

WA Health Translation Network

COVID-19 Research Collaboration

Minutes

Monday 4 May 2020, 3.00pm – 4.00pm

Via Zoom

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

1. Welcome and update

Included within the Agenda for this meeting, were the following documents for information:

- “What policy makers need to know about COVID-19 protective immunity.”
- National Research Infrastructure for Australia (NCRIS) facilities available to researchers in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- “Global COVID Lab” Webinar from the Human Vaccines Project.

Minutes

The Minutes from this meeting and all previous meetings are circulated as quickly as possible and uploaded to the WAHTN COVID-19 website. Please provide feedback to Gary Geelhoed.

The WAHTN website for COVID-19 has been receiving a high volume of traffic so it is proving useful to the community and Gary Geelhoed encouraged members to continue to send information to upload.

2. Funding

Unfortunately, the funding from Lotterywest has not been forthcoming. Modifications to the budget are currently being made.

Still exploring options related to hospital foundations and philanthropic avenues. With one Foundation already contributing over \$100K to clinical trials in their area health service.

3. Updates from Key Areas

DETECT and Harry Perkins Institute (Peter Leedman)

Multiple projects progressing within DETECT.

Announcement made last week regarding DETECT Schools project.

DETECT Fifo project is progressing to specifically target the health and lifestyle impact on fifo workers and the communities in which they work.

Linear will run one the first phase of a COVID-19 vaccine trial, which commenced last week.

The Harry Perkins Institute are awaiting funding for a few clinical projects.

COVID-19 Research Response (CRR)

Given the decrease in funding, Toby Richards and the Area Health Service Research Directors will meet to modify the costings attached to the CRR, particularly with regards to infrastructure and how the logistics of the CRR will work.

CIVIC – Chris Reid

CIVIC are working with the DETECT group for the community longitudinal cohort establishment of the Fifo project. Ethics approval process is in the pipeline and is rapidly moving through.

Mental health project is progressing (led by Sean Hood and Peter McEvoy). Study being developed and is part of the second round for CIVIC. We will likely see an increase and broader intake of activity over the coming weeks once the screening process commences with the Fifo project and other community based initiatives.

Australian National Phenome Centre (ANPC)

The ANPC is continuing to pursue the international connections and is assisting to coordinate the international metabolic phenotyping approach working with Imperial College London and Cambridge University.

Biobanking

A trial of OpenSpecimen software was completed and everyone is pleased at how this has evolved. WAHTN was instrumentally in progressing the Biobanking platform and the Steering Committee is currently in discussions with the OpenSpecimen vendors to make it possible for new groups and researchers to access the software with the long standing cohorts such as Busselton Study and Raine.

Proposed Workstream – Immunity to COVID-19 (Dominic Mallon)

A group of key immunologists in WA met to discuss the broader options available for detecting immunity, particularly those that have recovered from COVID-19. Various groups were represented at the meeting including Public Health, Infectious Diseases, Respiratory Medicine, Virology as well as Immunology.

The idea is to design an observational cohort study which will maximise the study of WA's relatively small experience with COVID-19. Translate and answer questions around immunity, including; true incidents; nature of immunity of those who have been infected; determinates; and why are children relatively protected from infection.

A consolidated proposal is being written which will hopefully have a positive response from Government.

Dominic encouraged members of the group to contact him if they wished to be included.

Consumer and Community – Ben Hogan

The survey distributed to consumers to get feedback from the general public about the importance of COVID-19 research and the consent process has now closed. A report will be available on the outcomes in due course.

Online training with the Community Representative Pool is scheduled on 14 & 15 May.

Mental Health (Sean Hood)

Working collectively with developing questionnaires for the mental health component within the CIVIC project.

A number of additional subgroups have formed with regards to telemedicine, health workers, and educational aspects.

Over 60 experts are meeting on 5 May to progress work in the mental health space, standardise measures and answer questions for the community.

Edith Cowan University (ECU) (Rob Newton)

Progressing the telehealth project with a meeting scheduled on 5 May (including Fiona Wood, Pip Brennan and David Playford).

SAP software company are very interested in digitally enhanced aged care and will be providing resources to this space, particularly around remote diagnostics and monitoring.

Two additional projects have progressed at ECU, including the School of Nursing using their simulation suite for preparedness and response recovery. The School of Business is planning for recovery and investigating business continuity and how they might respond and recover in WA.

ASCOT (Owen Robinson)

Still awaiting the medication, sourcing signatures and then WA recruitment can commence.

4. Next Meeting

It was proposed that these meetings be held on a fortnightly basis moving forward.

The next meeting will be scheduled on Monday 18 May, 3pm.