



RESEARCH ETHICS MONTHLY

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2019

Dear <<First Name>>,

Not you? Or we made a mistake? Send us an email to ResearchEthicsMonthly@ahrecs.com to let us know. We extrapolated your name (where possible) from the email address where this edition was sent. If you didn't receive this email directly, the salutation is probably of the first recipient. 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. More information about the Research Ethics Monthly can be found on the [blog pages](#).





Should we Reframe Research Ethics as a Professional Ethics?

Dr Nathan Emmerich

Research Fellow in Bioethics at ANUMS



Despite the fact that one of the urtexts of bioethics—Beauchamp and Childress’ [principles of biomedical ethics](#)—offers a set of concepts that purport to apply to both research and medical practice it is nevertheless the case that we standardly contrast research ethics with professional ethics. The operating presumption seems to be that a proper grasp of professional ethics requires an understanding of the unique role professional’s play, whereas the same cannot be said of research ethics. Here the presumption is that researchers are not unique but interchangeable. Furthermore, their individuality is inimical to good, and therefore ethical, research.

Whilst both healthcare professionals and researchers should be objective, the professional enters into a singular relationship with their patients. The position of the researcher can, however, be occupied by any relevantly qualified individual and their function is to report their scientific observations. Thus, underlying this contrast is an epistemological point. The perceived importance of the relationship between doctors and patients means that whilst the ethics of the preeminent profession, medicine, are predicated on professionalism they are equally predicated on something that is distinctively (inter)personal. In contrast, the notion that there might be an (inter)personal dimension to the relationship between researchers and research participants is inimical to the requirement for objectivity, at least for a certain value of objectivity.

[colored_box]Therein, of course, lies the rub. [According to Stark](#), the differentiation between research ethics and professional ethics can be traced to the National Institute of Health, Bethesda, Maryland, USA, circa 1950. Given the existing competition between the codes of professional ethics promulgated by medicine’s sub-specialties, the nascent idea of a research ethics was conceived pragmatically and in a professional terms. When it came to biomedical research, and the epistemology of the natural sciences, this was not an issue. However, consistent with [Schrag’s critique](#) of the subsequent development of research ethics as neglecting concerns expressed by social scientists, this is more problematic when it comes to the social sciences, particularly at the more interpretive end of the spectrum.

[Read more](#)

Australian Code (2018) and National Statement (2007 updated 2018):

Taking stock

Hopefully your institution has fully implemented the 2018 updates to the Australian Code and National Statement... or are in the tail end of implementation. If so, AHRECS offers three services you may find helpful:

1.
A desktop audit of your research integrity arrangements to judge how your implementation stands as judged against comparable institutions. And a blueprint to suggest practical ways your arrangements could be improved.
2.
A professional development plan for the Australian Code (2018) and your institution.
3.
Design and delivery of professional development activities for your RIAs, AO/DO/RIOs and research Community.

You could also use our on-call service (see below) for us to provide expert and independent advice on your policies, procedural and resource material/professional development materials.

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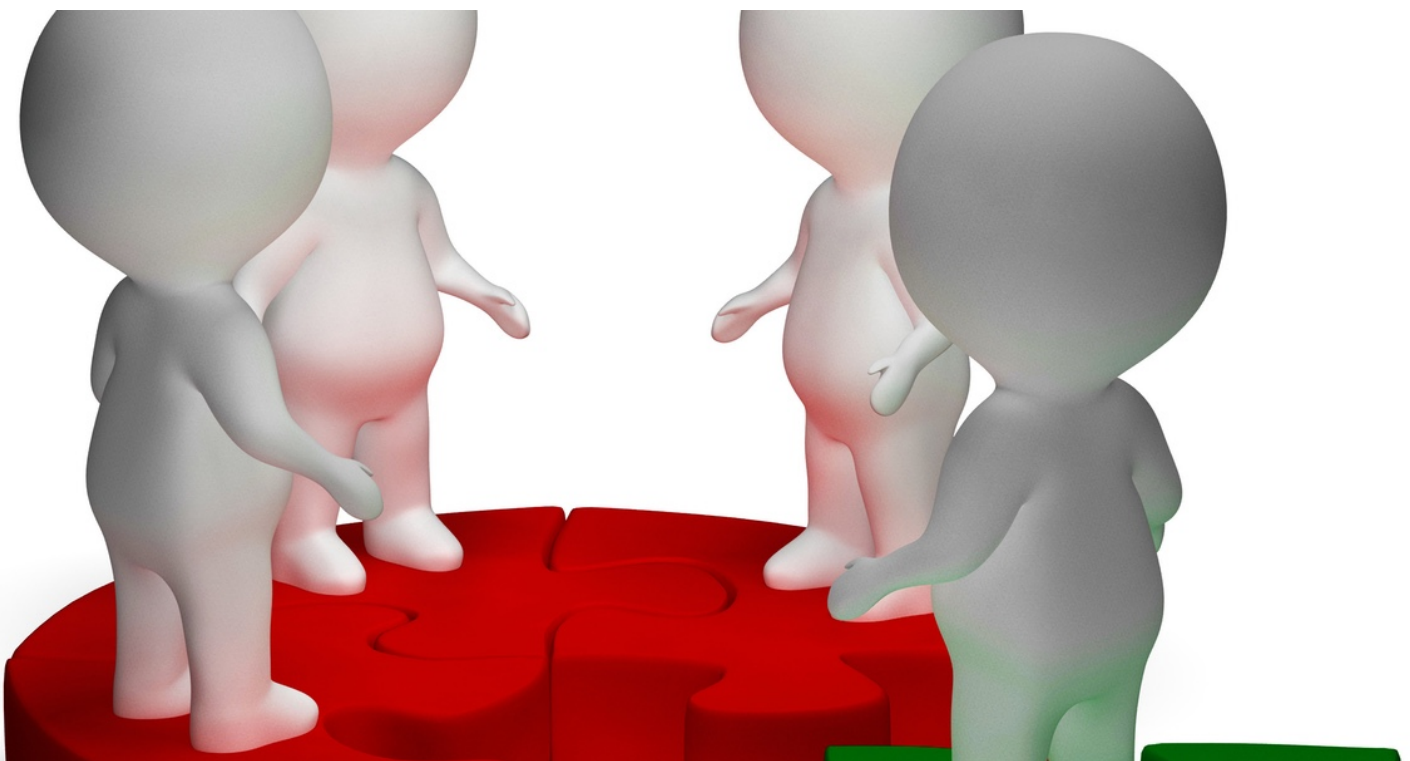
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The need to seek institutional approval to survey staff – was this a misunderstanding of the purpose of

Guideline 2.2.13 in the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research?

Katherine (Kate) Christian, Carolyn Johnstone, Jo-ann Larkins and Wendy Wright
Federation University



We have conducted a research project investigating the factors contributing to the satisfaction – or dissatisfaction – of early-career researchers (ECRs) from across Australia working in the sciences. A requirement of our ethics approval was a need to provide evidence from every university and research institute of permission to approach their staff to invite their participation in our research.

This requirement was a consequence of answering ‘yes’ to the following question:

If your research involves participants from other organisations (e.g. educational institutions, companies, agencies, collectives), you may need to obtain authorised approval before approaching participants, eg: Department of Education and Training, School Principals, School Councils (for research involving Government schools); Catholic Education Office (Catholic schools); School Boards (Independent schools); Senior Officers (Commercial or Government entities); Elders (Aboriginal communities); or Representative bodies (Collectives). Copies of approval letters must be attached to this application or, if pending at the time of submission, forwarded to HREC when available. Some authorities may decline to provide permission letters until ethics approval has been granted. In such cases, you should submit your application to the HREC for provisional approval pending receipt of the documentation.

[Read more](#)

The AHRECS team has grown

Much to our delight, experienced ethics officer, adviser and educator Kim Gifkins has recently joined the team. She brings further research office and HREC experience to

the team and like Mark Israel, is based in Western Australia. You see Kim' AHRECS profile and find her contact details [here](#)

The on-call advice service

Like adding an independent expert to your team at a fraction of the cost

Did you know AHRECS provides an on-call service to assist you when you need it? The service can be used as a sounding board on tricky situations, another opinion on draft documents and an independent and expert take on a contentious question. A package of 10 hours of advice can be purchased for 2300. It can then be used for human research ethics and research integrity matters, can be used in 15min or 1h blocks, and will not expire. The support can be provided by email, phone or video-link. Given it provides access to decades of experience and some of the most familiar names in the Australasia HRE/RI it's like adding a trusted adviser to your team at a fraction of the cost..

10h \$230/h

20h \$200/h

30h \$170/h

Email us at enquiry@ahrecs.com to discuss how we could assist your institution.



Ethics, Security and Privacy – the Bermuda Triangle of data management?

Malcolm Wolski and Andrew Bowness
Griffith University



To manage sensitive research data appropriately, ethics, security and privacy requirements need to be considered. Researchers are traditionally familiar with ethics, but often have not considered the privacy and security pieces of the puzzle. Our reasons for making this statement are:

- IT products used in research change rapidly
- Legislation changes rapidly and there are jurisdictional issues
- Most researchers are not legal or IT experts
- No one teaches them enough basics to know what is risky behaviour

The recent revision to the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) (2018) on [Management of Data and Information in Research](#) highlights that it is not just the responsibility of a university to use best practice, but it is also the responsibility of the researcher. The responsible conduct of research includes within its scope the appropriate generation, collection, access, use, analysis, disclosure, storage, retention, disposal, sharing and re-use of data and information. Researchers have a responsibility to make themselves aware of the requirements of any relevant codes, legislation, regulatory, contractual or consent agreements, and to ensure they

comply with them.

[Read more](#)

The Guides and payments to participants guideline are in the Resource Library

The five current good practice guides and the 'payments to participants' guideline are from the First Read pane of the Resource Library

[Resource Library](#)

Are you social?

AHRECS maintains a presence across three social media platforms - [LinkedIn](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#). When we post an item in the Resource Library or our blog, we add a note on those platforms. We generally post one item every day. If you ever frequent one of those platforms, please follow us. Especially if you use LinkedIn, where we are close to having 1,600 followers.



Empowering and enabling participation in human research: Reflections from two Queenslanders living with Multiple Sclerosis

Dr Gary Allen

MS Qld Ambassador | AHRECS Senior Consultant | Member NS s4 review committee



Natalie Walsh

MS Qld Community Engagement Manager

Participation in ethical human research often provides four positive opportunities for persons living with MS:

- (i) A welcome distraction from the sometimes-cruel realities of living with this progressive neurological condition.
- (ii) An opportunity to provide insight into the practical challenges of symptoms that maybe invisible to observers other than family, close friends and carers, and to give voice to the experiences of persons who are disenfranchised.
- (iii) Access to whatever benefits are anticipated as a result of a project.
- (iv) An opportunity to make a positive contribution to the body of knowledge and/or other public good.

The exclusion of people living with MS from research is a concern with regard to the ethical values of Justice (e.g. NS 4.5.3) and Beneficence because it

denies access to the benefits described above, on the grounds of a disability. It is also a merit and integrity concern because, if a section of the community is excluded from a research project, there is at least the possibility the results might be different for people living with MS.

[Read more](#)

While you are here...

Did you enjoy this edition? Would you like to support the work we do? If so, please consider helping us cover the cost of matters such as hosting the Research Ethics Monthly and other web development by becoming an AHRECS Patron.

In addition to the warm glow from supporting our work, you will be subscribed for monthly updates of useful material (such as resources for use in your local workshops).

Institutional subscriptions start are only \$350/year, which gives you access to all materials (which are provided on a creative commons basis).

A few profiled items from the subscribers' area:

1. [Talking about data sharing in research integrity professional development and resource material: A commentary on a Nature piece and reflecting on the epochs of ways of discussing data sharing](#) - A Research Integrity and Human Research Ethics Commentary (Also on Patreon)
2. [Design notes for proportional review forms](#) - A Human Research Ethics resource
3. [Obviously yours: Brain scans and implications of advances in technology and privacy – A Human Research Ethics discussion activity](#)- A Human Research Ethics discussion activity
4. [Proportional Research Ethics Review](#) - A Human Research Ethics resource
5. [National Statement \(2007 updated 2018\) game: Values and Elements cards](#) - A Human Research Ethics activity

Please join us in saying a big thank you to our new Gold Patrons:

- Bendigo Health
- Bond University
- CanTeen
- Central Queensland University
- Two universities that asked to remain anonymous
- The internal Ethics Review Panel of the Department of Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business
- A national research funding body that asked to remain anonymous

- University of Southern of Queensland
- University of Wollongong Ethics Unit
- 5 researchers who asked to remain anonymous

Things You May Have Missed...

Our Resource Library

- [Copyright the Card Game - Australian Edition](#) - (a game by [Creative Commons Australia](#) and the Australian Libraries Copyright Committee, in partnership with the [Australian Digital Alliance](#))
- [\(Australia\) 'There is a problem': Australia's top scientist Alan Finkel pushes to eradicate bad science](#) - The Conversation
- [Why We Need Guidelines for Brain Scan Data](#) – Wired
- [Fake Citations Kill a Career](#) – Inside Higher Ed
- [Could a New Project Expose Predatory Conferences?](#) – Technology Networks
- [How often do authors with retractions for misconduct continue to publish?](#) – Retraction Watch
- [Data sharing and how it can benefit your scientific career](#) – Nature
- [Better Metadata Could Help Save The World!](#) - Scholarly Kitchen
- [What universities can learn from one of science's biggest frauds](#) – Nature
- [How to Be A Good Peer Reviewer](#) - Scholarly Kitchen

Our Blog

- [Smarter proportional research ethics review](#)
- [Should you be worried about paying children to take part in research?](#)
- [Proportional processes can sometimes be the answer to a few \(apparently](#)

[competing\)_problems](#)

- [The F-word, or how to fight fires in the research literature](#)
- [Research Ethics Review as a Box-Ticking Exercise](#)



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