



## ETHICS RESEARCH POLICY

**Policy Type:** Risk Management  
**Policy Number:**  
**Distribution:** Agency Wide  
**Section:** Risk Management - Clinical  
**Previous Review Dates:** 08/2011  
**Next Review Date:** 08/2014  
**Responsibility:** Executive  
**Endorsed by:** Chief Executive Officer

**Authorised by:** Signature: ..... Date: .....  
Mr O Pearson, Chief Executive Officer

### 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE:

The purpose of this policy is to govern the conduct of health and medical research to improve the safety and quality of care at West Gippsland Healthcare Group and ensure the application of research in the health setting protects consumers/patients/residents and manages organisational risks associated with research.

This policy applies to any research conducted at or using West Gippsland Healthcare Group information involving human participation.

Governance issues are the responsibility of the Executive.

Use the attached Ethics Governance Checklist to see if the project is likely to require approval from the WGHG Human Research Ethics Committee. Note that this checklist has been developed using the NHMRC document "When does Quality Assurance in Health Care Require Independent Ethical Review?". This document was rescinded in 2009 but not replaced. An archived copy can be accessed at <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/e46>

### 2. POLICY STATEMENT:

- 2.1 All health and medical research undertaken at West Gippsland HealthCare Group is to be approved through the WGHG Human Research Ethics Committee.
- 2.2 The WGHG Human Research Ethics Committee is to review proposals for health and medical research using the National Health and Medical Research Council guidelines 2007.
- 2.3 The WGHG Human Research Ethics Committee shall:
  - a. Advise on all matters of an ethical nature referred to it from the Board of Directors, Executive, health care providers, patients, their relatives or any other person;
  - b. Advise on draft policies and procedures to promote ethical decision making within the West Gippsland Healthcare Group;
  - c. Advise the Board on all clinical matters relating to research within the West Gippsland Healthcare Group, with particular reference being made to compliance with the National Health and Medical Research Council Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research (NHMRC Guidelines )2007 and amendments.
  - d. Ensure that research procedures relating to obtaining patient consent comply with the NHMRC Guidelines (2007);
  - e. Maintain a register of all research projects involving human beings conducted within the West Gippsland Healthcare Group;
  - f. Report at least annually to NH&MRC and to the Board of Directors on research projects

- conducted at West Gippsland Healthcare Group, both in progress and completed during the year;
- g. Ensure that, while accepting that health professionals have a duty to advance knowledge and research, the rights of individual patients/residents/clients must be respected in line with national guidelines;
  - h. Advise on orientation, education and information for West Gippsland Healthcare Group staff in ethics;
  - i. Consider the application of legislation in ethics, privacy and research relevant to issues for West Gippsland Healthcare Group.

### 3. PROCESS:

- 3.1 Initially, those wishing to conduct health and medical research at, or using West Gippsland Healthcare Group information should access information from the Research tab on the WGHG website <http://www.gha.net.au/wghg/index.asp>
- 3.2 Those wishing to proceed with research must notify the Executive in writing and attach a completed [checklist](#).
- 3.3 WGHG Executive are to decide on research impact and proposals to be submitted to WGHG Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC)
- 3.4 Research proposals to be submitted to the WGHG Human Ethics Committee must be submitted on the National Ethics Application Form (NEAF). Researchers should access information about the NEAF from <https://www.neaf.gov.au/>.

### 4. REFERENCES:

WGHG Human Ethics Committee [Terms of Reference](#).

WGHG Human Ethics Committee Operational Practices

WGHG Ethics Governance Checklist

NHMRC “When does Quality Assurance in Health Care Require Independent Ethical Review?”.

Rescinded in 2009. An archived copy can be accessed at

<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/e46>

NHMRC – National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007 - Updated 2009

<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/e72>