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# RURAL RESEARCH CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM

## INFORMATION AND APPLICATION GUIDELINES

[HETI.NSW.GOV.AU](http://HETI.NSW.GOV.AU)



# INFORMATION

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The aim of the Rural Research Capacity Building Program is to increase the number and range of health professionals with the knowledge and skills in rural health care evaluation and research. We will develop rural based researchers:

- With knowledge, skills and abilities in applied research and evaluation;
- With the ability to address health care issues in policy and practice; and
- Who can work collaboratively with practitioners, consumers and researchers from other disciplines

This program has been developed for health professionals wanting to learn more about research and conduct their own research project. Up to fifteen (15) candidates per year will be selected to participate in the program for 2018.

## **RURAL RESEARCH CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM CONTENT**

- Understanding the context of Rural Clinical and Health Services Research in NSW
- Designing Research
- Conducting Research
- Translating and Communicating Research

The researcher development program commences with a series of teleconferences / webconferences designed to cover practical aspects of the program and prepare participants for a series of workshops in Sydney. Candidates will be expected to undertake reading and writing, including a formal Research Training Needs Assessment in order to prepare for the workshops. All candidates will be expected to complete or show evidence of completion of HETI Online Research modules and quiz.

Workshop 1 is held in February and runs for 3 days.

Days 1 and 2 involve introduction to both quantitative and qualitative research methods and are focused on developing skills to critically appraise research literature and design a research project. At the end of the workshop, candidates will be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of the context of Clinical and Health Services Research and support system for rural research in NSW
- Appropriately apply the terminology used for research in NSW
- Evaluate and describe the differences between Clinical, Health Services research and other research types
- Demonstrate understanding of the importance and impact of research within the rural health system, including its effect on health quality and the health care system
- Identify and describe stages in the health research process

- Understand operational and governance aspects of local research hubs and their local ethics committees
- Understand reporting responsibilities of researchers, including to local research hubs or ethics committees
- Examine current research in the candidate's area of interest
- Explore research being done within the NSW Ministry pillars and LHDs to determine projects that can complement and contribute to the candidate's research activities
- Establish linkages and partnerships key relevant program areas in the Ministry or NSW Health pillars or other relevant networks
- Construct a research question with a rural clinical/health services relevance that can be explored with a scientific research approach
- Foster research links with LHDs and local practice to generate research ideas
- Develop an appreciation for research feasibility and the appropriateness of research or other methodologies to answer a question of interest

Day 3 of Workshop 1 allows for individual and small group work in which participants explore the next steps of developing their research idea into a feasible study.

Subsequent workshops are targeted at relevant aspects of the research process, in line with the stage of the project being undertaken by participants. In addition to formal face-to-face workshops there are two videolink days, where candidates will attend a hub site within their LHD or a neighbouring LHD for a day of teaching and group work.

### **ALLOCATED RESEARCH TIME**

It is envisaged that successful candidates will continue to work in their substantive positions with time release for research. HETI has allocated funding to each LHD to provide the equivalent of 30 days **per calendar year**. Candidates may be able to access learning and development leave in addition to these 30 days.

Please note HETI has no ability to rollover unused funding into subsequent financial years.

The funding provided is up to a maximum of \$380 per day with 9% on-costs, for 60 days over two years. Candidates and managers should consider this level of funding when considering applications to the program

## RURAL RESEARCH PROGRAM SUPPORT

Successful applicants will receive support that includes mentoring, weekly teleconference support, access to research specialists (statisticians/qualitative researchers), access to training and networks (formal and informal) and two program coordinators. Candidates conducting research that involves Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will be supported to link with a cultural mentor to ensure a culturally appropriate approach. Candidates will also be linked to graduates of the program for additional support.

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

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The Rural Research Capacity Building Program is intended for staff who work within the NSW rural public health care sector who are involved in the development of policy, design, delivery, evaluation or administration of health care services and population health in their community. This includes community health care workers, allied health staff, nurses, doctors, educators, managers, and public health officers as well as staff involved in providing support services. **Permanent employees** of the Northern NSW, Mid North Coast, Far West, Western, Hunter New England (except Newcastle area), Murrumbidgee, Southern NSW Local Health Districts plus Nowra and areas south of Nowra in Illawarra Shoalhaven LHD are invited to submit research proposals for consideration. Rurally based staff working for NSW Ambulance, Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network and NSW Health Pillars are also eligible. Please contact us if you are unsure of your eligibility. **Temporary employees** may be considered if enduring employment for the duration of the program can be demonstrated.

**Please note:** Existing researchers or individuals already undertaking or having previously undertaken doctoral level studies or masters by research are **not** eligible to apply. If you are unsure of your eligibility, please contact David Schmidt on 64929104 or mobile 0477 915 863 or email [david.schmidt@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:david.schmidt@health.nsw.gov.au) or Kerith Duncanson 0428 848 264 or email: [kerith.duncanson@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:kerith.duncanson@health.nsw.gov.au) to discuss this prior to submitting your application.

## HOW ARE CANDIDATES CHOSEN?

Acceptance into the Rural Research Capacity

Building Program is dependent upon a candidate's readiness to undertake and complete the research within the 22 month duration of the program and the relevance of their research proposal to informing the practice or policy evidence base for rural health. This is assessed using the candidate's written application. Support from the candidate's manager is essential. Executive Sponsors in each Local Health District lead the preliminary selection process and make recommendations on behalf of the Local Health District to RRCBP Program Coordinators. HETI make the final decision based on number of places available and the quality of the candidates and their proposed research ideas.

## EXPECTATIONS OF PARTICIPANTS

Committing to the Rural Research Capacity Building Program is a **considerable responsibility**. Most candidates find it very rewarding but also challenging. Candidates will be asked to work towards agreed milestones and provide regular feedback on progress. Candidates are expected to attend all face-to-face meetings and to regularly participate in organised teleconferences. Candidates are required to complete a **portfolio of evidence** demonstrating competence in the units of competency outlined in the curriculum. This portfolio includes, but is not limited to, a formal report at the conclusion of the study, presentation of the research at the Rural Health and Research Congress and/or other external conferences and preparing a manuscript for peer review publication. Candidates are also expected to participate in RRCBP program evaluation and feedback tasks that are required to improve the quality of the program for future cohorts and assist in the measurement of key performance indicators. Graduates of the program are expected to contribute to research capacity building within the RRCBP and/or within their LHDs by way of advocacy and contributions to subsequent programs (for example as guest presenter in teleconferences or videoconferences).

The research projects will be administered through HETI in partnership with the Local Health Districts. HETI reserves the right to withdraw funding for projects which do not meet established research milestones within appropriate timeframes. Applicants need to be aware that ethics approval is likely to be required and this will be undertaken within each Local Health District. Local procedures for gaining ethics approval for a research project should be checked by the candidate. In NSW Health, employees are expected to comply with the following policies relating to ethics (available on the NSW Health intranet site):

Doc. No. GL2007\_020 Human Research Ethics Committees - Quality Improvement & Ethical Review: A Practice Guide for NSW

[www.health.nsw.gov.au/policies/gl/2007/GL2007\\_020.html](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/policies/gl/2007/GL2007_020.html)

Doc No. PD2010\_057 Research - Human and Animal research and the National Health & Medical Research Council Act 1992

[http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/policies/pd/2010/PD2010\\_057.html](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/policies/pd/2010/PD2010_057.html)

PD2010\_056 Research - Authorisation to Commence Human Research in NSW Public Health Organisations

[www.health.nsw.gov.au/policies/pd/2010/PD2010\\_056.html](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/policies/pd/2010/PD2010_056.html)

## INFORMATION TO ASSIST IN THE PREPARATION OF YOUR APPLICATION

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Applicants are encouraged to contact the Rural and

Remote Portfolio of HETI to discuss their research ideas prior to submitting their application.

Applicants are also encouraged to access the Primary Health Care Research and Information Service (PHCRIS) website for fact sheets and information on research, ethics and evaluation.

<http://www.phcris.org.au/infobytes/index.php> (follow the link to Research and Evaluation).

**Applicants should align their research to the priority areas of their LHD or one of the NSW Health Pillars.** Executive sponsors in each local health district or service will be able to provide guidance on:

- Identified Local Health District or Service research priorities
- Priorities identified in Local Health District or Service Plans

**Note:** Projects that do not align with LHD/Service research priorities may still be considered, however projects of this type must demonstrate exceptional merit and clear benefit to the organisation.

Other documents which may assist candidates in preparing an application are:

- Clinical Redesign models of care
- Clinical governance priorities
- The NSW government 2021 plan and The State Health Plan:
- <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/aboutus/strategic-planning.asp>
- Rural Health Plan (2014) <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/rural/Pages/rural-health-plan.aspx>
- Aboriginal Affairs Plan
- <http://www.aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au/nsw-government-aboriginal-affairs-strategy/>

HETI encourages applications aimed at improving the health of Aboriginal people and will provide assistance to ensure a culturally appropriate approach is utilised.

A **teleconference for potential candidates** will be conducted on **Thursday September 21 2017** between 11am and 12pm to assist you with completing your application form. Simply phone 1800 896 323 and when asked use member in 81512597#.

## KEY MILESTONES AND DEADLINES FOR THE 2018 INTAKE

Date	Milestone
August 2017	Applications open
September 21 2017	Prospective applicants teleconference 1100-1200 Phone 1800 896 323 and when asked use member pin 81512597#
October 31 2017	Applications close
November 2017	Review of applications by LHD / Service assessment panel and HETI review panel
November 23 2017	All applicants informed of either acceptance or non-acceptance into program.
December 2017 January 2018	Program development with RRCBP coordinators. Commencement of literature review and commencement of research protocol.
January 31 <sup>st</sup> 2018	Written proposal, signed by manager to be submitted to HETI and media consent form returned
Late February 2018	<b>Workshop 1:</b> Understanding the role of research. 3 day workshop in Sydney
Late March 2018	<b>Workshop 2:</b> Designing Research. 2 day workshop in Sydney
April 30 2018	Mentors finalised for all candidates
Mid May 2018	Final date for written research protocol submission for review to HETI
May, August, Nov, Feb 2018 and 2019	Quarterly reports due
Late May 2018 – June 30 2018	Ethics applications to be submitted. Ethics approval required by end June 2018
Late June 2018	<b>Workshop 3:</b> Conducting Research: 2 day workshop in Sydney
October 2018	<b>Small group videolink 1:</b> Rural hub sites -1 day workshop via videolink
February 2019	Annual review of progress
April 2019	<b>Small group videolink 2:</b> Rural hub sites -1 day workshop via videolink
July 2019	<b>Workshop 4:</b> Translating and Communicating Research. 2 day workshop in Sydney
Oct 1 2019	Final report due to HETI for critique
Oct – November 2019	Manuscript on study findings submitted to a peer reviewed journal Preparation for presentation of findings at conference (paper or poster)
December 2019	A final research portfolio submission for marking and formal program concludes. Graduation interviews conducted on portfolio submission.
2020	Graduation ceremony at NSW Rural Health and Research Congress

# 2018 APPLICATION RRCBP

**Please note:** Existing researchers or individuals currently undertaking or having previously undertaken doctoral level studies or masters by research are **NOT** eligible to apply. If you are unsure of your eligibility, please contact David Schmidt on 6492 9104 or mobile 0477 915 863 or [david.schmidt@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:david.schmidt@health.nsw.gov.au) or Kerith Duncanson 0428 848 264 or email: [kerith.duncanson@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:kerith.duncanson@health.nsw.gov.au) to discuss this prior to submitting your application.

**Applications should be clear and concise and must contain the following:**

## **PART 1 – COVER PAGE WITH CANDIDATE IDENTIFICATION DETAILS**

<b>CANDIDATE DETAILS</b>	
<b>Name</b>	
<b>Position</b>	
<b>Address for correspondence</b>	
<b>Qualifications</b>	
<b>Full-time or part-time status</b>	
<b>Place of work</b>	<b>LHD:</b>
<b>Contact details</b>	<b>Work: Mobile:</b>
<b>Email address</b>	
<b>CANDIDATE'S MANAGER</b>	
<b>Name</b>	
<b>Position</b>	
<b>Contact details</b>	<b>Work: Mobile:</b>
<b>Email address</b>	



**PART 2 – PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION OF YOUR RESEARCH PROPOSAL USING THE FOLLOWING HEADINGS AS A GUIDE**

<b>LHD / Service priority area</b>	Which is the LHD / Service priority area addressed by this proposal?
<b>Research question</b>	What is the question you plan to answer?
<b>Background</b>	What does the existing literature say about this problem/issue? (Please reference any claims)
<b>Rationale</b>	Why is this issue important in the context of rural health (and my Service or Local Health District) that you answer this question?
<b>Study design</b>	How do you plan to collect and analyse the data relevant to your research question?
<b>Feasibility</b>	How feasible do you think it is to answer this question given that this research will be completed part-time? Please describe here any factors you anticipate may hinder progress of the project (eg. Waiting on commencement of program you intend to evaluate)
<b>Impact and Translation</b>	What will you do with the results of this study (positive, negative or null) to influence policy or practice?

**PART 3 – APPLICANTS SHOULD ALSO ADDRESS FOR FOLLOWING ASSESSMENT CRITERIA**

1	Description of individual goals you would like to achieve from participating in the Rural Research Capacity Building Program
2	Description of the strategies you will use to commit time to undertake research for the duration of the program (including a description of proposed arrangements)
3	Description of demonstrated personal skills, attributes and experience that would make you a suitable candidate for the program
4	Description of research experience to date (if any)



5	A current NSW drivers licence (please include a photocopy of your licence)
6	Signed candidate agreement (attached)
7	Signed recommendation from your manager (attached). Applications without Manager sign off will not be considered.
8	<b>Optional:</b> inclusion of a brief <b>Curriculum Vitae</b> highlighting recent experience. This should not exceed two pages (do <b>not</b> include copies of certificates etc.).

#### PART 4

All applications are required to demonstrate support for both the research and the implementation of the research findings. Candidates will need to provide evidence of this support by nominating the following supports. The support people nominated will need to endorse this application by either signing this application or providing a letter / email indicating their support.

Support	Description	Contact details
Project sponsor	A project sponsor is an individual within your LHD or Service at an executive or senior management level who agrees to sponsor this project. For more details on the role of a project sponsor follow <a href="#">this link</a> . Please note this is a sponsor for this project and is different from the Executive Sponsor listed below.	Name: Position: Phone: Email: Signature:
Translation expert	A translation expert is someone within the LHD/Service or NSW Health Pillar who can assist implementation the findings into policy or practice. Clinical governance units, innovation units, allied health advisors or senior staff involved in policy development may be potential translation experts.	Name: Position: Phone: Email: Signature:

Research mentor <sup>#</sup>	A research mentor is someone with experience who can guide you in the style of research you are undertaking. This may be someone from within your area of clinical expertise, but this is not essential.	Name: Position: Phone: Email: Signature:
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<sup>#</sup> Sourcing a research mentor is not essential PRIOR to submission. HETI can assist with identifying and matching a research mentor if you do not have one.

A detailed submission will allow reviewers to understand your proposal, however it is important to be concise. It is expected an application will be **no longer than 12 pages** in total. Your application should be written using appropriate professional and research terminology. References should be drawn from existing scientific literature in addition to any policy documents cited.

Please forward completed applications to your respective LHD/Service Executive Sponsor

**APPLICATIONS CLOSE 31 OCTOBER 2017**

## SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION

Applications are due **31 October 2017**. **ONLY** electronic applications will be accepted. Local Health District and Service employees apply to:

Ambulance NSW	Allan Loudfoot Executive Director, Clinical Services NSW Ambulance <a href="mailto:allan.loudfoot@Health.nsw.gov.au">allan.loudfoot@Health.nsw.gov.au</a>
Hunter New England Local Health District	Jane Gray Executive Director of Research, Innovation and Partnerships <a href="mailto:Jane.Gray@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au">Jane.Gray@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au</a>
Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District	Helen Manoharan Director of Nursing & Midwifery Services / Site Manager, Milton Ulladulla Hospital <a href="mailto:Helen.Manoharan@SESIAHS.HEALTH.NSW.GOV.AU">Helen.Manoharan@SESIAHS.HEALTH.NSW.GOV.AU</a>
Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network	Janelle Buscombe Justice Health <a href="mailto:janelle.buscombe@justicehealth.nsw.gov.au">janelle.buscombe@justicehealth.nsw.gov.au</a>
Mid North Coast LHD	Paul Corben Director Public Health and Public Health Officer   North Coast Public Health <a href="mailto:paul.corben@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au">paul.corben@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au</a>
Northern LHD	Alex Stephens Director of Research   Northern NSW Local Health District Murwillumbah District Hospital <a href="mailto:Alexandre.stephens@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au">Alexandre.stephens@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au</a>
Southern NSW Local Health District	Tony Robben Deputy Director Clinical Governance <a href="mailto:tony.robber@gsahs.health.nsw.gov.au">tony.robber@gsahs.health.nsw.gov.au</a>
Western NSW and Far West Local Health District	Richard Cheney Director of Allied Health Western LHD Ph 63698081 <a href="mailto:richard.cheney@health.nsw.gov.au">richard.cheney@health.nsw.gov.au</a>
Murrumbidgee Local Health District	Jill Reyment Acting Director, Clinical Governance Wagga District Office <a href="mailto:jill.reyment@gsahs.health.nsw.gov.au">jill.reyment@gsahs.health.nsw.gov.au</a>

## CANDIDATE AGREEMENT

I, \_\_\_\_\_ understand that in submitting my application to the Rural Research Capacity Building Program I agree to undertake the following if selected:

- Participate in the four mandatory workshops - February 2018, March 2018, June 2018 and July 2019
- Submit quarterly progress reports to HETI in accordance with schedule
- Submit my research project for ethics approval by 30 June 2018
- Complete data collection and analysis by July 2019
- Complete my research project report by September 2019
- Complete an article for peer review on my research topic by February 2020
- Present my research findings at a relevant conference by April 2021
- Commit to taking dedicated research days between February 2018 and December 2019 to undertake the research, with a maximum of 30 days in 2018 and a maximum of 30 days in 2019
- Following completion of my research I undertake to share my knowledge of research with colleagues and support future research candidates
- Participate in any evaluation of the Rural Research Capacity Building Program in a timely manner.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## MANAGER AGREEMENT

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have read the potential candidate's application and understand that in supporting this application:

- I have read or had discussions with the potential candidate and think that their research will be useful to rural health and/or our Service / Local Health District
- I understand they will require 60 research days, including attendance at compulsory face to face workshops in February 2018, March 2018, June 2018, and June 2019. I understand candidates can access to learning and development leave for the purposes of attending workshops in addition to the funding provided
- I understand that funding for the research to allow up to 60 days (30 in year 1 and 30 in year 2) are provided. I understand that research days may be taken in blocks if mutually agreeable to both the potential candidate and myself. I understand this money is to be used to assist the candidate with their research and may not be diverted for any other purpose. I have considered the level of funding available when considering my support for this application
- It is my opinion that the potential candidate has:
  - Demonstrated ability to make independent decisions
  - Highly developed interpersonal, oral, and written communication skills
  - Excellent attention to detail
  - Demonstrated ability to prioritise workloads, set objectives and meet deadlines.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## CHECKLIST

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### Before submitting your application, please check you have:

- Ensured your research proposal addressed the Local Health District and / or Rural Health priority areas
- Completed the Candidate Agreement
- Included ALL of your contact details in your application
- Discussed the RRCBP with your manager and had them complete the Manager Agreement
- Addressed the assessment criteria
- Included an outline of your research proposal
- Provided evidence of support from a project sponsor, translation expert and (if possible) research mentor