

SOUTH WEST HOSPITAL AND HEALTH SERVICE

Research Strategy 2019–2024



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South West Hospital and Health Service Research Strategy 2019-2024

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Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians

The South West Hospital and Health Service respectfully acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians, both past and present, of the land we service; and reconfirm the South West Hospital and Health Service's commitment to reducing the inequalities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous health outcomes in line with the Australian Government's Close the Gap initiative.

Foreword

The major progress made in health care over the past century has been at times a product of accidental findings, incidental observation but mostly through research by highly motivated and committed clinicians often in the face of deeply entrenched clinician views that sought to impede change. The application of their research findings has led to major advances in health care that has transformed the health of our communities and given us insights into how we should continue to deliver care going forward and improve the health, quality of life and longevity of all our communities.

Prior to penicillin and Medical Research, death was an everyday occurrence. It was intimate.

Kathleen Dunn

In the South West Hospital and Health Service (SWHHS) we are challenged by vast distances separating our small communities, discrepancies in the health of our communities based on socioeconomic and cultural differences, avoidable illnesses, issues of access to care and at times an inhospitable environment. This creates a compelling need, in our unique environment, to undertake research relevant to our communities' health needs and to translate our research findings into effective service delivery and management.

The presence of active, properly structured and productive research in any healthcare organisation is an indicator of the maturity of the organisation as an effective healthcare provider, the standard of the clinicians and other staff in the organisation and their commitment to the healthcare they deliver to their communities. It additionally serves as a major attraction to new clinicians and their retention within the organisation. It serves as a measure of the quality of the health service.

Building on the core of research enthusiasts in the SWHHS, we have the opportunity to develop a robust research culture within the service complemented by the building of collaborations and networks nationally and internationally that will enhance the reputation of the researchers in the South West. Researchers in the SWHHS will be encouraged to focus on translational research in the priority areas identified in the plan.

This will ensure that we deliver advanced healthcare to our communities based on this research that will see the organisation become a leader in both rural health research and service delivery.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to detail the strategic direction and future for research within the SWHHS for the period 2019-2024.

Research has been prioritised as an important and essential part of the future of the Service and the Board's vision for the future. Research should form an integral role in ensuring that the Service is trusted and sustainable into the future with a focus on person centred care and pursuits of a reputation of excellence.

The document identifies the direction for research in SWHHS and the measures for development

and expansion of its research capabilities. Central to the strategy is a focus on translational or applied research with high utility for health provision in general and the Service in particular. This will guide the organisation's drive to develop a research culture that generates and implements evidence based medicine and enhances clinical care to Improve the health of those living with the South West.



1. Background

The SWHHS Research Strategy sits within the SWHHS Strategic Plan and the Safety and Quality Strategy for the 'Our communities' initiative. The plan proposes to:

- a. Develop a research culture in SWHHS and attract a workforce that delivers research excellence
- b. Improve health service delivery and health outcomes from innovative translational research
- c. Development of capability and capacity in research including research support and infrastructure to achieve this
- d. Develop strategic partnerships and increase external collaboration to complement and strengthen the SWHHS' focus on translational research
- e. Leadership of research in SWHHS, nationally and internationally

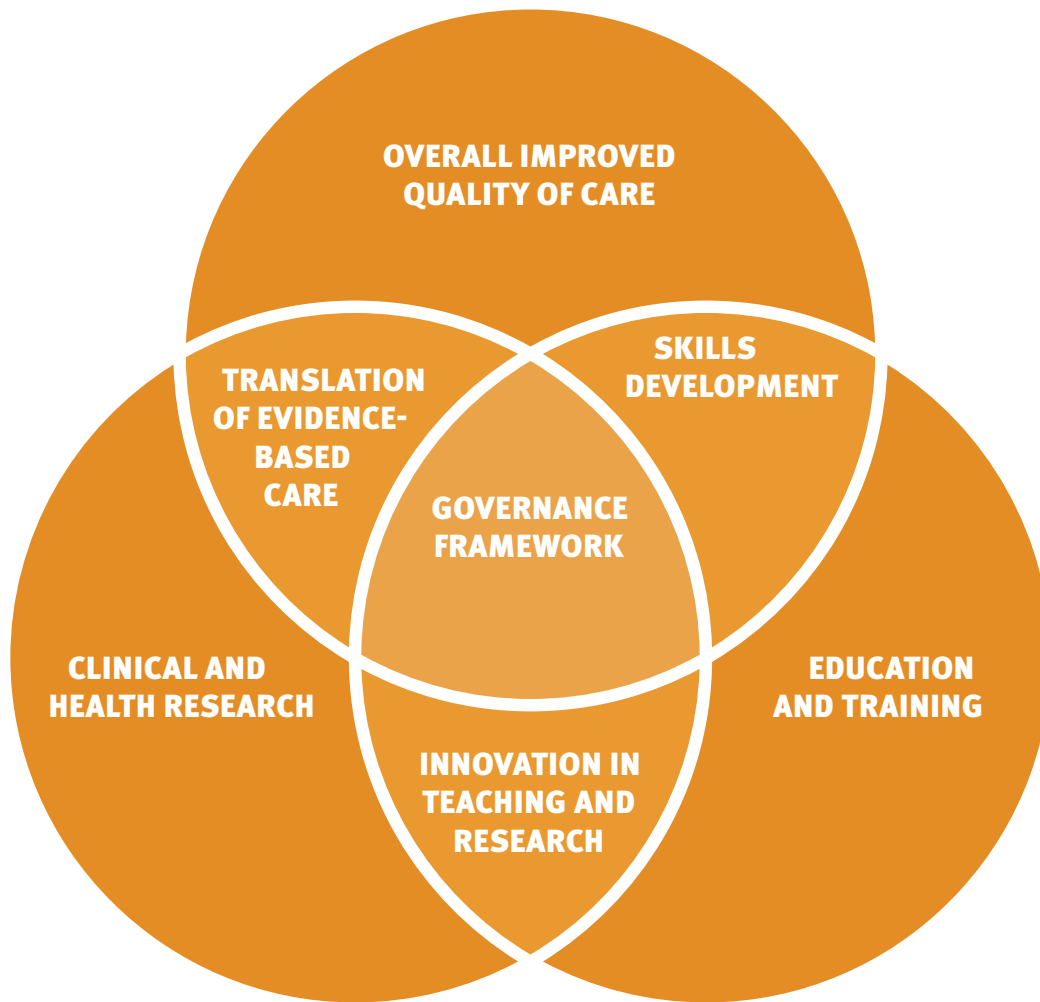
It is widely accepted that an energised research presence is necessary for the creation of an organisational culture that engenders innovation and the pursuit of knowledge which focuses on and benefits patient care and safety; this is a critical measure of clinical excellence and organisational reputation.

Research in SWHHS has been ad hoc in nature generally driven fortunately by a number of enthusiasts across the disciplines and supported by the tertiary institutions represented locally viz. University of Queensland (UQ), University of Southern Queensland (USQ) and James Cook University (JCU). Research in the hospital and health service has largely consisted of participation in multi-centre trials, observational studies and registries.

Whilst only recently re-established the basic, albeit immature, governance framework is functioning locally in terms of research governance, e.g. site specific assessments (SSA) with Department of Health oversight and ethics review the assistance of external Hospital and Health Service Research Ethics Committees (HREC) with oversight by the National Health and Medical Research Council. Further refinement will be needed of these two research governance processes. The necessary financial structures also need to be put in place to support research funding and the pursuit of research grants.

Research with education has always been viewed in SWHHS as a prime influence on the recruitment and retention of high quality clinical staff. Encouragement of research and the fostering of a research culture in an open and learning organisation across all disciplines, including non-clinical corporate services areas (e.g. waste management) has been recognised as a major influence on the reputation of the organisation and the quality of its services. Research in SWHHS will reach across the healthcare continuum and across disciplines to deliver innovative changes in practice.





Acknowledgement: Figures 1 and 2 – SCHHS Strategic Research Plan

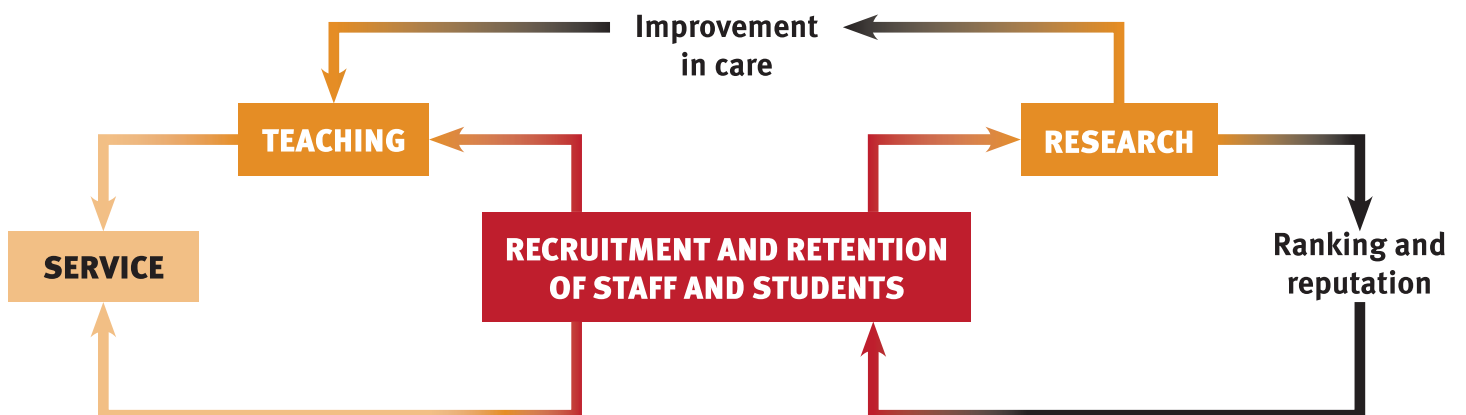


Figure 2 | Impact of staff on research, education and service delivery

a. SWOT analysis

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strong desire amongst clinicians locally to develop research in SWHHS • Board and Executive support • Governance structures in place • Strong tertiary education organisations' support locally • Strong support networks at a State and Federal level 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for education and training for researchers and potential researchers • Support / education as to the generation of research funding • Lack of research support staff • Motivation of larger numbers of clinicians to participate in research
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Research Steering Committee • Refinement of governance structures • The promotion of and integration of research and education into patient care (Fig.1.) • Recruitment and retention of research orientated staff (Fig.2.) 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to attract a workforce that encourages and delivers research • Failure to develop tools that support researchers • Failure to provide workforce research training and development opportunities

b. Research principles

SWHHS is required to adhere to a number of guiding principles when generating a research strategy. This includes the following documents and frameworks:

- National Health and Medical Research (NHMRC) Australian code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018
- NHMRC National statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007 and all updates
- NHMRC Research Governance Handbook 2011
- Therapeutic Goods Administration Guidelines for Good Clinical Practice
- Queensland Research and Development Investment Strategy 2010-2020
- Research for a healthier future: 2020 Health and Medical Research and Development Strategy
- Queensland Government Health Service Directive – Research Ethics and Governance
- Queensland Health Research Management Policy
- Research Management Policy Implementation Standard – Ethical and Scientific Review of Human Research
- Queensland Health Research Management Policy Implementation Standard – Consent, access, use of confidential information / data for the purposes of research
- Research Management Policy and Implementation Standard – Research Governance
- Research Management Policy and Implementation Standard – Conflicts of Interest in Research
- Research Management Policy and Implementation Standard – External Research Funding and Infrastructure Report
- Strategic Review of Health and Medical Research: Better Health through Research 2013

c. Priority areas

i. Translational research domains:

- Connected care
- Health communities
- Best evidence for primary care
- First responder
- Equity in population health
- Ageing well and multi-morbidity
- Wellbeing and mental health
- Technology in care
- Access to health services — marginalised populations
- Rural and remote health focus
- Improving value in healthcare
- Rural and remote workforce
- Clinical redesign and models of care



2. Vision

To be acknowledged as the leader in translational research that reaches across the continuum of health care and with a strong collaborative focus between disciplines that delivers significant and innovative changes in practice for the benefit of South West Queenslanders.



3. Goals and objectives

-Goal 1: Develop a strong research governance and ethics committee infrastructure and process

- Governance principles and procedures for the approval, management and monitoring of research across all areas and facilities in the SWHHS

Objectives	Strategies	Accountability	Timeframe
<p>Develop a governance model appropriate to the management of research in the SWHHS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a reporting structure that ensures the SWHHS Research Committee (RC) has a direct reporting line to the Leadership Team and Executive • Establish a Research Governance and Development Unit (RGDU) which is responsible for overseeing/managing all aspects of governance, support and development, under the direction of the Research Committee • Appoint a Director Research and a Manager Research Governance and Development to lead this unit and ensure all recommendations from Executive and the Research Committee are actioned. • Work with education, training and staff development sectors to ensure an inclusive and collaborative governance framework across all areas of education and research within the SWHHS 	<p>EDMS</p>	<p>12-24 months</p>

Refine HREC and other research governance processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formalise relationship with Townsville HREC • Organisational mechanisms are put in place to ensure the partner HREC as a reviewing body for multi-site projects 	EDMS/HSCE HREC Chair/ Secretariat	6 – 12 months
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Goal 2: Develop a research culture in SWHHS and attract a workforce that delivers research excellence

- Development of capacity in research including research support and infrastructure to achieve this

Objectives	Strategies	Accountability	Timeframe
Identify and recognise existing researchers within the SWHHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicise the work of existing researchers within the SWHHS • Celebrate work of existing researchers within the SWHHS • Embrace opportunities for junior researchers to be mentored/ participate in existing research projects 	Researcher Leaders/EDMS	6 months
Train future leaders in research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular annual research courses • Intent is for each participant to have a research proposal ready for submission to HREC • Development of training initiatives with partner universities 	EDMS or delegate	12 months Best to coincide with year beginning with arrival of new doctors and graduate nurses, allied health.

<p>Provide workforce training and development opportunities for researchers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the enablement of a research-training environment in the SWHHS by integrating translational research, teaching and service delivery • Appoint research leaders within health and operational streams to foster research ideas and mentor new researchers • Organise Research Days aimed at encouraging SWHHS researchers to showcase their work and facilitating networking among local researchers and external collaborators • Develop an annual SWHHS Research Report to convey research outputs (e.g. publications, presentations, grants, approved research) • Promote research activities through articles, newsletters and educational half-days • Condition for accessing local funding or grant should be evidence of attending local development course once every five years. • Allocate rostered time for research at individual SMO level and or unit/department level. • Encourage publication from clinical audit/quality improvement activities • Encourage publication of evidence-based improvements as linked to the National Standards 	<p>Discipline Leaders/EDMS</p>	<p>12-24 months</p>
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<p>Provide tools to support researchers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a formal Research Support Unit (RSU) with its head and unambiguously clear mandate. • Obtain appropriate software to support the governance administration and research • Development of an appropriate RSU space or facility 	<p>HSCE/EDMS</p>	<p>24– 48 months</p>
<p>Development of a SWHHS Foundation – build a competitive and targeted platform for this research enabled by an active Foundation and a community influenced research agenda</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of a micro-grant initiative with USQ and UQ • Provision of funding for local research 	<p>Board /HSCE/ EDMS</p>	<p>12- 36 months</p>
<p>Development of appropriate financial management mechanisms in the HHS for Researchers e.g. Trust Accounts, Cost Centres</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate financial structures need to be put into place in the HHS to allow researchers to manage their grants • Appropriate training in the management of research grants for researchers 	<p>CFO</p>	<p>6-12 months</p>

Goal 3: Develop strategic partnerships and increase external collaboration to complement and strengthen the SWHHS focus on translational research aligned with the core themes as listed

Objectives	Strategies	Accountability	Timeframe
Attract more research to SWHHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and support individual or departments to be involved with multi centre studies. • Encourage and continue to support SMO who sit on college committees and similar bodies. • Ensure registration with relevant bodies e.g. clinical trials 	Discipline Leaders / Clinical Leads	12-36 months
Develop strong collaborative ties with the partner universities and other potential collaborators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and engage potential partner universities, networker and collaboration opportunities • Develop strong collaborations with aboriginal Medical Services, Interest Groups and the Community • Identify and engage potential commercial partners or collaborators e.g. commercially funded clinical trials, industry, business groups • Identify existing researchers to leverage off existing research networks and collaborations • Strengthen current relations with Southern Queensland Rural Health (SQRH) through education opportunities and partnerships on research projects 	HSCE, EDMS, EDONM	

Goal 4: Develop strategic partnerships and increase external collaboration to complement and strengthen the SWHHS focus on translational research aligned with the core themes as listed

Objectives	Strategies	Accountability	Timeframe
Develop robust leadership of research that is all encompassing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In association with partner universities initiate research leadership and researcher training across SWHHS • In association with partner universities and colleges identify pathways for higher research degrees and units of study • Explore options with Health Innovation, Investment and Research Office for research fellowship for direct care clinicians 	HSCE, EDMS, EDONM	12-24 months
Share our learning on the local, state and international stage, demonstrating our outcomes and their impact on our community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present SWHHS works and outcomes at state and national conferences • Publish findings in-line with publications strategy 	All SWHHS researchers	Ongoing

Goal 5: Improve health outcomes from innovative translational research

Objectives	Strategies	Accountability	Timeframe
<p>Translate both locally generated and relevant externally generated research into practice in SWHHS – translational research focus</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reward units/wards/ departments that demonstrate evidence-based adaptations, i.e. implementation of research in day to day work. 2. Incentivise performance 3. Introduce a method of benchmarking against like disciplines/departments/ facilities 4. Encourage publication of translational activities notwithstanding nature/size 	<p>Discipline Leaders/EDMS / EDONM</p>	<p>2-3 years</p>
<p>We will invest in a strong learning environment for emerging and culturally appropriate workforces to maintain a sustainable skill mix to meet the community's needs</p>		<p>Board HSCE ELT</p>	<p>2-3 years</p>

5. Performance measures

- a. Number of research projects undertaken or participated in (collaborative, multi-centre) per annum
- b. Number of publications attributed to research by SWHHS researchers
- c. Number of Research Fellows and Conjoint / Adjunct Appointments with partner universities
- d. Number of National Health and Medical Research Council and other grants awarded to SWHHS
- e. Perception of innovation and research culture across the HHS – national and international
- f. Numbers of research projects/SSAs approved
- g. Researcher rankings e.g. Open Research and Contributor ID (ORCID)
- h. Number of employees regarded as active researchers
- i. Numbers of research project outcomes published or presented at conferences / seminars
- j. Translational research outcomes implemented locally and in other jurisdictions
- k. Number of successful commercial outcomes or patents
- l. Benchmarking against peer facilities / HHS
- m. Number of staff enrolled in research higher degree programs
- n. Number of staff able to act in research supervision capacity
- o. Amount of funding received through research participation



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