

POSITION STATEMENT



Position Title: Human Research Ethics Committee Member – Chair

Directorate: Chief Medical Office - Ballarat Health Services and St John of God Human Research Ethics Committee (BHS SJOG HREC)

Appointment Terms/Conditions

- **Classification and Code:** The Chair is offered an honorarium in acknowledgment of the time associated with chairing the meetings and performing executive duties

ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

Vision

Excellence in health care.
Our patients / Our Staff / Our community

Mission

Ballarat Health Services' primary role is to deliver quality care to the communities we serve by providing safe, accessible and integrated health services resulting in positive experiences and outcomes.

Ballarat Health Services – St John of God Human Research Ethics Committee (BHS SJOG HREC)

The role of the BHS SJOG HREC is to promote ethical human research, to protect the welfare of research participants and to foster research that benefits the community.

The BHS SJOG HREC is a National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) registered committee and is a joint undertaking by the two hospitals in Ballarat – Ballarat Health Services and St John of God.

The committee's role is to review research proposals that involve human participants to ensure that they meet ethical standards and guidelines. These guidelines include the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007 (updated 2018).

The National Statement uses the four guiding principles as the basis for consideration of applications. These are:

- Research Merit and Integrity
- Justice
- Beneficence
- Respect

BHS SJOG HREC COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Ballarat Health Services – St John of God Human Research Ethics Committee (BHS SJOG HREC) has a current vacancy for the role of Chair. The Chair, as leader of the BHS SJOG HREC is responsible for the committee function, ensuring that all ethical issues are explored and clear decisions made and recorded.

A chairperson is someone 'with suitable experience, whose other responsibilities will not impair the HREC's capacity to carry out its obligations under this National Statement' 5.1.30(a) *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007 (updated 2018)*.

Ballarat Health Services staff and individuals external to the organisation are eligible to apply for this position.

Committee members should have an interest in and commitment to human research and an understanding of the principles underpinning ethical research.

All HREC members receive:

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- Training support for their role as HREC member
- The opportunity to understand more about research being performed within the local health services

KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

- To uphold the responsibilities of the HREC Chair and apply the ethical principles and values set out in the National Statement of Ethical Conduct in Human Research (the National Statement), the HREC terms of reference, Ballarat Health Services policy and procedures, and operating guidelines
- To provide leadership and impartial guidance in relation to the responsible conduct of research on human participants as per the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (the Code) and the National Statement
- To chair HREC meetings in a manner that ensures that the views of all members are received and considered and that consensus-based decisions are made where possible
- To make decisions about the most appropriate ethical review pathway for ethics applications, amendments, reports, etc
- To consider the ethical implications of proposed research projects on human participants and to determine whether they are acceptable on ethical grounds
- To review monitoring reports about approved research projects until completion to ensure compliance with approved ethical standards
- To promote good communication between the HREC, researchers, and the institution

SPECIFIC DUTIES

- Become familiar with the National Statement and consult other guidelines relevant to the review of specific research proposals
- Read ethics applications, including ethics applications, amendments and reports that require full ethical review and expedited review.
- Prepare for and attend scheduled meetings of the committee or, if unavailable, provide opinions in writing on the ethical acceptability of research proposals before meetings.
- Contribute to the exchange of opinions from members at the meetings.
- Follow established mechanisms for receiving and promptly handling complaints or concerns about the conduct of an approved research project or conduct of the HREC.
- Promote staff, student, and HREC member awareness of relevant legislation, policies, procedures and guidelines.
- Report to the NHMRC and external agencies as appropriate.
- Review and comment on institutional plans and policies that may affect the welfare and rights of human participants.
- Liaise with the Committee's administrative support staff regarding preparation for HREC meetings, including reviewing draft agenda and supporting documentation;
- Be available to Executive Office staff (via email or phone) on a planned or ad hoc/daily basis, at least xx hours per week as necessary to:
 - Review agendas and draft minutes
 - Review draft response letters to applicants and supervisors
 - Provide ad hoc guidance and advice
 - others??

KEY SELECTION CRITERIA

- The chair will require suitable experience in accordance with the responsibilities and duties outlined above.

- The chair's other responsibilities must not impair the HREC's capacity to carry out its obligations under the National Statement.
- Current or previous research experience, ethics committee experience, and/or senior academic experience will be highly advantageous
- The capacity to understand important ethical issues and how these relate to the National Statement, the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (code) and other relevant legislation or policies.

Personal attributes required:

- Ability to facilitate and actively lead meetings that require consensus-based decisions
- An ability to listen to and appreciate the views of others, and to formulate and express a considered opinion
- Ability to review large proposals within short timeframes
- High standards of integrity and professionalism
- Effective interpersonal skills and the ability to work collaboratively
- Ability to interpret policy and legislation and apply it sensibly

MEETING INFORMATION AND DATES

The core business of each meeting is to review research proposals to ensure they conform to ethical principles, such as those contained in the National Statement. The HREC also discusses emerging ethical issues regarding research.

Meetings are collegial and their function is to bring together all member's views on the ethical implications of each research proposal.

The HREC meetings take place from 12:30pm to 2pm every 6 weeks on a Thursday. Meeting dates are published each February.

Papers for each meeting are circulated one week beforehand and there is an expected commitment of xx hours to read the papers.

Members will also be expected to participate in the delegated HREC sub-committee reviewing low and negligible risk applications out-of-session.

OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

- Appointment is subject to a satisfactory current Police Record Check.
- Appointments to the committee are generally for a term of xx years

HOW TO APPLY

Applications or specific queries should be sent to Kirsty Broadbent, Research Ethics and Governance Officer.

Your application should include:

- A cover letter explaining why you are interested and why you think you would be suitable to be a member of the Committee
- A copy of your current Curriculum Vitae

Apply on-line at: www.bhs.org.au

AUTHORISATIONS

Employee	
Department Manager	Ashleigh Clarke
Director / Chief Executive Officer	
Date Written:	Date Revised: February 2021