

**WA Health Translation Network
Management Committee Meeting No. 03/2020
Minutes
Tuesday 24 November 2020, 7.30am to 9am**

Location: Harry Perkins Institute, Seminar Room 612 and via Zoom

Attendees

Representative Members:

Chair: Professor Gary Geelhoed, Executive Director WAHTN

Child and Adolescent Health Service: Professor Peter Richmond

Curtin University: Professor Melinda Fitzgerald

Perron Institute for Neurological and Translational Science: Professor Steve Wilton

Telethon Kids Institute and Aboriginal Health Representative: Mr Glenn Pearson

University of Notre Dame Australia: Professor Jim Codde

WA Country Health Service: Mr Justin Manuel

Platforms:

Transdisciplinary Programs Representative: Professor George Yeoh

Women's Health Representative: Winthrop Professor Jeffrey Keelan

Staff:

WAHTN Chief Operating Officer: Dr Debbie Turner

WAHTN Executive Officer: Ms Lauren White

Apologies

Dr Darren Gibson, Ms Sandra Bellekom, Professor Daniel Fatovich, Professor Rob Newton, Professor Osvaldo Almeida, Professor Peter Leedman, Professor Geoff Stewart, Mr Bill Morgan, Professor David Morrison, Dr Aron Chakera, Dr James Flexman, Ms Nicola Ware, Ms Janet Zagari, Professor Steve Webb, Professor Osvaldo Almeida, Dr Angelita Martini, Mr Alan James, Dr Carolyn Williams, Ms Amanda Samanek, Dr Chris Kane, Professor Catherine Elliott, Professor Chris Reid, Professor Kevin Pflieger, Ms Debra Langridge, Professor Vera Morgan.

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

2. Declarations of potential or perceived conflicts of interest

None declared.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2020

It was RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Management Committee of 6 October 2020 were confirmed.

4. Governance and Operations

4.1 Draft Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025

The Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025 was endorsed by the WAHTN Executive Board at their meeting held on 23 November 2020. An Operational Plan will be developed outlining key performance metrics and objectives. The four strategic goals incorporated into the Plan are as follows:

- Collaborative Partnerships
- Workforce Development
- Excellence in Research and Innovation
- Policy, Ethics and Governance

In addition to the Strategic Plan, a proposed Governance Structure – discussion paper is currently under development, which proposes three models of governance. Once finalised, the paper will be shared with members.

4.2 Investing in Western Australia’s Research Future

Meetings have been held with Minister Roger Cook, Dr David Russell-Weisz and Dr James Williamson at which the proposal; *Investing in Western Australia’s Research Future* was submitted and discussed. Whilst the Minister and WA Department of Health are supportive of WAHTN, there has been no firm ongoing funding commitment to date.

4.3 Joint Venture Agreement

The revised Joint Venture Agreement continues to remain un-signed by WAHTN Partners at present. Agreement has not yet been reached on a couple of outstanding clauses between two parties, the WA Department of Health and University of Western Australia. WAHTN are hopeful this will be resolved as soon as possible.

4.4 Executive Board meeting held 23 November 2020

Gary Geelhoed verbally updated the Management Committee on key outcomes from the WAHTN Executive Board meeting held on 23 November 2020, including the following key points:

- The priority for the Board at present, is the Joint Venture Agreement, Operational Plan, and WAHTN’s current financial position. WAHTN’s financial sustainability was discussed at length.
- Gary Geelhoed recently visited and met with Heads from each WAHTN Partner Organisation. These meetings were held throughout September/ October 2020 and were an opportunity to highlight WAHTN matters, in particular the Strategic Plan, and learn what is occurring at Partner Organisations, which may be of mutual benefit. Gary noted that the Partners were generally very supportive of WAHTN.
- Given the uncertainty around future funding for WAHTN, Gary Geelhoed noted that he is prepared to remain in the role as Executive Director for a reasonable time beyond his current contract term. The current Chair of the Executive Board, Mr Malcolm McCusker will be stepping down from his role as Chair.

5. Executive Director’s Report

The Executive Director provided a verbal update, which incorporated the following items:

- Australian Health Research Alliance (AHRA)
As Chair of AHRA, Gary Geelhoed attended a meeting with Brendan Murphy to discuss the work of the Australian Cardiovascular Alliance (ACvA) and how AHRA can contribute to a proposed National Cardiovascular Taskforce.

National Wounds Initiative; Cost of Wound Care Burden: a survey of wounds in hospitals, aged care homes and General Practices in WA and Qld is currently underway with the project scheduled to be delivered by June 2021.

National Consumer and Community Involvement Initiative; the first draft of the CCI Handbook has been completed including the graphic design.

WAHTN is exploring whether we need to form a Data Committee in WA to liaise with the AHRA National Initiative or whether the proposed DoH Linked Data Committee chaired by James Williamson will cover the need.

The Women's Health Research Translation and Impact Network (WHRTN) has met to discuss distribution of funding received (\$5 million over five years).

NHMRC has awarded \$10million over 5 years to the National Network for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Researchers. These grants will build capacity across the sector. A great initiative which demonstrates collaboration across a variety of state and interstate institutions. Glenn Pearson will share the proposal with Management Committee members.

- Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF)
MRFF applications are expected to open early 2021 for commencement on 1 July 2021. A Strategic Planning sub-group will be established to ascertain how the funding should be invested to ensure WAHTN adds value across the State.
- Science on the Swan 2021
Science on the Swan 2021 is scheduled for 16 – 18 May. The SOTS Organising Committee has met and discussed the format options for the 2021 conference. The program is expected to focus on showcasing top WA health research, particularly in the clinical setting.

The 2021 conference will likely be a 3 day program, with 1 day focusing on COVID-19.

- Biobanking
The Biobanking Steering Committee continues to meet on a bi-monthly basis to progress the goal of aligned, standardised, accessible biobanking across the State. An infrastructure grant totalling \$500k financed by the WA Department of Health (WAHTN COVID-19 Research Collaboration) has been provided, with the University of Western Australia playing a central role in the governance of the project.

- **Guardianship Act**
The Health Consumers' Council of WA and WAHTN appeared before the Parliamentary Committee with regards to the Guardianship and Administration Amendment (Medical Research) Bill 2020 on 1 October 2020. Since then, the hospital sector has been implementing the legislation and amendments as best as possible, with some challenges.
- **WAHTN: The First Five Years**
The *WAHTN: The First Five Years* document has been printed in a promotional manner and circulated to the WA Minister for Health, Government bodies, WAHTN Partner Organisations, funders and other key organisations. The link to the electronic copy can be found here: bit.ly/wahtn-the-first-five-years.
- **WAHTN Distinguished Professor Series**
Professor Paul Glasziou will be speaking as part of the WAHTN Distinguished Professor Series on Tuesday 1 December 2020, 10am to 11am.
As a Professor of Evidence-Based Practice at Bond University and the Director of the Institute for Evidence Based Healthcare, Professor Glasziou's presentation will focus on "how can we reduce the waste in health care research?"
The event will be held via webinar and Management Committee members have been asked to circulate the event widely across their Networks.

6. Enabling Platforms

A detailed update on WAHTN's Enabling Platforms was attached to the Agenda for information. Key information is summarised as follows:

- **Research Education and Training Program (RETProgram)**
The following RETProgram online training courses have recently been released, the link to RETProgram's suite of courses can be found here: <https://retprogram.org/training/>
 - Paediatric Aboriginal Lung Health: Asthma diagnosis and interpretation of spirometry
 - Health Economics: Cost Effectiveness for Clinical Trials
 - GCP in Australia (Good Clinical Practice)

The RETProgram Steering Committee will be reshaped into a broader State-wide Education and Training Platform Steering Committee. Membership will be reviewed as the Steering Committee progresses. RETProgram will be dealt with under a standing Agenda item of the State-wide Education and Training Platform Steering Committee.

The independent external review of the RETProgram is well underway. The ARTD Consultants team have completed key stakeholder interviews and will shortly distribute a survey as per the contract milestones. A draft report will be provided by December 2020, with the final report to be received in January 2021.

- **Clinical Trials and Data Management Centre (CTDMC)**
An extensive list of projects that CTDMC has funded and/or had significant input in was included within the Agenda for information. If these grants are successful, they will generate funding for

the CTDMC to either coordinate the aspects associated with the clinical trial/s or provide data management services for the project.

The CTDMC demonstrates the significant impact CTDMC is having in research translation across the health and medical sector.

Peter Richmond commented that CAHS recently participated in a review of the clinical trials across the State and it was clear that the hospital sector requires a more sophisticated approach to engaging consumers and ensuring adequate training and governance for staff participating in and conducting research. From a strategic point of view, this is an avenue WAHTN could consider becoming involved in, particularly as it is likely to be an accreditation standard in 2021 to highlight the importance of research education.

7. Other Business

Management Committee members discussed the need to increase funding opportunities and suggested that WAHTN should clearly document the sectors where WAHTN has demonstrated its role in collaborative initiatives that would not have been achieved if WAHTN did not exist.

This document could be utilised to for future funding opportunities to inform the State and key organisations the impact WAHTN demonstrates. Tangible evidence could include: the formation of the Australian National Phenome Centre; Early Career Researcher Grants; Lobbying with regards to the Guardianship and Administration Act; Science on the Swan; successful clinical trials; and anecdotal stories demonstrating capacity, aspiration and a change in culture. Gary Geelhoed pointed out that this has largely been captured in the “WAHTN: The First Five Years” document.

Next Meeting:

2021 meetings of the WAHTN Management Committee are scheduled as follows:

- Tuesday 2 February 2021, 7.30am – 9.00am
- Tuesday 30 March 2021, 7.30am – 9.00am
- Tuesday 25 May 2021, 7.30am – 9.00am
- Tuesday 20 July 2021, 7.30am – 9.00am
- Tuesday 14 September 2021, 7.30am – 9.00am
- Tuesday 9 November 2021, 7.30am – 9.00am