**UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO**
**ŌTĀKOU WHAKAIHU WAKA**

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**ROLE TITLE:** Research Advisor

**DEPARTMENT:** Health Research South, Dean's Office

**SCHOOL / DIVISION:** Faculty of Medicine – Dunedin / Health Sciences

**REPORTS TO:** Manager, Health Research South

**DIRECT REPORTS (FTE):** N/A

**INDIRECT REPORTS (FTE):** N/A

## 1. PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE ROLE:

Health Research South (HRS) is a shared entity responsible for the integrity of the health research conducted within the joint research environment of the Faculty of Medicine – Dunedin (FoM-D) of the University of Otago and Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora - Southern. The Health Research South office works as part of the National Health NZ Research Team (Evidence and Pathways Directorate).

The role of Research Advisor is to evaluate research proposals, support and advise researchers and management from both organisations, in order to enable research projects to take place safely and effectively in Health NZ Southern and FoM-D.

## 2. ACCOUNTABILITIES:

Assist researchers in processes concerning the approval to conduct research such that the support given streamlines and creates an environment that is conducive for undertaking research. Provide individualised advice and support to ensure the approval process is appropriate for the research undertaken and the researcher's levels of experience and research team support.

Provide information, advice and support as required on the process of obtaining research approval for both the Health NZ Southern and the University of Otago through the HRS research office. Respond promptly and accurately to enquiries.

Receive, process and review applications for research approval from researchers, ensuring compliance with the national Health NZ Research approval process, Health NZ Southern Capacity and Capability approval process or University of Otago locality process.

Scrutinise projects with regard to quality, ethical and regulatory requirements, adequate funding, risk implications, and relevant consultation and sign off by appropriate organisational signatories. This includes identify potential risks to participants, patients, data, staff, facilities, or the reputation of either organisation.

Provide accurate information and advice to stakeholders within Health NZ or University of Otago who are responsible for approving research projects or signing research agreements and contracts. This includes highlighting potential risks or adverse consequences identified in the study, or limitations placed on the study by Ethics, Privacy, Cybersecurity or Data Governance.

Assess and triage risk, and as necessary refer research projects seeking Health NZ approval to specialist teams or review committees within Health NZ. Coordinate and assist researchers and the reviewers in the completion of the regulatory assessment by ensuring accurate and complete information is shared in a timely manner.

Maintain, in agreed format, information about all research approval applications, monitor the progress and outcomes of these applications, and report on these at appropriate intervals to the HRS Manager. Ensure HRS and Health NZ research office registers and databases of approved and pending research projects are kept up to date and accurate.

Provide advisory and applied services to support the Health Research South Oversight Kāhui to conduct its affairs and meet its governance responsibilities efficiently and effectively, including oversight of Health NZ Southern research accounts.

Maintain oversight of Health NZ Southern research accounts and related processes including liaising with research teams and Health NZ Finance to resolve issues, preparing reports and highlighting financial issues to the HRS Manager.

Provide accurate budgetary support and advice to research teams for commercial clinical trials to ensure full recovery of research costs. Provide advice on appropriate Health NZ costing and resource considerations for other research studies.

Using approved templates, set up, review and revise draft research funding contracts, subcontracts, information sharing agreements, and confidentiality disclosure agreements. Obtain legal approval and the approval of the HRS Manager, where appropriate. Brief the Health NZ signatories of research contracts and agreements.

When requested by the HRS Manager, negotiate subcontracts, amendments to research agreements with sponsors, other research institutions, or third-party suppliers.

Facilitate and assist in the development of processes and policies for research approval ensuring that these processes are manageable for the research staff while mitigating risk for the Health NZ and FoM-D. Collaborate with other University and Health NZ staff to improve and optimise processes, policies and procedures for research.

Supervision and training of Research Administrators, as required.

Actively engage with and, where required, lead research-related committees and groups.

Oversee and/or, as appropriate, plan and coordinate training workshops or events to celebrate Health NZ Southern and FoM-D research activity.

With the HRS Research Administrator, manage the processes for distributing HRS funds and other funding rounds facilitated by HRS. Research Advisor responsibilities include eligibility review, updating or developing award criteria and providing institutional knowledge to panel chairs.

Provide support and strategic advice to Health NZ Southern staff (who do not have an academic appointment) in the development of research protocols, potential external funding opportunities, grant applications and the management of research projects. This includes linking with other support services (e.g. Health NZ national biostatistician), the appropriate ethics committee, and Health NZ advisory committees. Advise on budgeting, ethical review processes, online platforms for research, consultation with Māori, peer review, as well as Health NZ consultation and approval processes.

Demonstrate flexibility in accommodating other projects and duties as required in the dynamic environment of health research support.

Develop and maintain effective contacts and working relationships with researchers and relevant research support, clinical, and general staff in order to improve the service offered by the HRS research office.

Develop and maintain effective contacts and working relationships with operational counterparts throughout Health NZ and in external organisations in order to improve the performance and standing of HRS.

Actively work to foster good communication and increase awareness of research approval requirements and processes among Health NZ Southern departments, Health NZ Research, the University of Otago, and the wider research community. This may include presentations on research approval processes to local research groups.

Escalate urgent safety events, complaints, concerns, or conflicts between University and Health NZ policies or procedures to the HRS Manager.

Contribute to a system of continuous quality improvement and good practice in the HRS research office, including ensuring standard operating procedures are kept up to date.

Build and maintain a sustainable knowledge base and resources for researchers, including key aspects of research design, methodology and feasibility; sources of, and application procedures for, research funding; development of study protocols and accompanying documents; and applying for, and obtaining, relevant regulatory approvals.

Develop and maintain a working knowledge of research related policy, national administrative guidelines, legislation and strategic documents (e.g. Health and Disability Ethics Committees, MedSafe, Health & Disability Consumer Rights, Privacy principles etc). Understand the background rationale for research approval processes, in order to provide effective guidance to researchers, and to contribute to policy and process changes.

Demonstrate sound knowledge of, and compliance with, all relevant University of Otago and Health NZ policies and procedures.

Ensure all activities of HRS involving research approval and support are undertaken efficiently, effectively and in a timely manner, that they comply with the organisations' policies and procedures and are carried out in such a manner as to provide a high standard of service to HRS, and to its clients.

**3. KEY RELATIONSHIPS:**

Internal:

- Health Research South Oversight Kāhui.
- Health NZ Research Office staff and national managers.
- Health NZ Evidence & Pathways Managers, Planning, Funding and Outcomes.
- FoM-D and Health NZ Southern researchers and research support staff including Research Nurses and Study Co-ordinators.
- UoO Research Integrity Office staff.
- Research Advisors, Research & Enterprise, UoO.
- UoO researchers conducting research which requires Health and Disability Ethics Committee Review.
- Health NZ Southern management staff, clinical directors and relevant administrative staff.
- FoM-D Heads of Department and relevant administrative staff.
- Privacy, Security, Legal team representatives from Health NZ.

External:

- External researchers carrying out research involving Health NZ Southern.
- External research related staff in relevant tertiary organisations, commercial trial Sponsors and Clinical Research Organisations.
- External health research funding and regulatory bodies.

**4. QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE:**

Essential:

- Relevant tertiary qualification with a research component.
- High level of interpersonal and team skills.
- Relevant experience in health, research or tertiary environment.

Preferred:

- 3+ years providing high level advice and support in a tertiary or health environment.
- Tertiary qualification (or equivalent) in a health-related field.

**5. TECHNICAL SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE:**

Essential:

- Computer literacy, in particular Excel and database use.
- Ability to translate complex information, and provide high quality, balanced analysis and advice.

Preferred:

- Sound knowledge of New Zealand's health research infrastructure including strategy, policy and process.
- Sound understanding of costing, budgeting and accounts.

**6. SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:**

N/A.

**7. DIRECT BUDGET ACCOUNTABILITY:**

- Preparation of commercial trial budgets ranging from thousands to hundreds of thousands of dollars.
- Oversight of Health NZ Southern research accounts (in excess of $9 million).

**8. MĀORI STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:**

Act in a manner consistent with the principles and implications, as well as the University's commitment to the Treaty as articulated in the Māori Strategic Framework.

**9. PACIFIC STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:**

Act in a manner consistent with the strategies and goals contained in the University's Pacific Strategic Framework, role-modelling and promoting Pacific values, equity and diversity principles and cultural safety practices.

**10. HEALTH & SAFETY:**

Act and work in a manner compliant with current health and safety at work legislation and University procedures, frameworks and guidelines. Role model safe behaviour and practices, share the responsibility to prevent harm and contribute to a safe campus and work environment, including raising workplace health and safety concerns for self, students, visitors and other staff.

**11. SUSTAINABILITY:**

Act in a manner consistent with the University's sustainability commitments; role-modelling sustainable practices, with a particular emphasis on minimising the environmental impact of day-to-day activities.

**12. EQUITY AND DIVERSITY:**

Act in a manner consistent with the University's commitment to anti-racism and the co-creation of accessible, safe, respectful, and welcoming environments where all students and staff are supported to achieve their full potential.