

## **APPLICATIONS TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SILVER CHAIN**

Prior to seeking ethics approval, researchers must have submitted to the Research Support Co-ordinator *Research Application Coversheet COR-FRM-344* to conduct research in Silver Chain (available on our website or from the Research Support Co-ordinator) accompanied by a full research proposal. Following review and conditional approval by the Research Director (or a senior research team member) and other Managers appropriate to the research topic or area, the researcher will be informed that their application will now need to be reviewed by the Ethics Committee. They will then be asked to complete *Ethics Application COR-FRM-345* if they have not already done so.

Should a problem be identified with the methodology or practicality of the research, the researcher will be provided with the feedback and assistance necessary to alter their proposed methodology to be more rigorous or to better fit with Silver Chain. Should the research be judged not to fit with Silver Chain's mission, values or strategic direction, or to be too much of an impost or cost to the service, the researcher will be informed that their application has not received approval.

## **APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL**

Applications must be submitted on Silver Chain's *Ethics Application COR-FRM-345* which is available from the Research Support Co-ordinator or the Silver Chain website – [www.silverchain.org.au](http://www.silverchain.org.au). The completed Ethics Application form and all associated documentation, not already submitted (for example a copy of ethics approval from other committees), must be sent via email and a hard copy to the Research Support Co-ordinator. All documents must be typed and signed.

## **MEETING DATES**

The Silver Chain Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) meets quarterly (if required) on the second Thursday of March, June, September and December. Proposed meetings and closing dates for receiving applications are available on the Silver Chain website.

Applications must be received a minimum of **28 days prior to a meeting date**, if the application is to be ready to proceed to the HREC meeting.

## **NOTIFICATION OF DECISIONS**

The applicant will be advised in writing of the decision of the HREC within 10 working days after the date at which the decision is made. The project may not commence until such time as the applicant has complied with any action called for in the approval conditions. Where amendments are required to any of the project documentation, a revised copy of the documentation must be submitted to and approved by the Chairperson prior to commencement of the project.

Ethics approval is valid for a period of three years. Initial approval will be for a period of one year and thereafter for further periods of one year at a time, subject to the receipt of satisfactory progress reports. At the end of the three year period researchers will be requested to re-apply in writing should they wish to continue with their research.

An applicant may lodge a written request with the Research Support Co-ordinator for reconsideration of a decision of the HREC. The applicant must lodge the written request within 14 days of the notification of the decision and outline the reasons for the request and the evidence upon which the request is based. The HREC shall consider the request at its next meeting.

## **PROGRESS REPORTS**

Approval to proceed is contingent on researchers submitting progress reports about the project, as stated in the letter of approval, to HREC and as requested from time to time by the HREC. Failure to submit a satisfactory progress report may result in withdrawal of ethics approval. On completion of the project, a copy of the final report (or other relevant output) is to be submitted to the HREC.

## **VARIATIONS AND AMENDMENTS TO AN APPROVED PROJECT**

Applications for variations or amendments to an approved project are to be made in writing to the Research Support Co-ordinator and include the approval number and project title, details of intended variation, why the change is necessary and the ethical implications, if any.

## **REPORTING ADVERSE EVENTS**

Researchers are required to immediately report to the HREC anything which might warrant a review of ethical approval of the project including:

- serious or adverse effects on participants,
- proposed changes in the project methods; and
- unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.

## **HANDLING COMPLAINTS**

Complaints about the conduct of a research project from research participants, researchers or other interested persons are made in writing to the Research Support Co-ordinator. The Research Support Co-ordinator will consult with the Research Director who will handle the complaint or delegate to a member of the Research Team as appropriate.

If a complaint relates to the Research Director, the Research Support Co-ordinator will refer the complaint to the Chairperson of the Human Research Ethics Committee. For complaints received from clients, the Research Director will review and decide whether the Research Department or the Client Liaison Officer will handle the complaint.

## **SUSPENSION OR WITHDRAWAL OF APPROVAL OF PROJECTS**

Where the HREC is satisfied that circumstances have arisen where the research project is not or cannot be conducted in accordance with the approved protocol or where the welfare and rights of participants are not, or will not be protected, approval may be withdrawn. Applicants and their governing institutions shall be notified accordingly and a recommendation shall be made to suspend, discontinue the project or that other necessary steps are to be taken. Researchers must not continue with the project if ethical approval has been withdrawn and must comply with any special conditions required by the HREC.

## TIPS FOR RESEARCHERS

- Be familiar with, and ensure your research project is consistent with the NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research and the Australian Code of Conduct for the Responsible Conduct of Research.
- **Participant Information Sheets** should be in plain language, using a large, clear font (eg Arial 12pt), stating the title of the study, names of investigators and any sponsors. It should outline the purpose, methods, demands, risk, inconveniences, potential benefits, time requirements and discomforts associated with the study. Ensure that your study design includes, if necessary, the services of an interpreter or other third party to ensure that the potential participant has fully understood everything about the project, prior to being asked to sign a consent form.

The information sheet and consent form must make it clear that **the participant is free to leave the study at any time, without affecting the services they may receive now or in the future from Silver Chain.**

**The following paragraph must be included at the end of all Information Sheets:**

### **Complaints About the Study**

“The Silver Chain Human Research Ethics Committee has given ethics approval for the conduct of this project. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project, please contact Dawn Woods, Research Support Co-ordinator, Silver Chain, 6 Sundercombe Street, Osborne Park WA 6017, telephone 9201 6758.”

## QUERIES

Researchers who have any queries regarding ethics approval should contact:

Research Support Co-ordinator  
Silver Chain Human Research Ethics Committee  
6 Sundercombe Street  
Osborne Park WA 6017

Tel: (08) 9201 6758  
Fax: (08) 9242 0268  
Em: [ethics@silverchain.org.au](mailto:ethics@silverchain.org.au)  
Web: [www.silverchain.org.au](http://www.silverchain.org.au)