

Guidelines for Other Departments and Organisations Wishing to Undertake Cooperative Research with The Division of Nursing and Departments from The Division of Allied Health at The Children's Hospital at Westmead

The Division of Nursing and the Division of Allied Health¹ at the Children's Hospital at Westmead (CHW) constantly seek to develop a research culture and to improve clinical practice through strengthening its evidence base. The Divisions of Nursing and Allied Health view cooperative research with other departments and units, both from within and external to the hospital, as a strategic advantage in developing research skills and programs. Nurses and Allied Health staff conduct their own research and collaborate with, and contribute to, studies which originate from other departments within the hospital as well as from external organisations.

These guidelines set a framework for organisations, departments and individuals wishing to conduct research in collaboration with members of staff employed by the Division of Nursing and departments of the Division of Allied Health. The aims of the guidelines are to ensure that appropriate time and resources are available for research without detracting from a commitment to provide the highest quality clinical care, and to ensure that the contributions of all parties involved in the research are appropriately acknowledged.

Guidelines

1. Nursing and Allied Health staff at CHW will only participate in research that is approved by the CHW Ethics Committee. Where other organisations are involved in the research (e.g. universities or other hospitals) approvals of their ethics committees is also required. Clarification may need to be sought through the CHW Research Office as to whether a particular project is Quality Management or Research and thus whether it requires Ethics approval.
2. Whenever research is required to be undertaken in a ward or allied health department or involves specific nurses or allied health staff, communication with relevant Nursing Unit Managers (NUMS), Clinical Nurse Consultants (CNCs) and Allied Health Departments should occur early in the project planning, well prior to submission of any ethics or funding proposals, to allow adequate time to allow for proper consideration of the costs and resource requirements.
3. The CHW Ethics Committee guidelines require that the signatures of all relevant NUMs and heads of departments are submitted with the Ethics application where staff, resources or collaboration is required for a project.
4. Participation of Nursing clinicians and Allied Health Departments in research will be dependent on availability of funding to cover the costs of equipment, staff and other expenses arising from the research. Items such as assessment tools, record

¹ Departments in the Division of Allied Health are:

Audiology	Children's Cochlear Implant Centre	Kids Health
Nutrition and Dietetics	Occupational Therapy including Play Therapy and Music Therapy	
Orthoptics	Orthotics	Pharmacy
Physiotherapy	Psychology	Speech Pathology
Social Work		

forms and other costs and expendables (eg drugs, videos) will also need to be included in the budget. It is expected that researchers will collaborate with respective NUMs and Allied Health Departmental Heads to ensure that study proposals include a budget to cover the costs of any Nursing and Allied Health staff and resources.

5. Research funding may be used to employ additional nursing and allied health staff for a project or, alternatively, to employ clinical staff to backfill an existing position to allow the staff member to participate in the research project. Nursing and Allied Health Departments may undertake to partially fund projects that are highly merited, closely linked and beneficial to clinical practice, and where the allocation of staff and resources is not detrimental to existing departmental services and activities.
6. Nursing and/or Allied Health staff may be involved as chief investigators, co-investigators, project coordinators or as data collectors as negotiated with the research team. In most instances, at least one nurse or member of an allied health discipline should be an investigator when this discipline is involved in any capacity in the research project. A formal agreement should be reached, as part of the study protocol, regarding the respective roles and responsibilities of all participants, including nursing and allied health clinicians. Agreements related to workloads, duties, authorship, acknowledgment in presentations/publications must be documented and signed by all parties.
7. Relevant to Allied Health: Existing information including assessment/test data collected by allied health staff may be requested for analysis in research projects. This information can be released under the following circumstances:
 - a. the project has been planned in consultation with the allied health departments involved
 - b. the project has received confirmed Ethics approval from CHW
 - c. the head of the respective departments have approved release of the data
 - d. at least one member of the involved allied health department is involved as co-investigator and co-author on any papers arising from the research.
8. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with any existing guidelines from a Nursing Unit or Allied Health Department. Any discrepancies between guidelines should be negotiated prior to submission of an ethics application.

**This document was prepared by NAHRC for, and in consultation with, the
Division of Nursing and the Division of Allied Health and has been approved by:
The Director of Clinical Services (Nursing) and
The Chair, Division of Allied Health
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Acknowledgment

This document was developed from *Guidelines for other departments wishing to undertake cooperative research with the Division of Nursing* prepared by Lynne Brodie in the Nursing Support Unit in consultation with Professor Sue Nagy, Associate Professor Kaye Spence, Jenni Jarvis and Rhonda Woodward, August 28th, 2001.