

**WA Health Translation Network  
Management Committee Subgroup Meeting 02/2022  
Minutes  
Tuesday 29 March 2022, 11am – 12pm  
Location: Room 634, Harry Perkins Institute, and via MS Teams**

**Present**

Chair: Professor Gary Geelhoed, Executive Director WAHTN  
Edith Cowan University: Professor John Olynyk  
Murdoch University: Professor David Morrison  
Telethon Kids Institute: Professor Catherine Elliott  
University of Notre Dame Australia: Professor Jim Codde  
University of Western Australia: Professor Romola Bucks  
WAHTN Consumer and Community Involvement Program: Ms Debra Langridge  
WAHTN Clinical Trials and Data Management Centre: Professor Chris Reid  
WAHTN Chief Operating Officer: Dr Debbie Turner  
WAHTN Manager: Ms Lauren White

**Apologies**

Busselton Population Medical Research Institute: Ms Jennie Hui  
Harry Perkins Institute: Professor Kevin Pflieger  
North Metropolitan Health Service: Dr Aron Chakera  
Perron Institute for Neurological and Translational Science: Professor Steve Wilton AO  
St John of God Hospital: Professor Steve Webb

**1. Welcome**

The Chair welcomes members to this meeting.

**2. Minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2022**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the WAHTN Management Committee Subgroup held on 22 February 2022 were noted.

**3. Governance**

**3.1 WAHTN Chairman**

The Hon. Ian Campbell formally commenced in his role as Chairman at the meeting of the WAHTN Executive Board held 9 March 2022.

Ian Campbell has met with the Heads of several WAHTN Partners, members on the Executive Board and AHRA Research Translation Centre members to date and further meetings are currently being arranged.

Unfortunately, due to the changing nature of COVID-19, the official function to thank the outgoing Chairman, the Hon Malcolm McCusker AC originally scheduled on 8 March 2022 was postponed. A formal announcement from the Hon. Stephen Dawson MLC, Minister for Medical Research regarding the

appointment of the incoming Chairman was released on 11 March 2022. A link to the media statement can be found [here](#).

### **3.2 Executive Director Position**

Interviews for the WAHTN Executive Director position have been held and the WAHTN Executive Board are meeting to select the candidate. Once the outcome is known, this group will be informed.

### **3.3 Re-accreditation as NHMRC Research Translation Centre**

NHMRC requested additional information from WAHTN regarding our application, which has since been provided. NHMRC have advised they are reviewing all Research Translation Centre applications received and have indicated that an official outcome should be received in late April 2022.

WACHS, Curtin University and WAPHA submitted a WACHS-led accreditation application as a Research Translation Centre under the Regional, Rural and Remote tier, titled the “WA Rural Research and Innovation Alliance”. If this application is successful, it would be of great benefit to WA to have two accredited Research Translation Centres in the State.

### **3.4 2022 Partnership Contributions**

Gary Geelhoed provided an update on the Joint Venture Agreement (JVA) and stated that one Partner Organisation has not yet submitted their signed Agreement, we expect to receive this shortly.

With regards to the 2022 partnership contributions, all Partner Organisations have been asked if they would consider maintaining their 2021 partnership fee commitment in 2022. To date, the majority of Partners have agreed to this and invoices have been sent.

Gary Geelhoed noted that the new Chairman will review WAHTN’s governance, strategic goals and activities once the new Executive Director has been appointed.

## **4. Activities**

### **4.1 Science on the Swan 2022**

Kevin Pflieger has been instrumental in populating the Science on the Swan 2022 Conference Program with an excellent selection of key speakers that are experts across the health and medical research innovation and commercialisation sector.

The Program can be found here: <https://scienceontheswan.com.au/cms/wp-content/uploads/Program-Overview-4.pdf>

Gary Geelhoed advised that the conference is being promoted widely and encouraged members of this Committee to do the same.

### **4.2 Promotion of Clinician Researchers**

Gary Geelhoed thanked Lindy Fitzgerald and Romola Bucks who have both been very active in the Working Group established by WAHTN to implement a clinician researchers’ model in Western Australia. The group are currently determining a practical solution to buy back clinicians time and have designed a survey to be sent to doctors, allied health and nursing practitioners as to preferences and salary expectations. Gary

Geelhoed has contacted the Chief Medical Officer, Chief Health Professions Officer and Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer, who have all agreed to assist with the survey distribution.

#### **4.3 Australian Health Research Alliance (AHRA)**

Gary Geelhoed and Debbie Turner attended the AHRA Council face-to-face meeting, held on 21 March 2022 in Canberra.

A review of AHRA National Initiatives and Networks was undertaken and presented to AHRA Council. Both Wound Care and CCI co-lead by WAHTN have been endorsed and will continue.

*National Wound Care Initiative* - Gary Geelhoed advised members that the AHRA National Wounds Standards project is close to completion and once finalised, it will be distributed widely.

*Consumer and Community Involvement Initiative* - Following the CCI Handbook's successful launch in late 2021, the Handbook has been very well received and is available widely. We have received positive feedback from the NHMRC which recognises the complementarity between its CCI Toolkit and the Handbook.

*International Consumer and Community Involvement Initiative* - Preparations are underway for the first International CCI Conference to be held in Perth in 2023. The City of Perth and various WA stakeholders have shown enthusiasm and support for the event.

#### **4.4 Biobanking**

There has been a significant amount of interest across the Biobanking sector of late. Gary Geelhoed provided a brief background, including that WAHTN established a Biobanking Steering Group in 2018 to assess the support, need and enthusiasm for establishing a state-wide biobanking initiative in WA. In light of this, a proposal was developed by Jeff Keelan and submitted to the WA Department of Health. It outlines the proposed governance structure and funding required to establish a state-wide WA Biobank Network.

Throughout the years, WAHTN has received small amounts of State funding towards Biobanking, including funding to test and trial the OpenSpecimen software, which was progressed through the Telethon Kids Institute and the Origins Study; and COVID-19 funding towards biobanking infrastructure.

Key stakeholders have since discussed the utility of OpenSpecimen software and whether REDCap may have better capabilities to create virtual biobanks and databases. All agree that Biobanking needs to be standardised across the State and that an integrated approach should be taken.

Gary Geelhoed advised that there may be an opportunity to repurpose unallocated funds from the COVID-19 Research Funding Grant towards biobanking. This has been discussed with the WAHTN Executive Board and Gary is meeting with the WA Department of Health to explore options.

## **5. WAHTN Platforms Update**

*Research Education and Training Program (RETProgram)* - A new short-term Funding Agreement from the WA Department of Health for the period January to June 2022 was recently received which enables the Program to retain one staff member and continue RETProgram operations until 30 June 2022.

*Consumer and Community Involvement Program (CCIProgram)* - Interim funding from the WA Department of Health has been agreed to for the period January – June 2022. Ongoing funding for the Program is being sought, with conversations currently taking place with the WA Department of Health research and Innovation Office.

Deb Langridge (Head, CCIProgram) advised that work is continuing as usual across the Partner Organisations and fee for service opportunities continue to grow.

A change in staff means that a new CCI Coordinator has been embedded at UWA.

The Communications and Engagement Coordinator is currently building the online communications profile for the CCIProgram which includes utilising videos to promote what researchers and stakeholders are undertaking with regards to CCI. Deb advised that if any members of this committee or organisations wish to be promoted in this way, to contact her directly.

The CCIProgram continues to support the Harry Perkins Institute's WA Comprehensive Cancer Centre, funding for which was recently announced by the Prime Minister on his visit to Perth. The CCIProgram has and will continue to provide support and involvement of people with lived experience throughout the Project.

*Clinical Trials and Data Management Centre (CTDMC)* – Unfortunately, the WA Department of Health is no longer providing direct funding to the CTDMC. In light of this, the CTDMC are exploring FHRI Fund and other opportunities.

The CTDMC has pivoted resources towards the Health Studies Australian National Data Asset (HeSANDA) program. HeSANDA Node Partners met in January, and the establishment of a Steering Committee is in progress.

Despite the loss of funding from WA Department of Health, at the request of the WA Area Health Services, CTDMC are continuing clinician research and biostatistical support site visits across these Partners. These are now conducted in an online format.

## **6. Other Business**

N/A

## **7. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the WAHTN Management Committee Subgroup will be held at the following time:  
Tuesday 26 April 2022, 11 am – 12 pm