

Guideline

Public Awareness of Research Projects

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Applicable to	All research personnel, students or staff (permanent, temporary, casual) within all facilities and services involved with supporting or conducting research at CHQ.				
Authorisation	Executive Director Clinical Services				

Purpose

This document provides guidance to researchers who wish to advertise for participants to be involved in research projects.

Among the responsibilities of the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) is to ensure that appropriate safeguards exist to protect the rights and welfare of research subjects. To this end, any proposed information sharing about a project by researchers must be both ethically and scientifically sound.

Scope

This guideline applies to any new application submitted for review by the Children's Health Queensland Human Research Ethics Committee (CHQ HREC) in which the applicant(s) propose to use information brochures, web-based material or social media platforms to disseminate information about the project, if approved, must declare this in the initial application or as a protocol amendment if a later decision is made by the research team.

Related documents

Policy and standard(s)

- [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research \(2007\) - Updated 2018](#)
- [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018](#)
- [Standard Operating Procedures for Queensland Health HREC Administrators](#)
- [Queensland Health Research Management Policy QH-POL-013:2015](#)

Procedures, Guidelines, Protocols

- [Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities: Guidelines for researchers and stakeholders](#)

Guideline

The Children's Health Queensland Human Research Ethics Committee (CHQ HREC) accepts that many institutions allow information about research projects to be published using a variety of media. The Ethics Committee is also aware that disease or condition specific family-support groups share information about research trials with families.

The HREC will permit information sharing about research trials under strict conditions. Such information sharing may take the form of information brochures, newsletters, web-based material or social media platforms.

The HREC has the authority, delegated through the Executive Director of Medical Services, to approve, require modifications to, or disapprove all research activities within Children's Health Queensland. Any new application for review by the HREC in which the applicant(s) propose to use information brochures, web-based material or social media platforms to disseminate information about the project, if approved, must declare this in the initial application or as a protocol amendment if a later decision is made by the research team.

Required Information

Among the responsibilities of the HREC is to ensure that appropriate safeguards exist to protect the rights and welfare of research subjects. To this end, any proposed information sharing about a project by researchers must be both ethically and scientifically sound. The level of information should be restricted to:

- the title
- the condition under study
- purpose of the study
- a brief protocol summary
- basic eligibility and exclusion criteria
- where the study will be conducted
- the expected time commitment
- a nominated contact person for further information
 - this should never be the child's principal, treating doctor or health professional

Such information cannot:

- offer, promise or imply a certainty of cure or other benefit beyond what is contained in the protocol and the informed consent document. This is especially critical when a study may involve subjects who are likely to be vulnerable to undue influence
- be coercive in nature e.g. *"This is a fun study..."* *"This is an exciting opportunity..."*
- no claims should be made, either explicitly or implicitly, that the drug, biologic or device is safe or effective for the purposes under investigation, or that the test article is known to be equivalent or superior to any other drug, biologic agent or device
- information sharing for recruitment into investigational drug, biologic or device studies should not use terms such as "new treatment," "new medication" or "new drug" without explaining that the test article is investigational. A phrase such as "receive new treatments" leads study subjects to believe they will be receiving new improved products of proven worth
- offer inducements such as payment, other than for reasonable legitimate expenses

Procedure

Any researcher proposing to use information-sharing about a research study using any of the modalities described above must submit these to the HREC, including the exact wording, when a project is submitted or as an amendment if this occurs later. For further information on the submission process, refer to the [CHQ HREC website](#) and [CHQ-PROC-90009 Ethical and Scientific Review of Human Research Procedure](#).

The HREC reserves the right to require changes or prevent the use of such materials if they do not meet the HREC's criteria. A research project cannot begin without HREC approval. The same applies to use of information sharing. Use ahead of HREC approval of the project presumes that HREC approval is a given and that the form of words would also be approved. Neither may be assumed.

Consultation

Key stakeholders who reviewed this version:

- Chair, HREC
- Co-ordinator, HREC
- Members, HREC
- Business Manager Research
- Director of Research

Guideline revision and approval history

Version No.	Modified by	Amendments authorised by	Approved by
1.0 17/08/2021	HREC Coordinator	Business Manager Research	Director of Research

Keywords	Advertising, public awareness, HREC, ethics, research, publication, 90028
Accreditation references	<p>NSQHS Standards (1-8)</p> <p>NHMRC Act - Institutional Annual Compliance to applicable standards and guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018) • National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007, updated 2018 • Guidelines Approved under Section 95A of the Privacy Act 1988 (2014) • Guidelines under Section 95 of the Privacy Act 1988 (2000) • Principles and accessing and using publicly funded data for health research (2016) • Ethical conduct in research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and communities: Guidelines for researchers and stakeholders (2018) <p>ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management Systems: (4-10)</p>