



RURAL RESEARCH CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM (RRCBP)

2023 INFORMATION AND APPLICATION GUIDELINES



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HETI'S VISION AND PURPOSE

VISION

To be the first-choice partner for
Education and Training in NSW Health

PURPOSE

We educate for better health outcomes

January 2023

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INFORMATION

The aim of the Rural Research Capacity Building Program (RRCBP) is to increase the number and range of rural NSW Health employees with the knowledge and skills in rural health care research, evaluation and implementation. 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 service employees wanting to learn more about research and conduct their own research project. Up to sixteen (16) projects will be selected to participate in the 2023 RRCBP program.

RURAL RESEARCH CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM CONTENT

The RRCBP is designed to provide experiential research education, supplemented by face-to-face workshops and coursework that align with the program curriculum. Evidence of RRCBP completion comprises a portfolio that demonstrates achievement of the following units of competency:

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

RESEARCH EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The RRCBP researcher development program commences with a series of web conferences that cover program logistics and preliminary, pre-workshop content aimed at 'Understanding Research'. Prior to Workshop 1, candidates are expected to have completed 'Understanding Research' activities from the web conference series and two My Health Learning Research modules. In total, pre-Workshop 1 activities will take approximately 12 to 15 hours. Workshop 1 is a two-day, face-to-face workshop in Sydney. The focus of Workshop 1 is applying 'Understanding Research' learnings to the candidates

own research topic. The workshop allows for individual level engagement with research mentors and small group work for participants to explore the next steps of developing their research idea into a feasible study, and to establish a 'novice-researcher' cohort.

Workshops 1 and 2 are one month apart, allowing time for participants to progress their research study and follow up on 'homework' from Workshop 1. Weekly two-hour web conferences between these workshops focus on research protocol development and research ethics. In Workshop 2 (Designing Research) these learnings are applied to the candidates own research protocol and ethics submission.

Workshops 3 (Conducting Research) and 4 (Communicating Research) are aligned with the stage of candidates' research studies. In addition to face-to-face workshops there are weekly education and collaboration web conferences (recorded, one hour duration), quarterly half day web conferences, when candidates will link in for research education and group work.

Where projects are undertaken by a pair or team, HETI will support one team member to attend workshops. Additional team members may be supported by their LHD to attend if funding allows.

ALLOCATED RESEARCH TIME

RRCBP candidates continue to work in their substantive positions with time release for the research. Expected time allocation to research is the equivalent of 30 days per financial year or 60 days in total over the two year program. Candidates may be able to access learning and development leave in addition to

these 'research allocated' days. HETI allocates funding to each Local Health District (LHD) to contribute towards costs, proportionate to the number of candidates from each LHD in the program. Please note that the funding is per project, which may have implications for team-based projects.

The funding provided equates to a maximum of \$450 per day with 9% on-costs, for 60 days over two financial years. Candidates and managers should consider this level of funding when considering applications to the program. HETI has no capacity to rollover unused funding into subsequent financial years.

RURAL RESEARCH PROGRAM SUPPORT

Successful applicants will have access to mentoring, weekly teleconference support, access to research specialists (statisticians/qualitative researchers), access to training and networks (formal and informal) and guidance from the two experienced research program managers. The RRCBP has a strong alumni focus, with current candidates linked with program graduates for additional support. 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. RRCBP candidates who undertake Aboriginal Health research are eligible to an extension of one year on the submission of the candidate's research portfolio. This extension supports the additional time required to conduct community consultation, research ethics and research implementation and reporting.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

The RRCBP is intended for staff who work within the NSW rural public health care sector and are involved in the development of policy, design, delivery, evaluation or administration of health care services or population health. This includes community health care workers, allied health staff, nurses, doctors, educators, managers, public health officers and staff involved in providing support services. Permanent employees of the Northern NSW, Mid North Coast, Far West, Western, Hunter New England (Maitland and North/West), Murrumbidgee, Southern NSW Local Health Districts, Illawarra Shoalhaven LHD (Nowra and South/West) 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. Temporary employees may be considered if enduring employment for the duration of the program can be demonstrated.

Submissions from pairs or teams of applicants are welcome. Each team member must meet the eligibility criteria.

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 0447 915 863 or email **david.schmidt@health.nsw.gov.au** or Kerith Duncanson on 0428 848 264 or email: **kerith.duncanson@health.nsw.gov.au** to discuss this prior to submitting your application.

HOW ARE CANDIDATES SELECTED?

Acceptance into the RRCBP is dependent upon a candidate's readiness to undertake and complete the research within the two year program duration and the relevance of their research to informing evidence-based rural health practice or policy. This is assessed from the candidate's submitted application. Support from the candidate's manager is essential and is documented

in the application. Executive Sponsors in each LHD lead the preliminary selection process and make recommendations on behalf of the LHD to RRCBP Program Managers. HETI make the final decision based on number of places available and the quality of the candidates proposed research ideas.

EXPECTATIONS OF PARTICIPANTS

Committing to the RRCBP is a considerable responsibility and time investment. Most candidates find it very rewarding but also challenging. Candidates are 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 scheduled web conferences. Candidates are required to complete a portfolio of evidence demonstrating competence in the units of competency outlined in the curriculum. This portfolio includes a written report at the conclusion of the study, presentation of the research at the NSW Rural Health and Research Congress (or similar) 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 web conferences).

RRCBP funds are administered through HETI in partnership with the LHD. 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 LHD. 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):

- GL2007_020 Human Research Ethics Committees - Quality Improvement & Ethical Review: A Practice Guide for NSW **https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/Pages/doc.aspx?dn=GL2007_020**
- The National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007) (National Statement (2007)) **<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/national-statement-ethical-conduct-human-research-2007-updated-2018>**
- PD2010_056 Research - Authorisation to Commence Human Research in NSW Public Health Organisations **https://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/pds/Pages/doc.aspx?dn=PD2010_056**

KEY MILESTONES AND DEADLINES FOR THE 2023 RRCBP INTAKE

DATE	MILESTONE
March 2023	Applications open
21 March 2023 and 6 April 2023	Prospective applicants Zoom information session from 11:00am to 12 noon on 21 March and 8:15am to 9:15am on 6 April. Join from PC, PC, Mac, iOS or Android https://nswiop.zoom.us/j/85220939739 Join by phone: 02 8015 2088 Meeting ID: 852 2093 9739
1 May 2023	Applications close
2 - 17 May	Applications reviewed by LHD/service RRCBP panel and HETI review panel
19 May 2023	All applicants informed of either acceptance or non-acceptance into program
20 May to late June 2023	Project development with RRCBP Program Managers. Commencement of literature review and commencement of research protocol. Weekly research education sessions via web conference (recorded)
June 2023	Workshop 1: Understanding Research. Two-day workshop (Sydney)
July 2023	Project development with RRCBP Program Manager. Completion of literature review and commencement of research protocol. Weekly research education sessions via web conference (recorded)
July 2023	Media consent form returned. Competency 1: Understanding Research submitted
Early July 2023	Workshop 2: Designing Research - Two-day workshop (Zoom)
September 2023	Candidate mentors finalised
September 2023	Project development with RRCBP program managers and mentors. Research protocol finalised; ethics submitted. Fortnightly program research education sessions via web conference (recorded)
Early August	Workshop 3: Conducting Research - Two-day workshop in Sydney or Zoom
October 2023	Written research protocol submission for review to HETI. Competency 2: Designing Research submitted
Quarterly 2023, 2024, 2025	One-page quarterly reports due
October to December 2023	Ethics applications submitted. Ethics approval by end February 2024.
November 2023	Web conference 1: Half day workshop
February 2024	Web conference 2: Half day workshop
May 2024	Web conference 3: Half day workshop
June - July 2024	Annual review of progress. Competency 3: Conducting Research submitted
August 2024	Workshop 4: Communicating Research. Two-day workshop in Sydney
December 2024	Web conference 4: Half day workshop
February 2025	Web conference 5: Half day workshop
31 March 2025	Final report (competency 4) due to HETI for critique
June 2025	A final research portfolio submitted for marking and formal program concludes. Graduation interviews conducted on portfolio submission.
2025/2026	Manuscript on study findings submitted to a peer reviewed journal. Preparation for presentation of findings at conference (paper or poster)
October 2025	Graduation ceremony and Emerging Research Showcase

INFORMATION TO ASSIST IN THE PREPARATION OF YOUR APPLICATION

Applicants are encouraged to contact the Rural, Remote and Allied Health Unit 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 LHD or service will be able to provide guidance on:

- Identified LHD or service-level research priorities
- Priorities identified in LHD or Service Plans
- Projects that do not align with LHD/Service research priorities may still be considered if novel or 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 State Health Plan and NSW Rural Health Plan
- NSW Aboriginal Health Plan 2013-2023: HETI encourages applications aimed at improving the health of Aboriginal people and will provide assistance to ensure a culturally appropriate approach is utilised.

GENERAL ENQUIRIES TO:

David Schmidt 0447 915 863 or
david.schmidt@health.nsw.gov.au

Kerith Duncanson 0428 848 264 or
kerith.duncanson@health.nsw.gov.au



Scan QR code or visit heti.nsw.gov.au/RRCBP to download the 2023 Application Form.

APPLICATION PROCESS FLOWCHART



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