



Australian Government

National Health and Medical Research Council

Call for submissions for recognition by NHMRC as a Centre for Innovation in Regional Health

Encourage leadership in health research and translation of direct relevance and benefit to regional and remote areas of Australia.

Identify and recognise one or more exemplars of collaboration in health and medical research, research translation, research-infused education and training, and outstanding health care.

Submissions must be provided by email to AdvancedCentres@nhmrc.gov.au by
8pm AEST, Tuesday 6 December 2016.

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1. Objectives

The translation of health and medical research is an integral theme of NHMRC’s strategy for the period 2015-16 to 2018-19.¹ As one of its priorities, NHMRC will continue to recognise national leadership in the provision of research-based and evidence-based health care and the training of doctors, nurses and other health professionals.

The aim of the Centre for Innovation in Regional Health (CIRH) initiative is to encourage leadership in health research and translation of direct relevance and benefit to regional and remote areas of Australia.

To encourage this leadership, NHMRC wishes to identify and celebrate exemplars of collaboration in health and medical research, research translation, research-infused education and training, and outstanding health care in a regional and/or remote setting. To achieve recognition as a CIRH, groups are required to demonstrate competitiveness at the highest international levels across all relevant areas of health care.

Australia faces challenges due to population spread over a large geographic area and the health disparities between metropolitan, regional and remote communities. There is considerable potential for collaborative approaches to drive innovation in regional and remote health care delivery, workforce capacity, planning and policy.

NHMRC is now inviting submissions from groups located outside major capital cities with a strong record of achievement and international levels of excellence in delivering research- and evidence-based health care in regional and remote Australia.

NHMRC’s CIRH initiative provides such centres with recognition, not funding. Our aim is to signal that NHMRC values leadership and excellence in research, translation and training of health professionals in an evidence-based environment, at international levels of excellence.

¹ NHMRC Corporate Plan 2015-2016.

2. Evaluation Criteria

Submitting groups should provide evidence of:

1. Outstanding leadership in research- and evidence-based clinical care that enhances the quality of health care in regional and remote Australia
2. Excellence in innovative biomedical, clinical, public health and/or health services research that addresses the challenges and opportunities of health care provision in regional and remote Australia
3. Programs and activities to accelerate translation of 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 programs.

3. Preparing a submission

This section provides guidance on the material that may be submitted. Page limits are given against each criterion to ensure that applicants focus on their peak achievements.

The Criteria for Submissions are:

1. Outstanding leadership in research- and evidence-based clinical care that enhances the quality of health care in regional and remote Australia

Submissions should address the leadership activities of the centre in providing clinical care to regional and/or remote areas, and especially how local health care practices and policies are research- and evidence-based. Since the leading regional health care centres are often required to manage the most complex cases and difficult settings, due to the outstanding clinicians and facilities available, the submission may include examples of how the centre manages these cases.

The submission may also include examples of how the centre uses research to improve treatment of individual cases and population health interventions, and how it integrates research into hospital-based and primary care.

Responses against this criterion should encompass plans and vision for further growth in leadership, including by sharing best practice with other centres.

(Maximum 5 pages)

2. Excellence in innovative biomedical, clinical, public health and/or health services research that addresses the challenges and opportunities of health care provision in regional and remote Australia

Submissions should provide evidence of research excellence, benchmarked at the top international level. This may include but is not limited to:

- key papers and contributions that have received high international recognition, with a brief explanation
- key publications that have changed practice or policy
- evidence of international recognition of research outputs, including prizes at the highest level
- evidence of cross-disciplinary approaches
- plans for the future development of excellence in research.

Submissions should demonstrate research activities of specific relevance to the population, or geographical region, in which they provide health care services. Submissions should also demonstrate the breadth of excellence of published research.

(Maximum 4 pages).

3. Programs and activities to accelerate translation of research findings into health care and ways of bringing health care problems to the researchers

Submissions should provide evidence of actions that are in place to improve local practices and policies flowing from research, and of leadership, nationally and internationally. These may include but are not limited to:

- centre programs and policies that accelerate research translation into health
- centre programs to enhance presentation of research questions to researchers
- a culture of research translation for the continuous improvement in health care, including primary health care
- track record in important clinical trials and health services research
- community engagement, including the inclusion of users of the health care facilities in research
- leverage to attract additional funding from business or philanthropy.

(Maximum 4 pages).

4. Research-infused education and training

Submissions should demonstrate how education and training:

- build the research capacity of health professionals
- provide opportunities for health professionals to train in and to conduct research
- involve research and translation leaders in teaching and training
- demonstrate infusion of research into educational offerings in all disciplines.

(Maximum 2 pages)

5. Health professional leaders who ensure that research knowledge is translated into policies and practices locally, nationally and internationally

Submissions should include a list of up to 20 leaders (with a maximum 2 page curriculum vitae for each, focussed on their local, national and international leadership roles in research translation).

6. Strong collaboration amongst the research, translation, patient care and education programs of the centre

Submissions should demonstrate how effective collaborative arrangements are in place that maximise the research, translation and educational opportunities and minimise duplication of scientific and administrative costs.

(Maximum 3 pages)

4. Making a Submission

What is a “centre” and who should make a submission?

NHMRC will accept submissions from partnerships across research, translation, health care and training, co-located, clustered or integrated by demonstrable mechanisms.

Whilst recognising the value of co-location, NHMRC will also accept submissions from centres where the geographical location of the health care partner (and the settings in which health care and translational research are conducted) make it necessary to utilise virtual linkages with one or more research and training partners.

The partners of the centre will share a vision, strategy and clarity of purpose, and be performing at the highest levels of international practice.

The centre must have a health care delivery component (likely a hospital or health network and other health care facilities). The partner undertaking the health care delivery component is responsible for forwarding the joint submission to NHMRC on behalf of the other partners. Submissions will demonstrate governance arrangements that enable the centre to achieve the objectives of an NHMRC designated Centre for Innovation in Health Research.

NHMRC has established two initiatives to recognise national leadership in the provision of research-based and evidence-based health care and the training of doctors, nurses and other health professionals: Advanced Health Research and Translation Centres (AHRTCs) and Centres for Innovation in Regional Health (CIRH).

Groups should not seek recognition as both an AHRTC and a CIRH. Groups should apply only for the form of recognition that better aligns with their activities, achievements and future goals.

Requirements for Submissions

Two (2) electronic files should be provided to NHMRC in PDF format, containing:

1. A submission which directly addresses each of the *Criteria for Submissions* (page limits for responses against each criterion are given on pages 3-5 of this document).
2. A short cover letter submitted by the Head of the health care delivery partner, and co-signed by the Heads of all other partner organisations. The cover letter should contain:
 - i. Contact details (email and mail addresses, phone number/s) for the Head of the health care delivery partner.
 - ii. A table listing the names of participating institutions.
 - iii. A brief summary of the submission (maximum of 1.5 pages in length).

Formatting Requirements

- All written material must be in at least 11 point font.
- All documentation must be submitted in PDF format. Each PDF file must be less than 2MB in size.
- Submissions must not contain any multimedia, video files or web-links.
- When addressing Criterion 2, references should be included as a single list that does not count towards the page limit for the criterion. References must include a list of all authors.
- Web-links can be used to reference papers and publications where there is no practical alternative. However, the method of referencing must still include the following minimum information: *Surname, Initials [all authors], Year, Title, Journal Title, Volume, Page(s) and DOI [if assigned]*. Reviewers must be able to identify publications using a printed version of the submission.
- When addressing Criterion 5, include a summary table containing the full names of the Health Professional Leaders and their major affiliation or employing institution.

5. Review of Submissions

NHMRC expects only a small number of centres to be performing at an international level. Submissions will be assessed against each of the six (6) criteria. Applications must achieve a high

rating against **all** six criteria to be eligible for shortlisting. The six criteria will be given equal weight in the assessment process.

International Review Panel

NHMRC will establish an independent panel of distinguished international and national leaders in the field to review submissions. Panel members will have experience at the highest level in outstanding academic health centres world-wide.

The International Review Panel will

- provide NHMRC with advice on the submissions and which particular centres show the leadership characteristics indicated above at an internationally competitive level
- advise NHMRC which centres show potential to achieve such characteristics, and
- advise NHMRC on the actions that could be taken to encourage development of leadership centres.

Depending on the number of submissions, NHMRC may establish a short-list of submissions for interview. It is anticipated that NHMRC will host the International Review Panel in the first quarter of 2017 to consider short-listed submissions and, where necessary, to interview representatives of the group².

Groups making a submission will be provided with written feedback on their submission based on the advice provided by the International Review Panel.

6. Outcome of the review

The NHMRC Council will consider the recommendations of the International Review Panel including any centres proposed for recognition as an NHMRC CIRH.

The Chief Executive Officer will make the final determination on centres to receive recognition, taking into consideration the recommendation from NHMRC Council. Recognition will be awarded for periods up to 5 years.

7. Reporting

CIRHs will be required to report periodically to NHMRC on their performance. The reporting requirements for each CIRH will be reflective of the content of their submission.

² Representatives of the Centre attending an interview will be required to do so at their own expense.