

**WA Health Translation Network
Management Committee Subgroup Meeting 04/2021
Minutes
Wednesday 20 October 2021, 10 am – 11 am
Location: Room 634, Harry Perkins Institute, and Via Zoom**

Present

Chair: Professor Gary Geelhoed, Executive Director WAHTN
Busselton Population Medical Research Institute: Ms Jennie Hui
Edith Cowan University: Professor John Olynyk
Harry Perkins Institute and the University of Western Australia: Professor Kevin Pflieger
Perron Institute for Neurological and Translational Science: Professor Steve Wilton AO
The University of Western Australia: Professor Anna Nowak
WAHTN Clinical Trials and Data Management Centre: Professor Chris Reid
WAHTN Chief Operating Officer: Dr Debbie Turner
WAHTN Manager National Projects: Ms Jo Wilkie
WAHTN Consumer and Community Involvement Program: Ms Debra Langridge
WAHTN Manager: Ms Lauren White
WAHTN Administrative Officer: Koshala Shanmugakumar

Apologies

Murdoch University: Professor David Morrison
North Metropolitan Health Service: Dr Aron Chakera
St John of God Hospital: Professor Steve Webb
The University of Notre Dame Australia: Professor Jim Codde
Telethon Kids Institute: Professor Catherine Elliott

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomes members to this meeting.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2021

The Minutes of the Meeting of the WAHTN Subgroup held on 15 September 2021 were noted.

3. Governance

Executive Board Meeting update

○ ***Board Chair Appointment***

The WAHTN Executive Board Chair recruitment is still in progress.

○ ***Executive Director Recruitment***

Recruitment will shortly commence for the role of WAHTN Executive Director. It is anticipated that the successful applicant will commence in April 2022.

- **Re-accreditation as NHMRC Research Translation Centre**
The NHMRC has announced a 'Call for Submissions for Accreditation (2021)' as a Research Translation Centre.
A letter has been sent to all WAHTN Partner Organisations and members of the WAHTN Executive Board advising them of the Re-accreditation process and requesting nominees for the Working Group. The first meeting is to be scheduled in November 2022.

4. Funding Opportunities

WA Future Health Research and Innovation Fund (FHRI)

Gary Geelhoed received an invitation from FHRI Advisory Council Chair, John Van Der Wielen to an event, which will share the achievements of the FHRI Fund to-date and provide insights into the State's future direction for health and medical research and innovation. The event is scheduled on Monday 15 November 2021.

Gary Geelhoed is seeking clarity from FHRI with regards to the stakeholders invited as the group raised concerns that the university sector and innovation hub have not been extended an invitation.

NHMRC Summary Results

The Chair and the group discussed the NHMRC Grants success rates which are continuing to decline in WA (attached to the Agenda). To address this situation, Association of Australian Medical Research Institute WA (AAMRI) and Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences WA (AAMHS) have convened a meeting to start the conversation about potential strategies for improving success rates. Gary Geelhoed has invited a representative from each of the WAHTN Partner Organisations to attend the meeting, scheduled on 25 October 2021.

The group suggested that it might be useful to discuss possibilities (in addition to near miss grants) with the FHRI fund, as there might be an opportunity to support researchers in the interim period with an additional safety net or support system to avoid researchers dropping out of the competitive circuit for grants, whilst they wait for funding outcomes.

5. Activities

Area Health Services Workshop

Unfortunately, the Area Health Services meeting has been postponed due to variety of reasons. The rescheduling of this meeting is in progress.

Clinical Trials Forum (held 9 September 2021)

A Clinical Trials Stakeholder Forum was held on 9 September 2021. The event was organised in collaboration with FHRI, WA Department of Health, WAHTN and MTPConnect WA Life Science Innovation Hub.

We are currently waiting for the workshop outcomes and summary documentation to be provided by the WA Department of Health.

The WAHTN Clinical Trials and Data Management Centre (CTDMC) are in the process of convening a Steering Committee which includes all of key stakeholders across the sector. An interim Steering Committee meeting will be held on 22 October 2022, and items for discussion includes terms of reference and membership.

The WA Department of Health and CTDMC are currently discussing CTDMC's Funding Agreement extension for a three month period, as the current contract is due to conclude in December 2021.

Australian Clinical Trials Alliance (ACTA) Advisory Committee is meeting in November 2021 in which Ethics and Governance will be discussed.

Gary Geelhoed suggested Mr Paul Forden (SMHS) as a WAHTN Executive Board member could facilitate seeking consensus among the Area Health Services to standardise ethics and governance and to ensure mutual recognition across the sector as much as possible.

Steve Wilton briefed the group on an international collaboration clinical trials workshop that he attended, at which discusses FDA requirements and ethics were discussed. Steve will update Chris Reid on the outcomes.

Science on the Swan 2022 topic focussing on Innovation and Commercialisation

Nominations have been sent to WAHTN Partner Organisations to establish the SOTS Organising Committee, with the first meeting to be held early November. The Venue is being finalised for the event, which will be held in May 2022.

Promotion of Clinician Researchers

Gary Geelhoed is in the process of arranging a meeting with key stakeholders to progress this initiative.

Anna Nowak voiced concern that the FHRI funding may just look at clinician researchers who are already in place, rather than funding a pipeline or a process and program to develop people and requested any advocacy towards that would be beneficial. She also reiterated the importance of the definition of clinician researchers broadened to include allied health etc.

Kevin Pflieger outlined the Stanford SPARK program and the NHS Clinical Entrepreneur Program. There is opportunity to trial the NHS Clinical Entrepreneur Program in WA. The discussions are in progress with the WA Department of Health.

Animal Research Centre (ARC)

Gary Geelhoed reported that there were no definitive decisions regarding the ARC's future, however he indicated that Prof Klinken is optimistic that the ARC will continue to operate in some form. An Update from the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation (JTSI) for ARC Stakeholders is attached.

Primary Care Research

Gary Geelhoed met with the CEO of WA Primary Health Alliance (WAPHA) to discuss a Primary Care Research Network in WA and has formally written to WAPHA.

Chris Reid suggested if it was helpful to bring together representation from WAHTN Partner Organisations that already have some primary care research who will benefit from connecting.

Debbie Turner requested that CTDMC include WAPHA in the invitation list for the CTDMC Steering Committee to enable them to be part of the conversation.

The group discussed the WAPHA's extensive database and agreed the database could be shared, as it would be valuable for research.

Biobanking

Gary Geelhoed acknowledged Prof Jeff Keelan, who has written a business case for biobanking, submitted to the FHRI Fund. The WA Department of Health is supportive of this sector wide application. A Biobanking Steering Committee meeting is scheduled on 3 November 2021.

6. CCI Handbook

The CCI Handbook will officially be launched on 19 November 2021. Invitations will be circulated shortly.

7. Other Business

Kevin Pflieger outlined that the Biodesign Program was initially enabled by the formation of Accelerating Australia. Kevin was able to found Accelerating Australia because the universities and medical research institutes were already working collaboratively together as a consequence of WAHTN, providing the receptive environment for establishing the consortium. Kevin offered to create a narrative around this for the WAHTN NHMRC Re-accreditation submission

8. Next Meeting

Wednesday 17 November 10 am – 11 am