

RESEARCH GOVERNANCE

NEWSLETTER No 013

Research Governance Policy Framework (RGPF)

The RGPF is approved for use in the Tasmanian public health system. The establishment of the RGPF is a progressive step forward for the Tasmanian public health service. It will align research governance practices with other jurisdictions and ensure best practice and compliance with national standards that govern research activities in Australia.

The RGPF:

- Promotes a whole of agency approach to the conduct of research, standardised processes
- Enables Tasmania to continue progressing national reform projects under the *Encouraging More Clinical Trials in Australia* program, including an ICT system
- Assists the hospital services to meet the National Accreditation Standards set by the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care (ACSQHC)

From July 2020, it is envisaged governance review processes will commence. This means investigators submitting a Human Research Ethics Applications to an ethics committee on or after 1 July 2020 must also submit a Site-Specific Assessment (SSA) to the Research Governance Officer (RGO). The RGO will review the project documentation and make a recommendation to the site Chief Executive (or Delegate) that the research project be granted site authorisation (or not).

Ethical review and the research governance processes **can be undertaken concurrently**, and researchers do not need to wait for ethical approval before submitting the SSA. A research project however must not commence at the site until the Chief Executive (or Delegate) has provided formal written site authorisation.

The Tasmanian Department of Health is committed to the successful implementation of the RGPF and is

available to provide policy education presentations. Further information is available from the Research Governance Office:

research.governance@health.tas.gov.au or at www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/research.

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care

National Clinical Trials Governance Framework – Pilot Site Success

The Royal Hobart Hospital has been selected as one of only 12 sites across Australia to participate in the Pilot Study for the Commission's, National Clinical Trials Governance Framework (the Framework). The Pilot Study will commence in late 2020.

Australian Register of Clinical Registries

The Commission has developed the Australian Register of Clinical Registries to facilitate collaboration and awareness of registry activity among key stakeholders. To date, 90 clinical registries have registered via the Commission's [registration tool](#). The Register allows users to search for information such as clinical condition, registry name and participating sites. The Register is on the Commission website found [here](#).

Teletrials Amidst COVID-19

Several Tasmanian residents were travelling to Victoria every two to three weeks to participate and receive treatment in a Phase I clinical trial. Phase I clinical trials are not normally conducted in Tasmania due to their complexity.

The combined efforts of the Department, Royal Hobart Hospital and Alfred Health has seen RHH adopt a tele-trial model to facilitate Tasmanian residents' continuance in trials. The Department is will continue to engage with Victorian research centres to expand the conduct of Teletrials in Tasmania.

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Read one participant's personal story:

<https://www.alfredhealth.org.au/news/lifesaving-trial-moves-to-tasmania/>

National Mutual Acceptance for Data Linkage Projects

The NMA scheme has been revised to include multi-jurisdiction data linkage studies. Researchers are now able to apply to specialist HRECs within the NMA scheme to seek the single ethical and scientific review of data linkage studies involving NMA public health organisations. The ethical approval of these HRECs will be accepted by participating jurisdictions in accordance with standard NMA approval processes.

As with all NMA HREC applications, all projects need to undergo any local research governance processes that may apply within participating jurisdictions, including the endorsement of relevant local data custodians. Researchers are encouraged to contact the relevant data custodian/s or data linkage unit to discuss the requirements for their project as soon as possible in the planning stages of the project, prior to the submission of the ethics application. Refer to the [NMA – Data Linkage Guide](#) for specialist NMA HRECs.

Research Grants for 2021

The Royal Hobart Hospital (RHH) Research Foundation offers a range of grants to support local health and medical research with the potential for benefit to the health and wellbeing of Tasmanians.

For more information visit The RHH Foundation www.rhhresearchfoundation.org or email their office: research@rhhresearchfoundation.org

Who's in Print

A reminder of the THS Library Services [Who's In Print?](#) newsletter.

Library Services supports the research needs of Tasmanian public health service employees statewide. To search for best evidence and quality health information online, across multiple or individual resources simply and quickly, Library Services recommends [ePortal for Online Clinical Help](#) (EPOCH). EPOCH has access to databases, ejournals, ebooks, clinical guidelines, and drug information, e.g. *MIMS*, *Therapeutic Guidelines*, *UpToDate*, *ClinicalKey*, *Cochrane*, *TRIP*, *CINAHL*, and *Joanna Briggs*, plus many others.

Webinars

In response to the risk posed to the conduct of clinical trials during COVID-19, ARCS offered free weekly webinars focused on COVID-19. Recordings of the 10-week series are available from the [ARCS COVID-19](#) website.



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