

WA Health Translation Network
Research Collaboration to COVID-19
Advisory Group
Minutes
Thursday 9 April 2020, 11.00am – 12.00pm
Via Zoom: <https://uwa.zoom.us/j/865794235>

Attendees: Gary Geelhoed, Daniel Fatovich, Graham Hillis, Jeremy Nicholson, Jon Watson, Stephen Stick, Aron Chakera, David Morrison, Jonathan Carapetis, Chris Reid, Toby Richards, Debbie Turner.

Apologies: Steve Webb, Darren Gibson, Merrilee Needham.

Gary Geelhoed explained that Jim Flexman of PathWest was to join but could not. Will be added .

1. Welcome and update

- Guiding document
Gary Geelhoed reminded the Advisory Group to provide feedback to the guiding document.

Gary Geelhoed mentioned that he was hoping to have a conversation with HBF (Hugh Dawkins) regarding the possible private health funds involvement.

A question was asked about general access to data and samples. Toby Richards advised that the plan is to put a Scientific Advisory Board in place. Essentially, this would enable any WA researcher to access to specimens. Toby has approached Steve Webb to oversee this as he is deemed relatively independent. Jeremy Nicholson confirmed there would be access.

- Governance and Panel
Over 80 research grant applications have been received. The panel will review over the Easter with a meeting scheduled on Thursday 16 April.

2. Funding

- Lotterywest
Anticipating endorsement from the Lotterywest Board shortly.
- Philanthropy
As the donor process is confidential, at this stage Gary Geelhoed is unable to go into detail, however, confirmed discussions were ongoing with potential donors.

3. Updates from Key Areas

- Biobanking (Aron Chakera)

Continuing to harmonise the biobanking process to provide a resource that supports all Area Health Services. Working groups will be established to continue to progress this. The steering committee later this month will consider long term plans.

- North Metro Health Service (Aron Chakera)
Currently integrating the current proposed trials into the NMHS research infrastructure. A couple of issues remain outstanding and are in the process of being finalised.
- East Metro Health Service (Graham Hillis)
Governance is currently in the processing being finalised.
The biobanking samples for data collection will likely be processed at Fiona Stanley, commencing next week. This is to be confirmed.
- Telethon Kids Institute (Jonathan Carapetis)
The BRACE study is underway. They have received funding from a donor.
Going live today at Fiona Stanley Hospital; at a limited capacity at Perth Children's Hospital; and at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital on Tuesday 14 April. Sample processing is currently processed at the Telethon Kids Institute, however, it will eventually go to other external sites with a smaller number of samples retained at the Telethon Kids Institute.

Funding opportunities for the PePCoCo trial are being pursued, particularly for the implementation phase.

- Curtin University (Chris Reid)
Chris Reid confirmed that a number of research grant applications have been submitted collaboratively, with a particular focus in the mental health space, which has brought together researchers across a number of Universities and Research Institutes.

Testing for CIVIC will be conducted over the Easter break with the intention of going live next week.

- Australian National Phenome Centre (Jeremy Nicholson)
The laboratories are set up and ready to go.
Jeremy Nicholson is in discussions with various international groups who have samples in their labs already, as in theory cross validating could occur.
- University of Western Australia (Jon Watson)
UWA have been collaborating with regards to the grant research applications, particularly in mental health.
The UWA Chief Information Officer has been assisting to build the server for the database and Redcap capability.

Jon Watson noted that it might be worthwhile for WAHTN to produce a brochure summarising the areas of support that requires funding. The Advisory Group members agreed with this approach.

Gary Geelhoed noted that WAHTN and Telethon Kids Institute has been developing a similar document which identifies projects (including large infrastructure projects) and emerging themes that require philanthropic funding.

- **South Metro Health Service (Toby Richards)**

Toby Richards confirmed that the SMHS Chief Executive has provided his endorsement regarding the core infrastructure projects moving forward.

Approx. 12 patients have now been recruited. Currently sorting out sampling with the collection occurring next week.

- **Emergency Medicine (Daniel Fatovich)**

The first person has been recruited into the critical illness study. Governance should be finalised shortly.

Gary Geelhoed noted a document in the UK from their Chief Medical Officers suggesting as many patients as possible are enrolled in clinical trials. A WA version has been sent to the Minister who has referred it to the Health Dept. Gary Geelhoed has asked for a decision as he will publish himself from WAHTN but noted it would not be as effective.

4. Media release and appearances

Gary Geelhoed mentioned the interviews that have been conducted and stated that all media has been uploaded to the WAHTN website:

<https://www.wahtn.org/wa-covid-19-research-collaboration/>

With regards to the request of a consolidated response for Research Australia, Gary Geelhoed advised he has followed up and provided Research Australia with a draft of the Guiding document. Gary will feedback to this group once he has further advice.

5. Next Meeting

A meeting of the Advisory Group will be scheduled in the later part of the week of 20 April.