

Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW

HREC Statement Programs of Research V1.0 March 2021



**Aboriginal
Health & Medical
Research Council
of NSW**

Office address
Level 3, 66 Wentworth Ave
Surry Hills NSW 2010
www.ahmrc.org.au

Postal address
PO Box 1565
Strawberry Hills NSW 2012

T +61 2 9212 4777
F +61 2 9212 7211
E ahmrc@ahmrc.org.au

Background

The AH&MRC Human Research Ethics Committee (The HREC) reviews proposals to conduct Human Research in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007 updated 2018) and the Ethical Conduct in Research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and Communities: Guidelines for researchers and stakeholders (2018). These National Guidelines provide a framework for a thorough review of applications for HREC approval.

Programs of Research:

There are instances when the HREC receives Programs of Research, this is where a series of related research projects are submitted for review under an overarching project. Under section of 3.1.11 of the National Statement it states that “Researchers seeking approval for a program of research (i.e. a series of related research projects), or to establish infrastructure for research such as a database or a biobank, should adequately describe their plans to the reviewers.” (Page 28).

Applicants who seek to establish infrastructure for an overarching project, are expected to describe within the research protocol, clear parameters which articulate the boundaries of the projects and outlines the processes of audit for ongoing management of the projects conducted within the program of research. These requests may be reviewed and approved by the committee on a case by case basis. The HREC considers that for approval of a program of research, researchers must at a minimum, outline how the data will be used. The HREC expects that it must use the same methods and dataset.

Additionally, as a requirement of the ongoing management, all projects under the approved program of research are to be submitted as an amendment request if it meets the AH&MRC HREC criteria. The review of each project under a program of research will be conducted by a sub-group of the HREC, out of session, to ensure that it continues to meet the criteria of the National Ethical guidelines. If the subcommittee determines that the project does not align with the program of research and does not use the same methods and dataset, then the project will need to be submitted for full ethical review and approval.

Programs of research will receive approval for no longer than a 5-year period. This arrangement will be reviewed yearly upon the submission of the Annual Progress Report. After 5-years researchers will be required to re-submit the project for review by the HREC.

If you are seeking further information regarding this statement, please contact the Ethics Secretariat at ethics@ahmrc.org.au