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Key Words: Research; Ethics; Ethical Standards

Policy Applies to:

- Credentialed Specialists;
- Staff employed at Mercy Hospital;
- Employees/students of other organisations who wish to conduct research within Mercy Hospital.

Related Standards:

- **New Zealand Public Health and Disability Act 2000** (New Zealand Health and Disability Ethics Committees)
- **EQuIP4 Standard:**
 2.5 The organisation encourages and adequately governs the conduct of health and medical research to improve the safety and quality of health care.

 2.5.1 The organisation’s research programme promotes the development of knowledge and its application in the health care setting, protects consumers/patients and manages organisational risks associated with research.
- **Health Research Council requirements in relation to research they have funded where Mercy Hospital is a nominated site.**
- **Code of Patient Rights**

Rationale:

Mercy Hospital encourages relevant high quality research, which improves the effectiveness of health interventions and the efficiency of health service delivery.


Therefore Mercy Hospital:

- promotes, facilitates and supports research;
- encourages staff to undertake research;
- participates in the governance and management of research;
- ensures research meets the high clinical, scientific and ethical standards required of it.

Definitions:

Research covered by this policy encompasses:

- Participation by Credentialed Specialists as researchers;
- Participation by staff of Mercy as researchers;
- Use of facilities or equipment;
- Access to patient and Mercy Hospital records;
- Investigations involving patients of Mercy Hospital;
- Any other research activity carried out in Mercy Hospital for which ethical approval is required as set out in the Ministry of Health document “Operational

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Standards for Ethics Committees” March 2002 (updated April 2006)
<http://www.hrc.govt.nz/assets/pdfs/policy/op-standard.pdf>

Objectives:


- To ensure appropriate access is available to research results that will underpin clinical best practice
- To support research projects undertaken by the Centre for International Health and the Otago International Health Research Network at the University of Otago.
- To ensure each project undertaken at Mercy Hospital has a principal investigator who is responsible for:
 - The relevant design and conduct of the research project;
 - Maintaining ethical standards;
 - Ensuring patient safety and confidentiality;
 - Progress reports to the Ethics Committee/Chief Executive Officer at the completion of the project or if longer than 12 months at 12 monthly intervals.
 - Obtaining appropriate ethics approval from
 - New Zealand Health and Disability Ethics Committee (Multi Regional or Southern Regional)¹ or a relevant approved Tertiary Ethics Committee
 - Mercy Hospital Ethics Committee²
 - Documentation – completing Intended Research Form (refer Appendix I); appropriate consent and information sheets;
- To ensure that research that is multi site has a staff member or credentialed consultant as a nominated contact person for the Mercy Hospital aspect of the study.
- To ensure research at Mercy Hospital is appropriate to our Catholic Tradition and Mercy Ethos

Implementation:

- Provide access to Joanna Briggs Database and AORN material is provided to ensure clinical staff can establish and maintain best practice.
- Establish and maintain an effective working relationship with the Centre for International Health and the Otago International Health Research Network.
- Ensure the Ethics Committee meets as required to be responsive in reviewing research proposals.

¹ http://www.ethicscommittees.health.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexcm/ethics-ethicalreview-role?Open&m_id=3.1

² Ethics Directives; Ethics Committee

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- Ensure research projects that have Mercy Hospital named as a site and have New Zealand Health and Disability Ethics Committee approval are reviewed by Mercy Hospital Ethics Committee to evaluate in relationship to our Catholic Tradition and Mercy Ethos. A copy of the Regional or Multi-site Ethics Approval letter must accompany the proposal.
- Research proposals that do not require New Zealand Health and Disability Ethics Committee approval are reviewed by Mercy Hospital Ethics Committee to ensure the research has an appropriate lead researcher, will be conducted in a safe and thorough manner, with due care given to participant wellbeing, and is appropriate to Catholic Tradition and Mercy Ethos of the Hospital.
- Ensure all research proposals have the Intended Research Form completed on presentation and progress of research is updated annually.
- The Chief Executive Officer may defer or suspend a project at any time in the interests of safety of patients or staff, or where financial or reputation risk to the sponsoring institution becomes apparent.

Evaluation:

- Annually an executive summary will be presented to the Quality and Risk committee identifying:
 - All research proposals presented to the Ethics Committee and the outcome of ethics review
 - An update of current research being undertaken at Mercy Hospital

Associated Documents

- **External**
 - Operational Standard for Ethics Committees” Ministry of Health, March 2002 (Updated April 2006).
<http://www.hrc.govt.nz/assets/pdfs/policy/op-standard.pdf>
 - Code of Ethical Standards for Catholic Health and Aged Care Services in Australia”, Catholic Health Australia 2001.
- **Internal**
 - Mercy Hospital Ethics Directives

Acknowledgements

Professor Philip Hill, McAuley Chair, Centre for International Health,
University of Otago.