**

- The Chair shall approve the agenda prior to the meeting. Minutes and agenda will be distributed by the HREC Support Officer of the Chair one week before the next meeting.
- Members of the Committee can add items for discussion to the Agenda by submitting items, and attachments 10 days prior to the next meeting.
- All meetings will be minuted. The Chair will electronically sign the minutes after the minutes are ratified at the following meeting.

#### **12. Reporting Committees:**

Investigational Drugs Sub-Committee of the CALHN HREC (IDSC)

#### **Version Control**

Reviewed by	CALHN HREC	
Last reviewed	September 2022	Next Due: August 2025/as required