

UnitingCare Queensland Human Research Ethics Committee



UCQ
HREC

Terms of Reference for UnitingCare Queensland Human Research Ethics Committee

Purpose

The UnitingCare Queensland Human Research Ethics Committee must ensure that a participant's inclusion in a research study complies with the Principles of Ethical Conduct set down in the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research, (March 2007).

The primary purpose of the ethical principles and associated guidelines for research involving humans is to promote ethically good human research. Fulfilment of this purpose requires that participants be accorded the respect and protection that is due to them. It also involves the fostering of research that is of benefit to the community.

The Principles of Ethical Conduct examined by the Committee should cover the principles of:

- Justice
- Beneficence
- Respect
- Risk and Benefit
- Participant's Consent

(Reference: National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research – March 2007), Section 1, pp11-13; Section 2, pp15-24)

Interpretation

“Committee” means the UnitingCare Queensland Human Research Committee.

The Committee in line with the National Statement states UCQ HREC is not supposed to examine the issue of research merit and integrity of individual projects – it is just supposed to review proposals from an ethical standpoint.

1. Roles and Responsibilities

- (i) The Committee will receive applications for official approval of research involving humans as defined by the NHMRC (National Health & Medical Research Council)
- (ii) Provides approval following due process
- (iii) Monitors any ethical issues
- (iv) Requests and receives regular reports
- (v) Reports annually to NHMRC
- (vi) Recruits members

2. Membership

2.1 Appointment of Members

The Committee shall be appointed by the Chair and endorsed by the UCQ Chief Executive Officer. The normal term of appointment is to be for a period of three (3) years from the date of the letter of appointment. As far as possible the principle of rotational membership must be observed. After serving three terms (9 years), retiring members must stand down for at least one year before being eligible for re-appointment. A review of membership will be carried out at least every three years.

2.2 The Committee will be composed of at least:

- One Nursing Academic Representative
- One Medical Practitioner
- One Allied Health Academic
- One Allied Health Practitioner
- One Legal Representative
- One Pastoral Care Representative
- One Male Community Consumer
- One Female Community Consumer

The Committee shall be chaired by the nominee of the UCQ Chief Executive Officer. An alternative chair may be appointed by the Committee if the Chair is not available or if they have a material interest in a matter under consideration. A permanent Deputy Chair shall also be appointed.

2.3 New members are orientated into HREC in accordance with the HREC Induction Checklist.

2.4 Members will be required to observe the appropriate confidentiality of the content of the applications and the deliberations of review bodies (in accordance with the NHMRC National Statement 5.1.37(t).)

3. Authority and Reporting

The Committee has the authority to carry out its responsibilities as outlined in Point 1 of this document. The Committee reports to the UCQ Chief Executive Officer.

4. Policy Development

Policies relating to the work of the HREC will be developed as required. Policies will be approved by the UCQ Chief Executive Officer.

5. Meetings and Attendance

The Committee meets every 2nd Tuesday of the month depending upon any research applications being submitted. The Chair may cancel a meeting if no applications are

received for consideration at that month's meeting by its deadline date; or if the applications have been considered by expedited review.

6. Conflict of Interest

A member of the Committee must declare to the Chair if there is a real or apparent personal or work related interest in the research matter under consideration, likely to be interpreted as a conflict of interest such that they may gain personal benefit, financial or otherwise from the research matter under consideration. Further participation in discussion and decision making in relation to the research matter will be guided by the Chair.

7. Minutes

Proceedings of the Committee are to be minuted and approved by the Chair.

8. Regular review

The performance of the Committee will be reviewed annually by the UCQ Chief Executive Officer to ensure that the Committee is meeting its responsibilities as set out in this document. The UCQ Chief Executive Officer may make recommendations to the Chair in relation to the Committee's membership, responsibilities, functions or otherwise. This document will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains consistent with the Committee's authority, purpose and responsibilities.

(last amended: September 2015)