

Victorian Research Translation Centres Collaborative Governance Working Group

TERMS OF REFERENCE

BACKGROUND

Since 2005, Australian jurisdictions and federal initiatives, have sought to reform and streamline ethical review and avoid unnecessary duplication of review for multicentre studies. There were a series of national initiatives intended to contribute to national harmonisation with varying degrees of success, including the National Mutual Acceptance (NMA) scheme. None the less, numerous sector review reports, including the recent Australian Safety and Quality Commission report, have found that that the uptake of the scheme varied significantly across sites and in particular, the variation in site-specific assessment and governance approval may have a negative impact on clinical research in Australia.

The Victorian Research Translation Centres Collaborative (VRTCC) comprises of Monash Partners and Melbourne Academic Centre for Health (MACH), both Advanced Health Research and Translation Centres (AHRTCs) recognised by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), and Western Alliance.

Monash Partners, MACH and Western Alliance, in collaboration with the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), have agreed to bring together a working group with state-wide representation to improve research governance processes across the state.

Benefits of a state-wide approach through the VRTCC include:

- consistent and proportionate governance process employed by organisations represented by VRTCC, compliant with the National Clinical Trial Governance Framework that will be overseen by the Australian Commission for Safety and Quality in Healthcare (ACQSHC) enhanced transparency/visibility of the clinical research sector and improved ease of conducting research in Victoria
- increase in clinical research activity and ultimately better health outcomes for Victorians
- enhancing Victoria's competitive advantage in attracting clinical trials

VISION

To optimise the clinical research governance processes across Victoria

OBJECTIVE

1. Review and summarise where issues exist in research governance processes
2. Identify opportunities for improvement in research governance and recommend potential solutions
3. Oversee pilot projects that trial possible solutions with potential universal applicability
4. Provide additional guidance to member sites relevant to their forthcoming accreditation under the new National Standard.
5. Ensure alignment with the Australian Safety and Quality Commission's Clinical Trial Governance Framework recommendations

MEMBERSHIP

The working group will be comprised of members from the Victorian Translation Centres, and the DHHS.

NAME	Organisation	Victorian Translation Centre
Drew Aras	Western Alliance	Western Alliance
Ashleigh Clarke	Ballarat Health	Western Alliance
Linda Christine		DHHS
Deborah Dell	Monash Health	Monash Partners
Lisa Fry	Barwon Health	Western Alliance
Angela Henjak	Alfred Health	Monash Partners
Stephen Jane	Alfred Health	Monash Partners
Paul Johnson (Sienna Panagiotopoulos acting)	Austin Health	MACH
Angela Jones (previously Kurian Thomas)	Monash Partners	Monash Partners
Alexandra Robertson / Nitya Phillipson (maternity leave cover)	Royal Children's Hospital	MACH
Megan Robertson	St Vincents Health Australia	MACH
Kate Scarff	Murdoch Children's Institute	MACH
Angela Watt	Melbourne Health	MACH
Nikolajs Zeps (Chair)	Epworth Healthcare	Monash Partners

QUORUM

A quorum of the Steering Committee will be 50% of the working group's members plus 1.

MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Attend and participate at each meeting
- Facilitate collaboration, consultation and communication
- Promote the activities of the Working Group in various settings
- Respect the opinions of other committee members
- Maintain confidentiality

PROJECT SUPPORT

The working group, with the assistance of the Chair, will work together to achieve the outcomes in good faith and collaboration.

A project officer will be appointed by the VTC to provide project and secretariat support to the working group

REPORTING

The working party will report progress to the VRTCC.

MEETING FREQUENCY

The working group will meet 8 weekly or as required to manage the work. The initial meeting will set the agenda of priorities, timelines and milestones which will need to be agreed by the members of the working group, and also the dates of further meetings. Due to the geographical location of the participating organisations, the meetings will be conducted either via face to face meeting or via teleconference with a strong preference for face to face meetings for the first 2 meetings.

DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

All parties agree to work in good faith and to generate all outputs by consensus. Where opinions differ the committee will work to resolve these or acknowledge any descensions where appropriate.

SUNSET CLAUSE/TERMINATION DATE

These Terms of Reference are effective from November 2019 and initially until June 2020 (expected date of completion of this working group). The VRTCC have chosen to extend the tenure of the working group, with the termination date to be detirmined.