

NMA Scheme: Single Review Model for Multi-Jurisdiction Data Linkage Studies

Summary of Changes

Overview

The National Mutual Acceptance (NMA) scheme has been revised to better support researchers undertaking multi-jurisdiction studies involving linkage of data.

Researchers are now able to apply for ethical review of linked data studies through a number of specialist NMA Human Research Ethics Committees (HRECs). The ethical approval of these HRECs will be accepted by participating NMA 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.

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.

How does this affect my research?

If you are a researcher conducting a study involving linkage of data across participating NMA jurisdictions, this arrangement provides an expedited pathway for ethical approval.

Researchers are now able to submit a research ethics application (HREA) for a data linkage study to one of several specialist NMA HRECs. The approval from the reviewing HREC will be accepted by all public health organisations within participating NMA jurisdictions.

Exclusions

Separate ethical approval will still be required for studies involving data held by WA and NT public health organisations. Where there are specific cultural or population-based considerations relating to the population being studied, the ethical review from another HREC with expertise in the specific population group will continue to apply¹.

¹ E.g. research proposals involving Aboriginal participants.

Specialist NMA Data Linkage HRECs

The following HRECs have been selected as expert data linkage HRECs able to provide the single scientific and ethical review of data linkage studies under the NMA scheme.

Jurisdiction	HREC	Contact Details
QLD	<p>Townsville Human Research Ethics Committee (EC00183)</p> <p>Royal Brisbane Women's Hospital (RBWH) HREC (EC00172)</p> <p>Metro South Hospital and Health Service Human Research Ethics Committee (EC0017)</p> <p>The Prince Charles Hospital (TPCH) HREC (EC00168)</p>	<p>TSV-Ethics-Committee@health.qld.gov.au Ph: (07) 4433 1440</p> <p>RBWH-Ethics@health.qld.gov.au Ph: (07) 3646 6132 / (07) 3646 6933 / (07) 3646 5490</p> <p>MSH-Ethics@health.qld.gov.au Ph: (07) 3443 8049</p> <p>ResearchTPCH@health.qld.gov.au Ph (07) 3139 4500</p>
NSW	NSW Population and Health Services HREC (EC00410)	<p>CINSW-Ethics@health.nsw.gov.au Ph: (02) 8374 5689</p>
VIC	<p>Alfred Health HREC (EC00315)</p> <p>Austin Health HREC (EC00204)</p> <p>Melbourne Health HREC (EC00243)</p> <p>Monash Health HREC (EC00382)</p> <p>Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre HREC (EC00235)</p> <p>Royal Children's Hospital (Melbourne) HREC (EC00238)</p> <p>St Vincent's Hospital (Melbourne) HREC (EC00343)</p>	<p>research@alfred.org.au Ph: (03) 9076 8825</p> <p>ethics@austin.org.au Ph: (03) 9496 4070</p> <p>research@mh.org.au Ph: (03) 9342 8530</p> <p>research@monashhealth.org Ph: (03) 9594 4611</p> <p>ethics@petermac.org Ph: (03) 8559 7542</p> <p>rch.ethics@rch.org.au Ph: (03) 9345 5044</p> <p>research.ethics@svhm.org.au Ph: (03) 9231 2394</p>
SA	SA Department for Health and Wellbeing HREC (EC00304)	<p>Health.humanresearchethicscommittee@sa.gov.au Ph: (08) 8226 7702</p>
ACT	ACT Health Human Research Ethics Committee (EC00100)	<p>ethics@act.gov.au Ph: (02) 5124 3949</p>