

# Hunter New England Health Research Plan 2015-2016



**Health**  
Hunter New England  
Local Health District

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# HNE Health Research Plan 2015-2016

## Foreword

Health services internationally are looking to foster research capability and embed clinically relevant research within healthcare delivery. The motivation behind this trend is evidence that clinical services supporting clinical academics in leading clinically relevant research produce better healthcare outcomes with greater efficiency. This occurs via a variety of mechanisms such as stronger adoption of best evidence practice, the fostering of small-scale local clinical practice improvement and the fostering of a culture of critical appraisal of evidence and practice.

Nationally, the NHMRC, recognizing the potential benefits of embedding clinical research in health services, has established a new “aspirational” model of advanced health research and translation centres (AHRTC). Although the HNE Health and partners were not successful in the first round of establishment of AHRTCs, the message to health care providers and health service managers is to develop integrated clinical research, training, education, and service delivery.

The New South Wales Office for Health and Medical Research is promoting a similar integrated research in health care strategy through establishment of hubs that bring together local health districts, medical research institutes and universities.

HNE Health, in response to these policy developments, is now setting out a strategic plan for research support and development. This plan will be brought together with and link with clinical research and development plans of the University of Newcastle and the Hunter Medical Research Institute. HNE Health will also seek to progress closer research ties with the University of New England.

Priorities guiding the HNE Health strategic plan are to:

1. Grow clinical academic workforce with strategic appointments in research intensive and supportive clinical departments.
2. Promote unity of purpose across University of Newcastle and Hunter Medical Research Institute to actively support the growth and development of clinical academics embedded in the health system.
3. Develop and align “enablers” and “support platforms” for clinical research. These will include clinical research and trials support, research administration, research grant and finance management, research training programs, research fellowships, small grants in aid and research governance.
4. Establish a dedicated HNE Health research support recurrent budget and recurrent co-funding arrangements for support of national competitive partnership grants, clinical PhD scholarships, clinical research fellowships and essential clinical research support infrastructure.
5. Commission targeted research activity using internal competitive tendering to address gaps in knowledge in priority areas in the HNE Health’s strategic plan.

6. Identify and develop local health systems improvement projects with potential to develop into larger-scale, externally funded multicentre projects via the establishment of a Centre for Comparative Effectiveness in Health Care (CCEHC).
7. Provide dedicated mentoring and career development for early and mid-career clinicians (all professions) with interest/capability in research and innovation in partnership with and supported by programs in place within University of Newcastle.

A focus on these 7 priority areas will help HNE Health accomplish its broader strategic priorities.

This plan is in keeping with HNE Health's commitment to Excellence – Every Patient Every Time. It responds to the 2015-2016 Operational Plan Directive 5.2: Facilitate multidisciplinary innovation, education and research by implementing the HNE Health Research Plan. In recognition of the current dynamic environment, this plan looks ahead 12 months, and will be refreshed for 2016-2017.

This document captures outstanding actions from the 2012-2015 HNE Health Research Governance Framework Action Plan. It also reflects the health systems and consumer focus promoted by the NSW Agency for Clinical Innovation.

This document will be the basis of HNE Health's partnership with the University of Newcastle and Hunter Medical Research Institute and will provide guidance to HMRI's strategy in support and enablement of health and medical research.

We thank all stakeholders who have contributed to the development of this Plan, particularly members of the HNE Health Research Innovation Advisory Council, and look forward to working with you to realise the successful implementation of these initiatives and build on them in the future.



**Professor Chris Levi**  
Director Clinical Research & Translation



**Jane Gray**  
Director Research Innovation & Partnerships

## Glossary

NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
AHRTC	Advanced Health Research Translation Centre
OHMR	Office of Health and Medical Research, NSW Ministry of Health
MRSP	Medical Research Support Program (NSW State Government Program)
RIGB	Research Infrastructure Block Grants (Commonwealth Government Program)
RTS	Research Training Scheme
HMRI	Hunter Medical Research Institute
RHD	Research Higher Degrees

## HUNTER NEW ENGLAND LOCAL HEALTH DISTRICT STRATEGY MAP

*Excellence - Every Patient, Every Time*

<b>Our Vision: Healthy People – Now and into the future</b> <b>Our Goals: Keeping people healthy</b> <b>Providing world-class clinical care</b> <b>Delivering truly integrated care</b>		
<b>STRATEGIC PRIORITIES</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Community (The people we serve)</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Deliver disease prevention, early intervention and health promotion across the lifespan</li> <li>1.2 Support a healthy start to life</li> <li>1.3 Empower communities to engage as partners in health and reduce health disadvantage</li> <li>1.4 Close the Gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal health</li> </ol> </li> <li><b>2. Service (The service we provide)</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 Improve equity of access and service delivery</li> <li>2.2 Cooperate, collaborate and communicate with our partners to best meet agreed health needs</li> <li>2.3 Develop a culture of service and person-centred care that includes the needs of families and carers</li> <li>2.4 Sustain effective clinical networking</li> </ol> </li> <li><b>3. Patient Safety, Quality and Experience (Excellence – every patient, every time)</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1 Provide a quality health service experience</li> <li>3.2 Deliver safe, effective and appropriate healthcare</li> <li>3.3 Provide strong corporate and clinical governance</li> </ol> </li> <li><b>4. Resources (Managing our services well)</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4.1 Make the most effective use of the finite resources available and ensure that costs are kept under control to promote sustainability</li> </ol> </li> <li><b>5. Positioning for the future (Proactively preparing)</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5.1 Plan and invest for future health needs</li> <li>5.2 Facilitate multidisciplinary innovation, education and research</li> <li>5.3 Encourage new sustainable technology to support clinical needs</li> </ol> </li> <li><b>6. Our staff and workplace culture (Supporting and encouraging our staff)</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6.1 Attract, develop and retain competent, capable staff with the right cultural fit</li> <li>6.2 Be ethical and accountable for demonstrating our shared (CORE) values</li> <li>6.3 Ensure a safe working environment</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<b>CORE VALUES: Collaboration Openness Respect Empowerment</b>

## 1. Environmental Analysis

The external environment supports in principle the development of research capability within the local health district. However, HNE Health receives no purpose specific funding for research capacity building. There is currently reliance on fostering existing partnerships and persuading local partners with research funds, to invest in strategies where there is mutual benefit.

Dedicated funding may become available if the district is successful in the future with an AHRTC bid.

HNE Health needs to seek funding support from NHMRC and OHMR for regional research capacity building within health.

<b>External Factors</b>	<b>Probability</b>	<b>Impact on HNE Health</b>
Change in NHMRC policy to better support and enable regional research partnerships	Moderate	Major
Change in OHMR/MRSP funding policy towards NSW Hubs	Low	Minor
Alignment between HNE Health clinical research strategy and University of Newcastle broader research strategy	Low	Major
Alignment between HNE Health clinical research Strategy and HMRI research support and enablement plan	Low	Major

## 2. SWOT Analysis – Research Support and Development HNE Health

Cohesive partnership between HNE Health, Calvary Care, the University of Newcastle, the University of New England and HMRI will be required if the region's clinical research productivity potential is to be realised. The first step in this partnership will be the development of a unified joint strategic plan.

	Strengths	Weaknesses
i.	Potential for good alignment of strategy given the local sector of only two universities, one medical research institute within HNE Health.	Current lack of alignment of research strategy between partner organisations leading to risk of duplication.
ii.	Strong support and enabling platform established by HMRI.	No dedicated HNE Health budget for research support and development.
iii.	Large investment in workforce administering research within University of Newcastle.	Lack of mutual understanding by partner organisations has specific individual needs and expected return from research expenditure.
iv.	Internationally competitive preclinical research groups within University of Newcastle.	Very limited number of high performing clinical academics.
v.	HNE Health well integrated with primary and community care with potential to facilitate translation.	Seven only high performing research intensive clinical services based on a combination of performance metrics including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- leading clinical academics performance as measured by publications, citations, grant earnings, esteem</li> <li>- evidence of translation into health care practice and policy</li> </ul>
vi.	Strong Research Ethics and Governance Unit, with regular income and potential to develop into the HNE Health Research Support & Development Unit.	Limited linkage between most clinical and preclinical research groups.
vii.		Lack of focus on clinical research support within University Newcastle and limited focus on expertise within HMRI.



	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
i.	Develop a unified clinical research support and development plan for HNE Health, University of Newcastle and HMRI.	Inability to leverage funding to support research capacity building.
ii.	Develop a unified strategy for clinical research support harnessing existing resources within University of Newcastle and HMRI.	Ongoing division and lack of alignment of strategies between partner organisations.
iii.	Strengthening research intensive clinical services.	Changes in current senior management leading to research capacity building becoming low priority.
iv.	Build research capability within research active clinical services.	Lack of future recognition for regional centres of research excellence at both state and federal levels.
v.	Build multidisciplinary research, with medical research supporting and mentoring nursing & midwifery and allied health research.	Lack of clear and transparent HNE Health accounting for research funds.
vi.	Build networks and research centres/clusters with adjacent local health districts.	Decline in MRSP funding to HMRI.
vii.	Attract new proposed funding from OHMR in the areas of early and mid-career clinical researchers and health systems research.	
viii.	Build new aligned HNE/UoN/UNE/HMRI Centres of Clinical Research Excellence commencing with a Centre in Comparative for Effectiveness in Health care (CCEHC).	

### 3. Source of Funds Analysis

Clinical research funds will come from allocated HNE Research Development and Support Unit budget and from co-funding partners and funding agencies – OHMR, University of Newcastle, HMRI, NHMRC and private donations. The Research Development and Support Unit have a small budget from the review of research applications, in accordance with NSW Ministry Health Policy Fee Schedule for Research Ethics and Governance Review.

### 4. Our Vision and Values

**Our Vision:**

*HNE Health is an advanced health research and translation centre, internationally recognised for discovery, innovation and excellence in clinical care, every patient every time.*

**Our Values:**

- Collaboration
- Openness
- Respect
- Empowerment

## 5. Key Strategies and Measures

### Key Strategies:

#### 1. Establish an integrated and aligned HNE Health research partnership with University of Newcastle, University of New England and HMRI.

Competitive Advantage	Key Strategy	Desired Position
Integrated governance allowing future viable bids for AHRTC status	Alignment of clinical research strategy around specific action points when it is multi party investment joint return satisfying University, HMRI and HNE Health metrics	A truly integrated research translation centre

#### 2. Clinical academic workforce capacity building

Competitive Advantage	Key Strategy	Desired Position
Clinical academics linked to strong pre-clinical research groups producing high impact translation research outputs.	Develop and/or recruit clinical academics in medicine, nursing & midwifery and allied health and set up structures to facilitate linkage of two pre-clinical research groups.	Double our number of research intensive clinical services from 7 to 14

#### 3. Establish shared infrastructure and support platforms

Competitive Advantage	Key Strategy	Desired Position
Integrated infrastructure. No duplication of effort or expense.	Aligned and collaborative infrastructure development plan.	A truly integrated research translation centre.

#### 4. Establish a Centre for Comparative Effectiveness in Health Care

Competitive Advantage	Key Strategy	Desired Position
Integrated research and clinical service platform with strong focus on health systems and behaviour, supported by experts in methodology, in partnership with University of Newcastle	Build health services research workforce to support specific priority projects aligned with HNE Health's focus on High Value Health Care	National and international recognition for effectiveness research and translation

## OPERATIONAL PLAN

### We want to be:

*An advanced health research and translation centre, internationally recognised for discovery, innovation and excellence in clinical care, every patient, every time*

### The key measures of our success will be:

1. *A service where patients are offered involvement in clinical research and all staff recognise the importance of clinical research in supporting excellence in health care delivery.*
2. *Recognised excellence in measurement and reporting of Comparative Effectiveness in Health Care focusing on translation of research into practice, measurement and improvement in health care outcomes (T3 and T4 translational research). This will include:*
  - *Research implementation and knowledge transfer programs established in both hospital and primary care.*
  - *Nationally and internationally recognised high impact translational research emanating from all major clinical services.*
3. *Nationally recognised and awarded clinical academic leaders working in all major clinical services.*
4. *Establishment of a programme of HNE Health-commissioned research aiming to address evidence practice gaps and to improve health outcomes in disadvantaged communities.*
5. *Development of a nationally recognised clinical academic training program, medicine, nursing & midwifery and allied health professions.*
6. *Development by nationally recognised, Centre for Comparative Effectiveness in Health Care (CCEHC) in partnership with University of Newcastle, Central Coast and Mid-North Coast LHDs and the HNECC Primary Health Network. Within HNE Health this Centre will be underpinned by clinical practice improvement program across all departments supported by sound research methodology and analysis techniques.*

**We will achieve these outcomes by:**

1. Leadership in outstanding research and evidence-based clinical care, including for the most difficult clinical conditions.
2. Excellence in innovative biomedical, clinical, public health and health services research which is translated into better health outcomes.
3. Programs and activities to accelerate research findings into health care and ways of bringing health care problems to the researchers.
4. Research-infused education and training.
5. Health professional leaders who ensure that research knowledge is translated into policies and practices locally, nationally and internationally.
6. Strong collaboration amongst the research, translation, patient care and education.
7. Enhance the current regulatory framework for Research in HNE Health by establishing a monitoring program of approved research.
8. Promoting a culture of research support and involvement among staff and patients.

**Through these key activities we will be:**



## Detailed Action Plan

	Action	Who	When
1.	<b>Develop a unified HNE, UoN, UNE and HMRI clinical research support and development plan.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director Clinical Research &amp; Translation</li> <li>• Director Research, Innovation &amp; Partnerships</li> <li>• Deputy Vice-Chancellor, (Research and Innovation) UoN</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor, Faculty of Health &amp; Medicine, UoN</li> <li>• Director HMRI</li> <li>• General Manager, Calvary Mater Newcastle.</li> <li>• Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Health and Rural Medicine), UNE</li> </ul>	August 2015
2.	<b>Establish a budget and business rules for clinical research fellowships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director Clinical Research and Translation</li> <li>• Director Finance</li> </ul>	August 2015
3.	<b>Establish a Research Development and Support Office within Research, Innovation &amp; Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director Research Innovation &amp; Partnerships</li> </ul>	September 2015
4.	<b>Develop a proactive focus on development of capability and capacity building in nursing &amp; midwifery and allied health research.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director Clinical Research &amp; Translation</li> <li>• Director of Nursing &amp; Midwifery</li> <li>• Director of Allied Health</li> </ul>	December 2015
5.	<b>Establish a process for competitive assessment of clinical research fellowships.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director Clinical Research and Translation</li> <li>• Director Finance</li> </ul>	July 2015
6.	<b>Establish workforce unit support processes for recruitment of clinical academics and clinical research fellows and honorary affiliated researchers from pre-clinical disciplines.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director Clinical Research and Translation</li> <li>• Director Workforce</li> </ul>	February 2016
7.	<b>Establish a working party and develop a unified clinical research infrastructure support plan aiming to co-locate key clinical research support persons and infrastructure within the HMRI building.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director HMRI</li> <li>• Director Clinical Research and Translation</li> <li>• Deputy Vice Chancellor Research UoN</li> <li>• Pro-Vice Chancellor Faculty of Health UoN</li> </ul>	October 2015

8.	<b>Establish a community clinical research engagement strategy promoting involvement in clinical research and promoting the CCEHC to the general public across Hunter, New England and Central Coast regions.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director HMRI</li> <li>• Director Research Innovation and Partnerships</li> <li>• Pro-vice Chancellor Faculty of Health</li> </ul>	March 2016
9.	<b>Establish a Steering Committee to develop the membership, funding model, organisational framework, organisational structure and major research themes for the proposed CCEHC.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chief Executive Officer HNE Health</li> <li>• Vice Chancellor University of Newcastle</li> </ul>	March 2016
10.	<b>Establish the IT, data management and data linkage systems to support CCEHC measurement of health care outcomes, health care expenditure and research outputs and impact.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director HMRI</li> <li>• HNE Health Director of Information Technology</li> <li>• UoN Director of Information Technology</li> <li>• Primary Health care Network Director of Information Technology.</li> </ul>	March 2016
11.	<b>Establish a monitoring program for Research conducted in HNE Health.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager Research, Support and Development Office</li> </ul>	March 2016