

the children's hospital at Westmead

POLICY

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Policy Statement:

This policy applies to all Nursing and Allied Health students wishing to undertake research at The Children's Hospital at Westmead.

Notes:

- 1 This policy is to be filed in the Ward/Department Policy Book
- 2 Department Heads should ensure that all staff is briefed on the policy (if relevant to the Department)
- 3 This policy remains current until replaced/rescinded by the Issuing Authority

BACKGROUND

Sound research requires the maintenance of high ethical standards, reliable and valid methods of data collection and accuracy in reporting. The research performed by nursing and allied health professionals within The Children's Hospital at Westmead (CHW) is of a varied nature and employs a range of methodologies. Collaboration in research is important, and the Hospital actively encourages students interested in paediatric care and child health to undertake research at this institution.

For general guidelines on research practice see the document at:

http://www.avcc.edu.au/news/public_statements/publications/grespra.htm

The aims of this document are to provide guidelines for nursing and allied health students undertaking research toward honours or higher degrees and to define the requirements of the Hospital in relation to clinical supervision. A research project provides the student with grounding in the design, conduct and reporting of research. It is important that the findings of research projects are made available. Publication in professional journals is actively encouraged, so that the benefits of the research are disseminated to the wider professional and research community.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR CLINICAL SUPERVISION

All students undertaking research at CHW are required to have a clinical supervisor who is a staff member of the Hospital. The clinical supervisor should be appointed prior to submission of the project to the CHW Ethics Committee. Clinical supervisors are selected on the basis of their familiarity with the field of study and the methodology to be employed in the project. The clinical supervisor is the primary point of contact for the student at the Hospital and is responsible for supervising the student in relation to professional conduct and management of the project within the Hospital. Therefore, the clinical supervisor should be familiar with the applicable government, institutional (Hospital and University) and departmental guidelines for the conduct of research, requirements for confidentiality, and occupational health and safety matters, and should bring these to the attention of the student.

Students may also have a university-based supervisor who supervises the student in relation to the requirements of the university. Supervision of the research design, methodology, data collection, analysis and interpretation of findings may be provided by either the clinical supervisor or the university supervisor.

Key considerations for successful supervision include:

- selection of a clinical supervisor with appropriate qualifications and knowledge relevant the project, or a major component, with an associate supervisor for the other component,
- availability of continuous effective intellectual interaction and oversight of the research at all times,

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- coordination and communication between the clinical supervisor and the university supervisor,
- clear definitions of the responsibilities and expectations of each party (student, clinical supervisor, and university supervisor),
- provision of necessary resources and facilities within the department undertaking the research,
- efficient management of the project to ensure the research and report/thesis is completed in a timely manner.

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

i) Research proposals

- Proposals by students to undertake research at CHW should be submitted to the Division of Nursing or relevant Allied Health department. The Centre for Research and Evidence-Based Nursing will assist nursing research students to locate an appropriate clinical supervisor. The Research Coordinators within Allied Health departments will assist allied health research students to locate an appropriate clinical supervisor.
- Students should prepare a brief proposal that outlines the nature of the research, overall aim, expected timeframe, and resources required (e.g., facilities, equipment and staff time). The proposal should be submitted together with any relevant correspondence (e.g., with university ethics committees).
- Written information on the requirements and supervision of the university should be included with the proposal.
- Following clarification of supervision arrangements, research proposals must be submitted to the CHW Ethics Committee. Proposals to the Ethics Committee are also reviewed by the Scientific Advisory Committee.

ii) Written agreement with clinical supervisor

Students and supervisors should prepare and co-sign a written agreement that includes:

- the timeframe and frequency of supervision,
- documentation of supervision and progress,
- the status of the supervisor(s) as a co-investigator(s),
- the respective roles of the clinical and university supervisors,
- requirements in relation to reporting and dissemination of the results,
- authorship of publications from the research.

iii) Oral presentation of the results

- All students are required give at least one 15 minute presentation (10 minute talk and 5 minutes for questions) outlining their project design and research findings at an appropriate forum within the Hospital. It may be helpful for the student to also present the project at an early stage in order to receive feedback on the research design.

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- Presentation of the findings at a hospital or professional meeting (e.g., hospital clinical or research meeting, or a regional, national or international conference) is also encouraged.

iv) Written report of results

- On completion of the study, the student will provide a copy of their research report or thesis to the clinical supervisor within an agreed time frame. Research reports should include the background to the project, aims, method, results and discussion of the findings, including the implications for practice and further research.

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