

We are pleased to announce substantial progress in establishing the AHRTC, which we are now calling the **Western Australian Health Translation Network (WAHTN)**. We are pleased to report that the development of the Network for an initial two year period with funding from the Future Health Fund subject to achievement of key milestones has been confirmed.

The WAHTN office is established at the Perkins Building North, and the team have been working actively on a detailed communications plan that incorporates a social media platform to ensure rapid exchange of information between members. We are also developing the strategic plan for the next two to five years and will be seeking input to this in coming weeks.

Executive Board

The first meeting of the Executive Board was held on the 31st of March and was chaired by Malcolm McCusker AC CVO QC. Members of the Executive Board represent their respective sectors. The Members and their sectors are Dr Gary Geelhoed, Chief Medical Officer (WA Department of Health), Prof Jonathan Carapetis, Executive Director Telethon Kids (Medical Research Institutes), Prof Dawn Freshwater (Universities) and Peter Thompson (ex Officio Interim Executive Director). Dr Robyn Lawrence, Executive Director Fiona Stanley Hospital (Hospitals) was an apology at the first meeting. The structure of the WAHTN was confirmed by the Board, and will be presented in more detail when the Management Committee has met. Substantial progress with the Network's initial collaborations on research skills training (funding confirmed), state wide research imaging facility and collaborative genomics research were reviewed.

Management Committee

The Management Committee has also been established, following an invitation from the Director General of the Department of Health to each signatory organisation to nominate a representative. The inaugural meeting will be on the 13th of April.

Streams of Excellence

A plan to develop 'streams' in the seven areas of excellence identified in the Submission, including Cardiometabolic, Respiratory, Ophthalmology, Cancer, Obstetrics and Child Health, Ageing and Degenerative Disease and Rural Remote and Indigenous Health is underway. The streams will be asked to develop their own strategic direction and identify key initiatives and collaborations to be developed within a six month time frame.

Researchers Data Base

As part of the communications plan, a centralised data base of health and medical researchers in Western Australia is being developed. This will form an integral part of establishing the networks required for the WAHTN. The data base will be a unique and invaluable resource for researchers, providing up to date information in research advancements and opportunities across WA. We encourage interested researchers to join the data base by contacting Claire Egan at claire.egan@health.wa.gov.au.

Work is also progressing on developing the website that will be linked to the Data Base and will soon be ready for input from the discipline Streams of Excellence when established.

NHRMC News

On Friday, the 27th of April, the WAHTN received news from the NHRMC recognising the potential for this collaboration to achieve international recognition. The international reviewers recognised the enthusiasm and ambition of the WAHTN's partners, but as the Network has existed only since July 2014, they did not award the title of 'Centre' to the WAHTN.

The NHRMC reviewers recognised

- The considerable historic record of research achievements from

this State, particularly in data linkage, child health and genomics

- The impressive plans to recruit future clinical / scientists
- The comprehensive State government-driven health services framework with a vision to advance health and translation
- The bringing together of previously separate entities and the adoption of a State-wide view for research translation

The NHRMC presented a challenge to Western Australia and the WAHTN to show evidence of coalescence and collaboration to improve research and translation. In order to be able to realise the full potential of the Centre, partner organisations were urged to pursue opportunities to align their strategies. They recognised the two hubs of research activity (FSH and QEIIIMC) and recommended that where appropriate further consolidate clinical activity between them.

Thank You

The enthusiasm and support for the WAHTN from all participating institutions, the Minister of Health and the Director General of the Department of Health WA has been encouraging and continues to drive the Centre. Once again, thank you for your strong support for the concept of a world class centre for translational research in Western Australia.

Introducing the WAHTN Team



Claire Egan, the WAHTN's Administrative Officer is a Law and Arts graduate, and is currently completing College of Law. She is proud to say that she has been involved in medical research all her life -through the Raine Study.



Christine Shervington, the WAHTN's Associate Director, has extensive experience in university and government and policy development and management, and has been involved with the development of the collaborative centre for over three years.



Peter Thompson MD MBA FRACP FACC FACP FCSANZ, has been the WAHTN's Interim Executive Director since September 2014. He is also Director of Research Development and Director of the Heart Research Institute at SCGH. Peter is a Clinical Professor of Medicine and Population Health at UWA and is the Deputy Director of the Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research.