

# CMHDARN RESEARCH ETHICS CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

## INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

### Background

The Community Mental Health Drug and Alcohol Research Network (CMHDARN) was established in 2010 to broaden involvement of the community mental health and alcohol and other drugs sectors in practice-based research and to promote the value of research and the translation of research evidence into practice. Its overall aim is to improve the quality of service delivery and correspondingly, the outcomes for consumers / clients of community managed services, their families and carers.

### Purpose of the RECC

- To encourage researchers to participate in a process of review regarding ethical practice in mental health and alcohol and other drugs research
- To build the capacity of community managed alcohol and other drugs and mental health organisations to both demonstrate and implement ethical research practices
- To provide expertise on ethical considerations for research projects specifically targeting mental health and alcohol and other drugs consumers / clients and workers in the field

### Role of the RECC

- To review the ethical considerations of research project proposals in the MH and AOD sectors
- To provide ethical review for CMHDARN and partner-organisation research projects that do not require ethical approval from other institutions (e.g. a Human Research Ethics Committee) to ensure that the research meets the ethical requirements stipulated in the 'CMHDARN Best Practice Guidelines'
- To provide guidance and advice on engagement with consumers / clients and use of their feedback in research data and publications
- To provide approval for CMHDARN / NADA / MHCC to support, participate in or promote a research project
- To provide information about ethical standards and ethical practice guidelines appropriate to conducting research in the AOD and MH sectors
- To provide advice and support for Human Research Ethics Committee applications for research projects working within the MH and AOD sectors
- To provide guidance to make a decision about whether research should be reviewed by a Human Research Ethics Committee
- To review all research, from an ethical perspective, that seeks to gain access to data from clients / consumers of services represented by NADA and/or MHCC

***Please note: CMHDARN support for, or involvement in, research projects***

CMHDARN RECC support does not imply any formal assistance or endorsement from CMHDARN. However, CMHDARN will generally only provide formal assistance to research projects that have RECC support.

## Who should request RECC ethics consultations?

- Anyone who is conducting research relating to clients / consumers who receive services from MHCC and NADA member organisations
- NADA member organisations who wish to access data from the NADAbase
- Academic researchers who wish to conduct research in and with the MH and AOD sectors
- Service delivery organisations in the MH and AOD sectors who are conducting an internal evaluation
- Service delivery organisations in the MH and AOD who want to publish research / evaluation results
- Researchers who want CMHDARN / NADA / MHCC to promote or participate in their research in the MH and AOD sectors\*

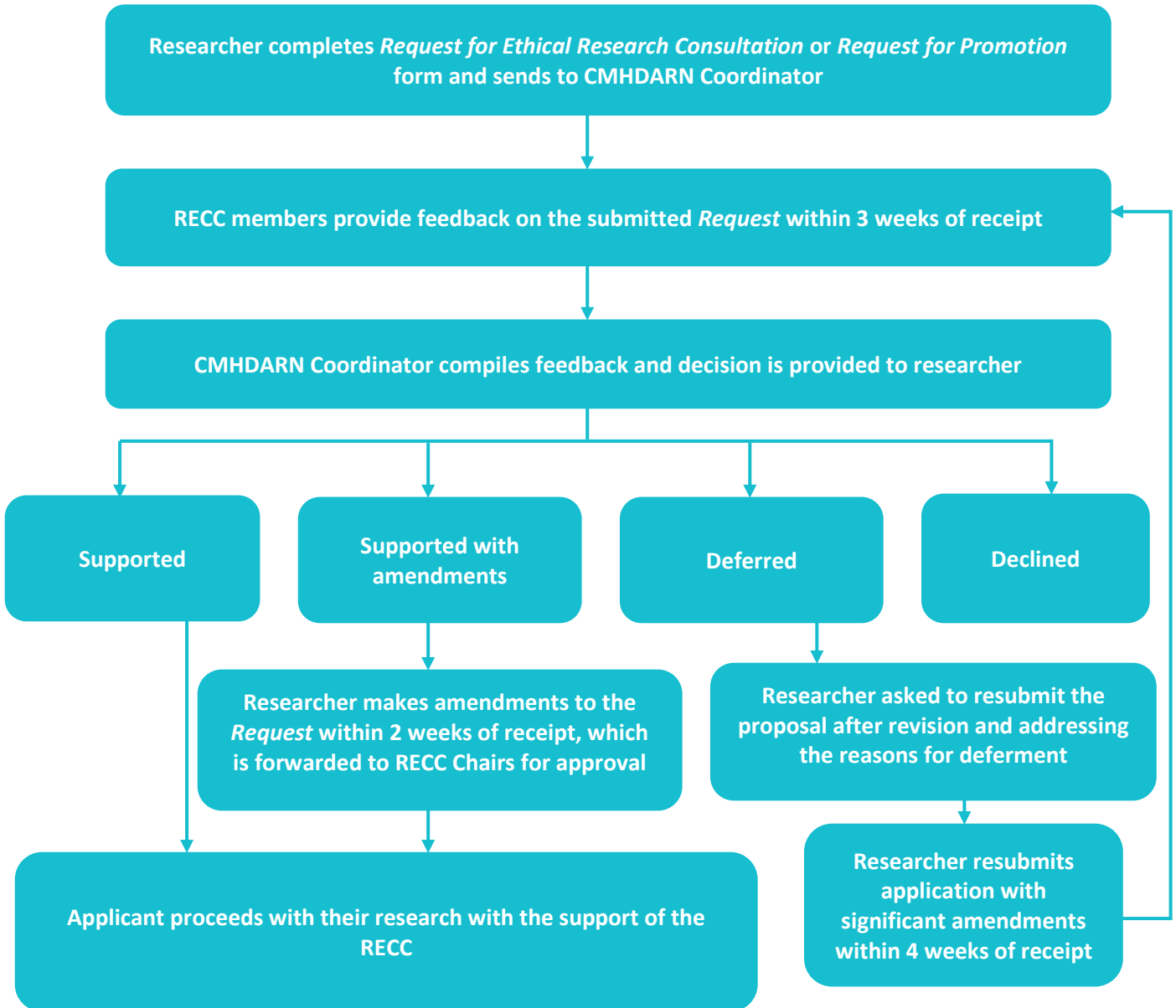
## Process for the request for RECC consultation

1. Complete a 'Request for Ethical Research Consultation' form or a 'Request for CMHDARN, NADA, MHCC promotion' and submit it to [info@cmhdaresearchnetwork.com.au](mailto:info@cmhdaresearchnetwork.com.au) including specified attachments
2. The CMHDARN Coordinator will circulate the 'Request' to the RECC reviewers for feedback
3. Feedback is returned to the applicant, via email within *four* weeks of application, with one of the following outcomes:

<b>Supported</b>	The proposal is supported as submitted
<b>Supported after amendments</b>	The proposal is supported subject to the incorporation of the amendments into the proposal. Amendments are to be submitted to the Chairs of the RECC for review
<b>Deferred</b>	The proposal is not supported as submitted but it can be reassessed by the RECC after revision to address the reasons for deferment
<b>Declined</b>	The proposal is not supported as submitted

4. If the outcome of the 'Request' is:
  - a. "Supported" – the applicant will receive some feedback, however, the RECC considers the information provided to be sufficient to meet the thresholds set out in the 'Criteria for evaluation'.
  - b. "Supported after amendments" – the applicant must resubmit the documentation within two weeks of receipt. The Chairs of the RECC will then assess the changes and either support the application or recommend further amendments.
  - c. "Deferred" – for further consideration of the RECC, the applicant must resubmit all documentation with significant revision within 4 weeks of receipt. The RECC will then reconsider the 'Request' and feedback will be sent via email to the applicant within 3 weeks of receipt.
  - d. "Declined" – the RECC will offer recommendations for change and will reconsider the application only after significant change to the proposal has been demonstrated. The applicant will need to re-apply.
5. The CMHDARN Coordinator will maintain contact with the primary researcher throughout the research project, including an invitation to submit an article for the CMHDARN Connect.

**Flowchart of process for Request for Ethical Consideration:**



**Process for Review – if applicant disagrees with RECC decision**

If an applicant disagrees with the outcome from the RECC, they must submit a letter with substantiating documents to the CMHDARN Coordinator within four weeks of receipt of the RECC decision. The RECC will reconsider on a case by-case basis.

**\*Please note:**

Promotion for this purpose, means the distribution of study information through various means, including the networks of CMHDARN, NADA and/or MHCC. Promotion does not include screening or recruitment.

If the researcher would like CMHDARN, NADA and/or MHCC to partner or promote a study and the study has current ethics approval from an HREC, there is a separate application for this process. Please download or email the CMHDARN Coordinator to obtain the **'Request for CMHDARN, NADA or MHCC research promotion'** and submit with the relevant documents to the CMHDARN Coordinator at [info@cmhdaresearchnetwork.com.au](mailto:info@cmhdaresearchnetwork.com.au)

If the study does not have current ethics approval, the applicant must complete the 'Request for Ethical Consultation' before the research can be promoted by CMHDARN, NADA or MHCC.

*Before CMHDARN, NADA or MHCC can partner in or promote a study, an application (either a request for promotion or a request for ethical consultation) must be made to the CMHDARN RECC and the RECC must agree to recommend to 'support' the application.*

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