



HEALTH
EDUCATION
& TRAINING

RURAL RESEARCH CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM

INFORMATION AND APPLICATION GUIDELINES





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INFORMATION

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 twenty (20) candidates will be selected to participate in the program for 2019.

RURAL RESEARCH CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM CONTENT

The content of the RRCBP is designed to provide an experiential learning process, supplemented by face-to-face and coursework elements in line with the research program's curriculum. Evidence of the achievement of this program will be via a portfolio of work which 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

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 May 2019 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 financial 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 financial 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?

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 or Kerith Duncanson 0428 848 264 or email: 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

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

PD2010_056 Research - Authorisation to Commence Human Research in NSW Public Health Organisations

www.health.nsw.gov.au/policies/pd/2010/PD2010_056.html

KEY MILESTONES AND DEADLINES FOR THE 2019 INTAKE

Date	Milestone
1 March 2019	Applications open
20 March 2019	Prospective applicants teleconference 1100-1200 Phone 1800 896 323 and when asked use member pin 81512597#
1 April 2019	Applications close
1 – 15 April 2019	Review of applications by LHD / Service assessment panel and HETI review panel
19 April 2019	All applicants informed of either acceptance or non-acceptance into program
19 April to mid May 2019	Program development with RRCBP coordinators. Commencement of literature review and commencement of research protocol.
1 May 2019	Written backfill proposal, signed by manager to be submitted to HETI and media consent form returned
Late May 2019	Workshop 1: Understanding the role of research. 3 day workshop in Sydney
Mid June 2019	Workshop 2: Designing Research. 2 day workshop in Sydney
July 2019	Mentors finalised for all candidates
July to August 2019	Final date for written research protocol submission for review to HETI
Aug, Nov 2019 Feb, May, Aug, Nov 2020	Quarterly reports due
July to Sept 2019	Ethics applications to be submitted. Ethics approval required by end August 2019
Late August 2019	Workshop 3: Conducting Research: 2 day workshop in Sydney
November 2019	Small group videolink 1: Rural hub sites - 1 day workshop via videolink
May – June 2020	Annual review of progress
April 2020	Small group videolink 2: Rural hub sites -1 day workshop via videolink
August 2020	Workshop 4: Translating and Communicating Research. 2 day workshop in Sydney
1 February 2021	Final report due to HETI for critique
March – April 2021	Manuscript on study findings submitted to a peer reviewed journal Preparation for presentation of findings at conference (paper or poster)
April 2021	A final research portfolio submission for marking and formal program concludes. Graduation interviews conducted on portfolio submission.
September 2021	Graduation ceremony at NSW Rural Health and Research Congress

INFORMATION TO ASSIST IN THE PREPARATION OF YOUR APPLICATION

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:
<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/statehealthplan/Pages/default.aspx>
- Rural Health Plan (2014)
<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/rural/Pages/rural-health-plan.aspx>
- Aboriginal Health Plan 2013-2023
<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/aboriginal/Publications/aboriginal-health-plan-2013-2023.pdf>

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 **Wednesday 20 March 2019** between 11am and 12pm to assist you with completing your application form. Simply phone 1800 896 323 and when asked use access code 81512597#. Some seminar/workshops will be conducted within Local Health Districts during the application period. Staff will be advised of these via email from the LHD Research office.

APPLICATION 2019 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 or Kerith Duncanson 0428 848 264 or email: 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

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

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

LHD / Service priority area	Which is the LHD / Service priority area addressed by this proposal?
Research question	What is the question you plan to answer?
Background	What does the existing literature say about this problem/issue? (Please reference any claims)
Rationale	Why is this issue important in the context of rural health (and my Service or Local Health District) that you answer this question?
Study design	How do you plan to collect and analyse the data relevant to your research question?
Feasibility	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)
Impact and Translation	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	Signed candidate agreement (attached)
6	Signed recommendation from your manager (attached). Applications without Manager sign off will not be considered.
7	Optional: inclusion of a brief Curriculum Vitae highlighting recent experience. This should not exceed two pages (do not 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 this link . 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 [#]	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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[#] 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 1 APRIL 2019

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 – May, June and August 2019 and August 2020
- Submit quarterly progress reports to HETI in accordance with schedule
- Submit my research project for ethics approval by August 2019
- Complete data collection and analysis by March 2020
- Complete my research project report by February 2021
- Complete an article for peer review on my research topic by May 2021
- Present my research findings at a relevant conference by September 2021
- Commit to taking dedicated research days between July 2019 and February 2021 to undertake the research, with a maximum of 30 days in 2019/2020 financial year and a maximum of 30 days in 2020/2021 financial year.
- 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 May, June and August 2019 and August 2020. 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:** _____

SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION

Applications are due 1 April 2019. ONLY electronic applications will be accepted. Local Health District and Service employees apply to:

Ambulance NSW	Allan Loudfoot Executive Director, Clinical Services NSW Ambulance allan.loudfoot@Health.nsw.gov.au
Hunter New England Local Health District	Jane Gray Executive Director of Research , Innovation and Partnerships Jane.Gray@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au
Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District	To be advised
Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network	Janelle Buscombe Justice Health janelle.buscombe@justicehealth.nsw.gov.au
Mid North Coast LHD	Tony Lower Director of Research Mid North Coast Local Health District Anthony.Lower@health.nsw.gov.au
Northern LHD	Alexandre Stephens Director of Research Northern NSW Local Health District Murwillumbah District Hospital Ph 0417 282 725 Alexandre.stephens@ncahs.health.nsw.gov.au
Southern NSW Local Health District	Tony Robben Deputy Director Clinical Governance tony.robber@gsahs.health.nsw.gov.au
Western NSW and Far West Local Health District	Richard Cheney Director of Allied Health Western LHD Ph 63698081 richard.cheney@health.nsw.gov.au
Murrumbidgee Local Health District	Marianne Warren Director Organisational Effectiveness Murrumbidgee Local Health District Ph 0400 412 113 Marianne.Warren@health.nsw.gov.au

General enquiries to:

David Schmidt ph (02) 6492 9104, mobile 0477 915 863 or email david.schmidt@health.nsw.gov.au

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

CHECKLIST

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



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