



RESEARCH ETHICS MONTHLY

MARCH 2020

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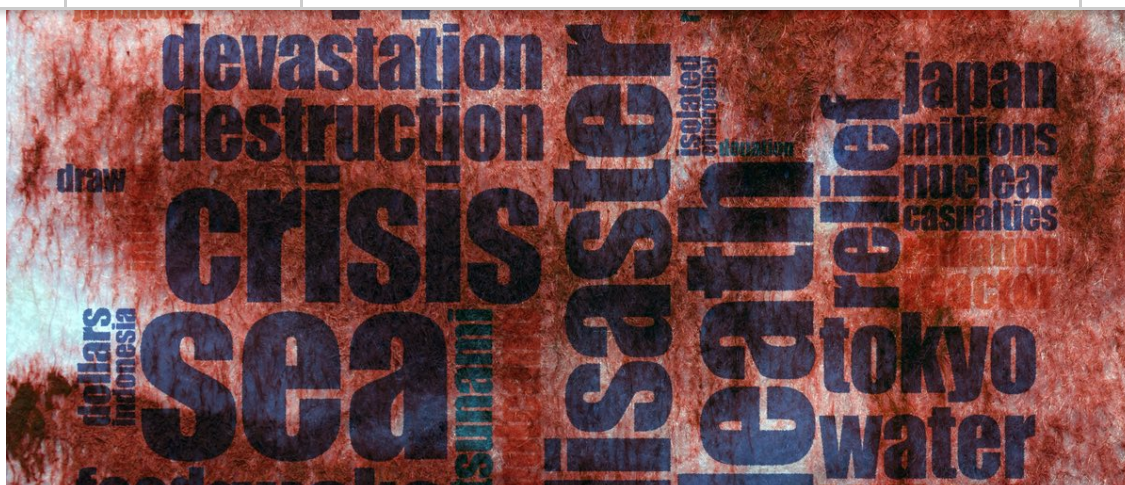
Please consider subscribing yourself [at this link](#), because it is incredibly affirming and would be greatly appreciated. Subscribing is free, easy and keeps our in-house internet elf happy ("Gary stop zooming around the office in your wheelchair and stop bringing to work your digital countdown to The Mandalorian s2").

Despite Covid-19, AHRECS is still around and beavering away at three large jobs for clients. We may shortly start on a pretty exciting job in New Zealand.

More information about the Research Ethics Monthly can be found on the [blog pages](#).

The Research Ethics Monthly is possible thanks to the generous support of our [institutional](#) and [individual patrons](#). If you enjoy the monthly dose of human research ethics and research integrity please consider becoming a patron. It's not a lot of money, but makes a huge difference to us.





Towards a code of conduct for ethical post-disaster research

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We recently called for a [code of conduct](#) in disaster research. This call is rooted in our respect for the research process itself and our care for affected people and the researchers who do this work. To be clear, we *are* calling for a cross-disciplinary conversation to advance a shared set of moral and ethical principles to help guide what we study, who we study, how we conduct studies, and who is involved in the research process itself. We *are not* arguing for another layer of bureaucratic or regulatory oversight such as those required in some countries by internal review boards and ethics committees. Our hope is that such a discussion will launch first within focused [academic and policy meetings](#), before it can be scaled up to the regional and eventually international levels.

Our intent is to prompt further reflection and conversation around the following three possibilities for ensuring that disaster scholarship is relevant, fair, and ethically sound.

First, it is essential that research has a *clear purpose* that is rooted in present knowledge gaps and emergent context-specific research priorities in the disaster aftermath. The collaborative work that happens before disaster and in the immediate aftermath can help clarify the focus of research studies and ensure that the knowledge generated is locally-relevant and hence more likely to effectively inform response, recovery and future disaster risk reduction efforts.

include a range of perspectives, including those of local researchers and those who hail from elsewhere but hold deep knowledge of the places and people affected by disasters. They also comprise those voices of the survivors whose ability to deal with the event and contribute to the recovery effort is central to rebuilding damaged physical infrastructure as well as people's lives and livelihoods. Ensuring that local researchers and survivors are in the driving seat does not exclude outside researchers when prompted by local colleagues. In many instances, outside scholars have access to a wide range of resources (e.g., equipment, funding, time) that may be unavailable locally in times of collective hardship. Crucial, though, is that local researchers have the opportunity to lead efforts associated with research design, data collection and analysis, and ultimately the sharing of findings.

Third, it is crucial that research agendas and projects launched in the disaster aftermath be *ethically coordinated* and involve locals and outsiders. This means that local researchers need to be identified quickly after disaster—the National Science Foundation-supported [Extreme Events Research and Reconnaissance networks](#) have already jump-started these efforts. There are many other [organizations and networks globally](#) that have advanced new methods for identifying researchers and communicating creatively in the disaster aftermath through [virtual forums](#) and [virtual reconnaissance efforts](#) that allow for a wider range of researchers to connect, communicate, and ultimately collaborate.

[Read more](#)

Research ethics review during a time of pandemic

[Gary Allen](#), [Mark Israel](#) and [Colin Thomson](#)

COVID-19 is prompting changes to academic delivery, essentially intended to contain the spread of the virus and protect the most vulnerable from its effects. As more countries introduce travel restrictions and mandate self-isolation, it will no doubt change the way we conduct research.

Research ethics review needs to adapt to meet the needs of these trying times.

We have written previously about the use of [proportional review](#) and [proportional processes](#) to progress matters outside of a research ethics committee meeting.

But there will always be matters that need to be considered by a human research ethics committee.

together different perspectives, lived experience and knowledge.

It remains important that committees exercise their responsibilities in [paragraph 5.2.31 of the National Statement](#).

5.2.31 Decisions by an HREC about whether a research proposal meets the requirements of this National Statement must be informed by an exchange of opinions from each of those who constitute the minimum membership (see paragraph 5.1.30). This exchange should, ideally, take place at a meeting with all those members present.

But, that does not mean committee members need to sit together in a room. The same valuable results might be achieved with video conferencing packages like Zoom and MS Teams, Blackboard Collaborate, perhaps even aided by asynchronous online collaborations on feedback. AHRECS has worked with many institutions that already run their meetings successfully online.

Of course, institutions may need to assess their on-line or virtual meeting systems to ensure they enable chairs to be satisfied that there has been an exchange of opinion and not merely individual expressions that are unseen by other members.

In addition, AHRECS can help you take advantage of an online meeting by conducting a short professional development activity on a topic of your choice. This would involve a further reading and reflection booklet, 15-minute pre-recorded presentation (e.g. Social Media and human research ethics) and 15 minutes of Q&A/discussion. The cost of such an activity is A\$900.

Email enquiry@ahrecs.com to discuss further.

Working flexibly through the Coronavirus: Continuing professional development in research integrity or human research ethics?

Research ethics and research integrity professional development works best as a long-term commitment to building the capacity of the current and next generation of researchers. As universities extend their online capacity to educate coursework students in the face of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and place restrictions on staff travel, there is little reason to close down all professional development for staff and research students.

We think there are a number of compelling reasons to conduct these workshops online. Online workshops offer an opportunity to trigger research conversations among staff working remotely; their timing can be readily adjusted to meet availabilities and they can also be captured and reused in the institution over the next couple of years.

Using Zoom,^[1] AHRECS can deliver online workshops for any number of HDR candidates, supervisors and early career researchers. The workshops would be tailored to your institution and your needs. We have run such workshops across Australia, New Zealand and the broader region.

a 10% discount. Such a workshop might be a 101 introduction or more advanced and practical. AHRECS can also run longer, more interactive workshops and run sessions for larger groups, on request.

Send an email to enquiry@ahrecs.com to discuss further.

[1] Zoom has the advantage of being free for the user and being accessible via computer, tablet and smartphone. It also supports connection via phone. Sessions can be recorded.



Endometriosis, women's health and the 'hysteria myth'

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This post originally appeared on Monash Lens

Endometriosis is finally a hot topic.

We're hearing more and more women's stories of having their pain dismissed by loved ones and doctors. Stories of lives being derailed by debilitating symptoms. And stories of strength and determination to make the next woman's experience a little better.

About [1.5 per cent of the female population worldwide has endometriosis](#). It's a chronic disease formed by tissue such as the lining of the uterus (the endometrium). This tissue forms lesions that stick on, and sometimes invade, organs such as the ovaries and bowel.

[Read more](#)



Plain English communications and the PICF – and beyond

Bob Milstein

For many of us, preparing the Participant Information and Consent Form (PICF) for a research project is an irksome, time-consuming and unexciting “hoop-jumping” task. Albeit, essential.

Indeed, the National Statement shows how essential the PICF task is. In particular, the Statement’s guiding principle for researchers is that:

“... a person’s decision to participate in research is to be voluntary, and based on sufficient information and adequate understanding of both the proposed research and the implications of participation in it.”

For the purposes of this blogpost, the emphasis is on the “understanding”.

[Read more](#)

While you are here...

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1. [When words matter](#) - A Human Research Ethics commentary
2. [Who passes along the message?](#) - A Human Research Ethics discussion activity
3. New member of a research ethics committee resource sheets
 - a. [The Meaning of Membership](#) - NMRECRS#01
 - b. [The categories of membership and their responsibilities](#) – NMRECRS#02
 - c. [Preparing for your first meeting](#) – NMRECRS#03
 - d. [Human research ethics](#) – NMRECRS#04
 - e. [At the first meeting](#) – NMRECRS#05
 - f. [The National Statement](#) – NMRECRS#06
4. [What constitutes “quality” in preclinical biological studies? - A human research ethics commentary](#) - A research integrity commentary
5. [Quality in research ethics review](#) - A Human Research Ethics talk by Prof. Colin Thomson AM
6. [Human bycatch](#) - A Human Research Ethics commentary 00
7. [Group recruitment/consent](#) - A Human Research Ethics discussion activity
8. [Flow chart to determine whether research on material published to the web/social media posts require research ethics review/consent?](#) - A Human Research Ethics resource
9. [Dracula attacks: Consent for wider use of blood](#) - A Human Research Ethics discussion activity
10. [Brainstorming - A Human Research Ethics discussion activity](#) - A discussion activity about the ethical conduct of research with brain organoids

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- Torrens University
- University of Melbourne
- University of Southern Queensland
- The University of Sydney Ethics Office
- University of Wollongong Ethics Unit

Things You May Have Missed...

Our Resource Library

01. [Honesty in authorship. Who's on first?](#) – Hindawi
02. [Is research integrity training a waste of time?](#) – Nature

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04. [The Intellectual and Moral Decline in Academic Research](#) – James G. Martin
Centre for Academic Renewal
05. [Clinical trials: how to make informed consent more ethical](#) – **The Conversation**
06. [Defining predatory journals and responding to the threat they pose: a modified Delphi consensus process](#) - Paper
07. [Flying Blind – the Australian Health Data Series: Human Research Ethics Committees \(HRECs\) - Report](#)
08. [\(China\) How China's New Policy May Change Researchers' Publishing Behavior](#)
– Scholarly Kitchen
09. [Opinion: Exorcising Ghostwriting from Peer Review](#) – **TheScientist**
10. [When it comes to good practice in science, we need to think global but act local](#)
– Nature
11. ['Evidence-Based Medicine' and the Expulsion of Peter Gøtzsche](#) – **Medscape**
12. [Global Code of Conduct for Research in Resource-Poor Settings](#) - TRUST
13. [How Universities Cover Up Scientific Fraud](#) – **Areo**
14. [How Academic Science Gave Its Soul to the Publishing Industry](#) – Issues in
Science and Technology
15. [\(Russia\) Putin wanted Russian science to top the world. Then a huge academic scandal blew up](#) – **The Washington Post**

There were more than 42 more great items in the last 50 days. Follow us on social media to get an alert when new items are added
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Our Blog

1. [Lost time may never be found again but is it time to talk about the duration of ethics approvals?](#)
2. [The Ethics and Politics of Qualitative Data Sharing](#)
3. [Conversations with an HREC: A Researcher's perspective](#)
4. [A users perspective on the ethics application process in Australia-room for improvement](#)
5. [Question for Research Ethics Monthly readers: Win for your institution a...](#)



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