

**Alfred Hospital Ethics Committee
Position Statement****ETHICS REVIEW OF RESEARCH INVOLVING ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE**

1. The Alfred Hospital Ethics Committee may review ethics applications for research that includes, either specifically or incidentally, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander participants and/or communities.
2. This position statement pertains to research that may impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people or communities in any of the ways listed in the AIATSIS definitionⁱ below.
3. Ethics reviews may be undertaken by both a hospital HREC and a specialist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander HREC, where different areas of expertise are required. In this circumstance, evidence of approval by an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander HREC will be requested either (if already obtained) with the application documents, or as a condition of ethics approval by the Alfred Hospital Ethics Committee.
4. With other applications, a case-by-case assessment will be made by the Chair of the relevant Ethics Committee group that would be reviewing the application (the Drugs & Interventions group or the Health & Social Sciences group), as to whether the Ethics Committee:
 - a. Has sufficient expertise amongst its membership to undertake a full review of the project;
 - b. Needs to seek additional input from an appropriate external reviewer with knowledge of research involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, a network within the relevant community, and/or familiarity with the culture and practices of the groups who may be involved in or impacted by the researchⁱⁱ; or
 - c. Will refer the application to another HREC with acknowledged expertise in the assessment of projects involving Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander participants and/or communities.

REFERENCES

National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007 (updated 2018), National Health & Medical Research Council

AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research (2020), Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)

ENDNOTES

i Definition from *AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research*:

“What is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research?”

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research includes all research that impacts or is of particular significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including the planning, collection, analysis and dissemination of information or knowledge, in any format or medium, which is about or may affect Indigenous peoples, either collectively or individually. The AIATSIS Code applies to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research, regardless of whether the research intends to directly involve human participants, and specifically extends to the use of collections such as archives, datasets, collections of information or biospecimens that may not otherwise be categorised as human research.

For the purposes of this Code, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research should be understood as research that concerns or impacts Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in any of the following ways:

- the research is about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, societies, culture and/or knowledge, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander policies or experience.

- the target population is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, groups, communities or societies.
- the target population is not explicitly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals or communities but the research population includes a significant number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people have been incidentally recruited and researchers wish to do separate analysis of Indigenous-specific data.
- there are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals or communities contributing to the research.
- there is new or pre-existing data related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples being used in the research.
- the research concerns Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' lands or waters."

ii In accordance with *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*, Chapter 4.7

Endorsed on 16 February 2023 by:	
Professor John McNeil * Chair Alfred Hospital Ethics Committee	Dr Angela Henjak Senior Manager Office of Ethics & Research Governance