

[insert organisation name/logo]

Research and Development Policy

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Record of Policy Review

Review Date	Person Initiating/Leading Review	Other People Consulted

Triggers for Policy Review (tick all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Standard review is timetabled. | <input type="checkbox"/> Internal / organisational factors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A gap has been identified | <input type="checkbox"/> A stakeholder has identified a need, eg by email, telephone etc |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional knowledge or information has become available to supplement the policy. | <input type="checkbox"/> A serious or critical incident has occurred, requiring an urgent review. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> External factors | <input type="checkbox"/> Need for consistency in service delivery across programs and organisations. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Policy is no longer relevant/current due to changes in external operating environment. | <input type="checkbox"/> Separate, stand-alone policy is now warranted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> There are changes to laws, regulations, terminology and/or government policy. | <input type="checkbox"/> A near miss has occurred, requiring a review to prevent a serious/critical incident in the future |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Changes to funding environment, including requirements of funding bod(y)ies | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify). | |

Additional Comments

[for example, policy now covers details related to new legislation].

Research and Development Policy

1. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to **[insert organisation name]** in carrying out and supporting research relevant to personal, service, organisational and sector development.

[insert organisation name] is committed to the application of research and evidence based practice in all areas of its operation and views this policy as essential to its continuous quality improvement.

This policy applies to all formal research projects undertaken or supported by **[insert organisation name]**.

2. Definitions

A formal research project is an original, systematic inquiry to establish facts, test a Hypothesis, or carry out an evaluation and generally leads to the creation of a written report.

Development is the experimental introduction into practice of alternative procedures or methods of support, together with the simultaneous evaluation of their effectiveness, efficiency or both.

Evidence based practice is the conscious, conscientious and explicit application of the best available research and evidence, together with professional expertise and consumer choice, to work practices.

Participatory Action Research

Is an approach to research that emphasises the involvement of consumers, community members and researchers in all aspects of the research process.

Practice wisdom is the possession of practice experience and knowledge together with the ability to use them critically, intuitively and practically. These qualities, skills and processes are developed through critical reflection and review of practice.

A research agreement is the contractual basis for specific research activity and contains all the terms and conditions to which involved parties agree.

Research networks are collaborations of people (such as researchers, academics, service providers, students, families and people with mental health issues) who share an interest in mental health and research to further the understanding of

mental health and related improvements in policy, service design and delivery, and service outcomes.

3. Principles

[insert organisation name] is committed to providing the best possible support to people with lived experience of mental illness. We recognise the importance of research in providing an evidence base to inform continuous improvement in policy and service design and delivery.

Staff are encouraged to identify opportunities for innovation, and have adequate resources to participate in research activities.

Research undertaken by, and/or supported by, **[insert organisation name]** is expected to comply with the standard ethical requirements contained in the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans* (1999) developed by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) in accordance with the *NHMRC Act, 1992* (Cwth).

Researchers are required to comply with the following legislation and guidelines:

- NSW Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998
- NSW Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act, 1998
- NSW Guardianship Act, 1987
- Guidelines for Ethical Research in Indigenous Studies (Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, 2010)
- Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act 2000.

4. Outcomes

Services and programs provided by **[insert organisation name]** are guided by research findings and evidence based practice, and staff are supported through training/workforce development to understand and identify the primacy of consumers' experience in this research and translation into practice. Staff are supported through training and workforce development to implement change and apply evidence-based practice.

Research activity undertaken by **[insert organisation name]**:

- is effectively managed through a framework which establishes, monitors and responds to quality, safety, ethics, risk management, financial management, misconduct and relevance
- has clear policies and processes for appropriate and secure storage of data
- supports and promotes the research agenda of the sector
- maximises sector research efforts

- is responsibly and effectively reported and disseminated
- is used to demonstrate evidence based practice
- is disseminated to promote wider uptake of EBP/best practice
- is used to modify service delivery.
- provides opportunities for mentoring
- seeks opportunities for consumer-led or participatory research

[potentially for some CMOs [insert organisation name] administers research grants]

Research results contribute to the knowledge-base within the sector, are considered within the organisation, and direct improvements to **[insert organisation name]** services.

[insert organisation name] develops sector linkages and collaboration which encourage investment in new ideas and service innovations to improve outcomes for consumers.

[insert organisation name] Includes consumer/community participation in its research framework to ensure that research and development includes the experience of consumers.

5. Functions and Delegations

Position	Delegation/Task
Board of Directors	Endorse Research and Development Policy. Endorse research agenda Be aware of external funding, membership, contractual and partnership relationships. Review and endorse budgets and expenditure. Monitor organisational integrity
Management	Compliance with Research and Development Policy. <u>CEO/Manager</u> Identify and lead the development of relationships with external stakeholders. Support staff in Research and Development activities. Communicate with the Board of Directors, staff and external partners about the Research Agenda and progress.

	<p>Communicate with staff regarding current and potential research relationships pertinent to the organisation.</p> <p>Sign off on all external funding and contractual relationships.</p> <p>Manage research budgets and expenditure as delegated through projects and activities.</p> <p>Ensure staff have adequate skills and resources to participate in research activities.</p> <p>Develop the Research Agenda (Identify research projects in line with strategic objectives, priorities and policy).</p> <p>Support consumers and carers to contribute to the research agenda.</p> <p>Lead comparative and benchmarking activities and subsequent organisational change.</p> <p>Participate and support professional development opportunities.</p> <p>Affirm presentation activities to encourage dissemination and staff development</p> <p>Authorise staff attendance at conferences</p>
<p>Staff</p>	<p>Compliance with Research and Development Policy.</p> <p>Identify, lead the development of, and contribute to research relationships with external stakeholders as delegated through projects and activities.</p> <p>Communicate with (all) staff regarding the Research Agenda and current and potential research relationships pertinent to the organisation.</p> <p>Manage research budgets and expenditure as delegated through projects and activities. (in consultation with management)</p> <p>Maintain knowledge of current good practice related to research.</p> <p>Obtain written informed consent from consumers prior to sharing any personal information with researchers.</p> <p>Consider whether consumers may need other support to participate in research and post research activity</p> <p>Support consumers and carers to contribute to the research agenda.</p> <p>Lead or support research projects in line with strategic objectives, priorities and policy.</p>

	<p>Remain aware of new initiatives and best practices relevant to their role at the organisation.</p> <p>Support comparative and benchmarking activities and subsequent organisational change.</p> <p>Seek out professional development opportunities.</p>
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6. Risk Management

[name of organisation] ensures that research it undertakes, participates in or endorses has a sound theoretical base, is ethical and promotes evidence based practice for its programs, services, staff development and consumer outcomes.

All staff are supported to be aware of and keep up to date with available evidence based practice literature.

Expectations for Research Relationships will be in writing and/or in a Memorandum of Understanding. Systems are in place to ensure research relationships entered into are relevant, purposeful, time-framed, and prevent/manage conflicts of interest.

Staff members with Research and Development functions are provided with ongoing support and professional development.

All staff, volunteers, student placements and Board members are made aware of the Research and Development policy during orientation.

All staff involved in research are provided with ongoing support and professional development to assist them to undertake their duties effectively. Research, activity supporting research, and translation of research are included in role descriptions and workload/work reviews.

The policy will be reviewed in line with **[insert organisation name]**'s quality improvement program and/or relevant legislative changes.

7. Policy Implementation

All staff are responsible for the application of research and evidence based practices at **[insert organisation name]**. All staff, Board members, students and volunteers are made aware of this policy during orientation.

All staff are provided with ongoing support and professional development to maintain knowledge and implementation of good practice.

[insert organisation name]'s staff meetings provide a forum for the sharing of information and current research. Other mechanisms may also be used, such as circulation of journals, policy documents, reports, training opportunities, etc.

The Board delegates authority to senior executives and managers and defines their responsibility for the operation of all services to achieve goals and ensure Research and Development is undertaken and integrated effectively.

Board members, staff, students and volunteers are aware of **[insert organisation name]** procedures for Research and Development through orientation and induction processes.(see 6.4)

Research and Development is discussed at staff meetings for information sharing and planning purposes. Research and Development is discussed as part of the organisations strategic and business planning processes.

Details of external meetings with research partners and stakeholders are noted (minuted) in the **[insert location]** which is accessible by all staff.

8. Policy Detail

[insert organisation name]:

- initiates and maintains dialogue between mental health researchers, policy makers, practitioners, industry, consumer groups and carer groups.
- values and involves consumers to inform mental health service provision
- refers to contemporary research findings to inform mental health service provision, including consumer supports
- assists research centres and networks to undertake research within the mental health and related sectors
- Seeks to collaborate in research with other community services and tertiary education facilities / universities to address the often complex needs of consumers and to promote better outcomes through a 'no wrong doors' approach to practice
- contributes to thought leadership, across the community and sector, on mental health and related issues
- initiates and undertakes its own research to help inform a range of **[insert organisation name]** policies, programs and procedures.

8.1 Evidence-Based Practice

The provision of services and programs, including consumer supports at **[insert organisation name]**, are informed by evidence based practice.

[insert organisation name] conducts information gathering and analysis by formal and informal means to guide work practices. The following is a list of avenues to guide how information may be captured, disseminated, transferred.

- Organisational policies and supporting documents
- Government policies, guidelines and other resources
- Literature reviews
- Consumer, stakeholder and community consultation
- Library searches
- Email updates (e.g., MHCC member email updates)
- Membership and subscription to journals, magazines, professional bodies, etc.
- Newspapers and journal articles
- Searching the internet
- Internal project evaluations
- Forums and conferences
- Intersectoral meetings (internal and external)
- Verbal discussions and networking (with colleagues, sector contacts and networking at events).
- **[insert other]**.

Results of information gathering and analysis are documented in **[insert location]**, with sources noted.

8.1.1 Literature Reviews

A literature review is conducted for all projects and services at **[insert organisation name]**. This is carried out by the nominated manager or **[insert position]** or an external consultant. The purpose of the literature review is to examine all current and relevant research and knowledge on a particular topic. The literature review will usually also identify any relevant programs, projects or services that have been undertaken both locally, nationally and internationally.

8.1.2 Consultation

a) Consumers and other Stakeholders

Consumer needs and feedback are instrumental to inform the planning process and programs/services of the organisation. **[insert organisation name]** consults with consumers, the Board and stakeholders in many levels of decision making to inform work practices. Further, **[insert organisation name]** seeks input from consumers and the community to determine the priorities for research and development. The following consultation tools are used:

- o Questionnaires and surveys
- o Forums and workshops
- o Face to face interviews
- o Site visits

- Focus groups
- Board meetings
- Consumer representation
- **[insert other]**.

The results of consultations are collated, analysed and communicated to staff, consumers and involved stakeholders and are documented in **[insert location]**, with sources noted.

Where possible, **[insert organisation name]** monitors, reviews and measures the effectiveness of the consultation process, and the impact of consultations on practice/services/policies.

b) Advisory groups and committees

In addition to having diverse sector representation on project advisory groups and steering committees, **[insert organisation name]** facilitates consumer and carer representation on external groups and committees. These meetings provide a valuable resource for consulting with key stakeholders, experts and funding bodies and increase consumer input in determining policy and practice.

c) Consultants

[insert organisation name] may utilise the expertise of consultants or specialists in the sector to conduct work such as:

- Project scoping
- Literature reviews
- Project evaluations
- Data analysis
- Final reports.
- Research partnerships and network establishment

Recommendations from these activities are used to inform decision making. Further information about working with consultants can be found in the Integration Policy.

8.1.3 Practice Wisdom

[insert organisation name] staff come from a variety of backgrounds within the government, community managed, and private sectors, bringing with them a wealth of knowledge, skills and experience that contributes to the continuous improvement of the organisation.

The organisation utilises the diverse experience, knowledge and energy of staff members through:

- consultation,

- involvement in consumer/carer-focused, service-focused, and sector-focused activities for which they have experience and/or skill and/or passion, and
- opportunities for contribution to organisational development processes.

Staff are encouraged and supported to pursue professional development opportunities to develop and diversify skills, further enhance knowledge and apply evidence based practice.

8.2 Research Activities

[insert organisation name] may undertake, participate in and/or support research activities which aim to:

- strengthen outcomes for consumers, families and carers
- inform policy and program design to develop comprehensive mental health, substance use and service delivery within a rights based framework
- improve long-term strategies to manage demand for recovery oriented mental health services
- improve accountability, performance reporting and quality of recovery oriented mental health services
- provide an evidence base for mental health promotion and community development activities
- strengthen access to mainstream services for people with lived experience of mental illness
- strengthen mental health sector and cross-sector linkages, including the development of an on-line NSW and/or National Directory of Mental Health Services
- facilitate the development of a web-based NSW and/or National Mental Health Research Network

8.3 Research Agenda

[may be applicable to some CMOs only]

The Research Agenda is a statement of key directions for research.

[insert organisation name] develops a Research Agenda every **[insert time frame]**.

The Research Agenda aims to ensure that research is clearly linked to improving the quality of service delivery within **[insert organisation name]** and throughout the sector.

Research priorities are closely linked to **[insert organisation name]**'s Strategic Plan and, where identifiable, with research priorities of international, national mental health research agendas, and with partner research centres and research networks.

[insert organisation name] consults with consumers, carers, partner organisations and other stakeholders during the development of the Research Agenda.

The Research Agenda is endorsed by the Board prior to finalisation.

8.4 Research Agreement

Prior to commencement of any research activity, a Research Agreement (contract) between the **[insert position]** and the researcher/s (if internal to **[insert organisation name]**) or research organization/s (if external to **[insert organisation name]**) and any other formal research partners will be signed by those with authority to do so.

8.5 Consent/Agreement

All people involved in a study undertaken or supported by **[insert organisation name]** will only do so following approval by the Board, informed consent, or the agreement of a person with authority to consent on the person's behalf.

It must be clear that consent is given without undue influence, coercion or inducement.

The participant (and/or the person agreeing to participation on their behalf) must be informed that consent/agreement is an on-going process and that they may choose to withdraw their consent/agreement at any time during the study without penalty.

A copy of the Consent/Agreement Form and the Information Sheet will be provided to the consumer (and where relevant the person agreeing on their behalf), and is maintained in the consumer's personal file.

The Consent/Agreement Form and Information Sheet must state that the decision of the participant to withdraw from the research project will in no way effect their access to **[insert organisation name]** services.

Consent/agreement should be continually renegotiated throughout the person's participation in the project. Participants/families and legal guardians are to be provided the option to advise the researcher of their desire to withdraw consent/agreement to continue to participate in research at any time.

8.6 Information Sheet

Researchers involved with **[insert organisation name]** will provide an 'Information Sheet' to research participants (and family/carers where relevant) in appropriate language. The information provided must include:

- Who is responsible for the research
- The purpose of the research
- How the person was chosen as a participant
- Risks and inconveniences as well as anticipated benefits
- The research procedure, including the duration and frequency of meetings/interviews and who will be present
- The role of the researcher, including any identified limitations
- Mechanisms for ensuring confidentiality, anonymity and privacy, identified limitations, data access, storage, and disposal
- Data collection, analysis and information dissemination
- Mechanisms for feedback, complaint lodging, right of withdrawal and disposal of confidential information
- The name and contact details for a member of the research team who can be contacted for further information.

8.6.1 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Researchers involved with **[insert organisation name]** will demonstrate awareness of cultural considerations and sensitivity in regard to the beliefs and customs of the Aboriginal People or Torres Strait Islanders who are involved in research.

Any project which involves research that may affect the health and well-being of Aboriginal people and communities in New South Wales must be approved by the NSW Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council (AH&MRC) Ethics Committee. For more information, click [here](#) (or ph. 02-9212 4777, email ethics@ahmrc.org.au). An application should be made to this committee for research for which any one of the following applies:

- The experience of Aboriginal people is an explicit focus of all or part of the research; or
- Data collection is explicitly directed at Aboriginal peoples; or
- Aboriginal peoples, as a group, are to be examined in the results; or
- The information has an impact on one or more Aboriginal communities; or
- Aboriginal health funds are a source of funding

8.6.2 People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds

Researchers involved with **[insert organisation name]** will demonstrate awareness of the needs of people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds who require interpreter services, written resources and an understanding of particular cultural attitudes and actions.

8.7 Complaints

All complaints will be responded to through the Feedback and Complaints Policy.

Specific and user friendly information will be provided on the procedures for raising concerns or complaints as well as the process for complaint resolution on the 'Information Sheet.'

All participants must be advised that making a complaint related to the research project will in no way affect their access to **[insert organisation name]** services.

Should a complaint be received, **[insert organisation name]** may suspend a research project while an investigation is conducted. The **[insert position]** will advise the researcher of the outcome of the investigation and what action will be taken.

If a complaint is received regarding a project being undertaken by a student on placement at **[insert organisation name]**, the student's Faculty Supervisor and the Human Research Ethics Committee at university will be notified. **[insert organisation name]** may withdraw support for the project while the complaint is investigated. The **[insert position]** will advise the student of the outcome of the investigation and what action will be taken.

If a complaint is received about an **[insert organisation name]** employee while they are engaged in **[insert organisation name]** supported research, the matter may be subject to the Staff Performance and Misconduct Procedure.

8.8 Referencing and Plagiarism

All sources of information by the organisation will be correctly referenced to avoid breaches of copyright and claims of plagiarism. Any sources used, ranging from books and journals to web sites and emails, are acknowledged as a matter of courtesy to secure the author's credibility, to inform readers, and for copyright adherence. **[Referencing styles and formats vary – select one that the organisation will adopt, such as those found [here](#)].**

8.9 Dissemination

[insert organisation name] disseminates research findings by

- *[e.g., submission to journals]*
- *e.g., professional forums and conferences*
- *e.g., website*
- *e.g., peak body]*

8.10 Implementation

[insert organisation name] is committed to the prompt implementation of research findings into policy and practice.

8.11 Innovation

Subject to sufficient funding, **[insert organisation name]** may undertake, or participate in, innovative smaller projects as a preliminary to larger scale research.

8.12 Sector Approach

[insert organisation name] supports a broad consensus on appropriate methodologies, methods and tools for mental health research and evaluation across the mental health research community.

9. References

9.1 Internal

Diversity Policy
Integration Policy
Partnering Procedures
Participation Policy
Personal Records Policy
Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
Promotion & Prevention Policy
Strategic & Operational Planning Policy

9.2 External

Legislation

Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)
Guardianship Act, 1987 (NSW)
Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act, 1998 (NSW)
The Community Relations Commission and Principles of Multiculturalism Act 2000.

Other

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, 2010 *Guidelines for Ethical Research in Indigenous Studies*

<http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/research/ethical.html>

Clark, M & Chilvers, C. (2005). Mental health research system in England: yesterday, today and tomorrow. *The Psychiatrist*. Vol 29: pp441-445 <http://pb.rcpsych.org/content/29/12/441.full> Accessed 30th October 2011.

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Griffiths, KM, Christensen, H., Barney, L., Jenkins, A., Kelly, C. & Pullen, K (2004). *Promoting Consumer Participation in Mental Health Research: A National Workshop*. Centre for Mental Health Research, Australian National University

Mid Essex Hospital Services (2009). *Research & Development*

Policy <http://www.meht.nhs.uk/our-services/research-and-development-at-mid-essex-hospital-services-nhs-trust/research-and-development-rd-policy/> Accessed 30th October 2011.

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National Institute for Health Research. *INVOLVE: Supporting Public Involvement in NHS, Public Health and Social Care Research*. www.invo.org.uk Accessed 9th November, 2011.

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NSW Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council (AH&MRC) Ethics Committee. http://www.ahmrc.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=13:ethics-committee&catid=3:what-we-do&Itemid=12 Accessed 16th November, 2011.

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University of Western Australia School of Population Health and the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, (2004). *Consumer and Community Participation in Health and Medical Research: Fact Sheet Series*. http://www.involvingpeopleinresearch.org/images/pdf/fact_sheet_series.pdf Accessed 9th November, 2011.

9.3 Quality and Accreditation Standards

EQuIP4

Provided by the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHS)

Standard 2.5: The organisation encourages and adequately governs the conduct of health and medical research to improve the safety and quality of health care.

Criterion 2.5.1: The organisation's research program promotes the development of knowledge and its application in the health care setting, protects consumers/patients and manages organisational risks associated with research.

EQuIP 5

Standard 2.5: The organisation encourages and adequately governs the conduct of health and medical research to improve the safety and quality of health care.

Standard 2.5.1: The organisation's research program develops the body of knowledge, protects staff and consumers/patients and has processes to appropriately manage the organisational risk associated with research.

Health and Community Service Standards (6th edition)

Provided by Quality Improvement Council (QIC)

Standard 1.6: Knowledge (including research and the collection, storage and sharing of information) is managed in a systematic, ethical and secure way, and the organisation uses it to inform service review and development.

Evidence Questions: What is the evidence that:

- a) the organisation keeps up to date with current trends in its field and uses demographic and research data to improve outcomes for its consumers?
- b) cooperative work practices exist to share knowledge within the organisation?
- c) information is stored in an organised way that is easily accessible to approved staff and consumers and, when necessary, is secure and legally compliant?
- d) protocols on the sharing of information about consumers exist and are used?
- e) data on the use of services and advances in the field are collected and used in planning, evaluation and quality improvement?
- f) staff are involved in the collection, analysis and use of data to improve services and programs and time is allocated for these activities?

9.4 National Mental Health Standards (Revised 2010)

N/A

9.5 Recovery Oriented Service Self-Assessment Tool (ROSSAT)

Evidence items are:

Item 1.2d: Policies and procedures are in place that addresses consumer participation:

- How peoples' lived experience will be used to enhance the organisation's knowledge and decision making
- Induction and training of workers
- Representation on the board / governing body
- Reference groups and other consultation structures

Item 1.4: A complaint process is in place and is promoted and easily accessible. Each complaint is respected, taken seriously and acted upon, and consumers and carers are protected from reprisals.

Item 1.10: The organisation maintains an information system that facilitates the appropriate collection, use, storage, transmission and analysis of data to enable review of services and outcomes at an individual and service level. This is done in accordance with information management and related Commonwealth, State / Territory legislation and Acts.

Item 1.11: Any research being conducted by the organisation enables consumers to either, design and conduct the research, collaborate as partners and/or be consulted as participants. Ethical issues are considered and addressed and prior to consumers participating in any research, informed consent is obtained.

Item 5.4: Consumers, their families and carers actively participate in quality improvement processes including service evaluation, development and decision making.

9.6 NSW Disability Services Standards (DSS)

N/A