



Government of Western Australia
Child and Adolescent Health Service



Child and Adolescent Community Health Research Strategy 2023-2025

1 August, 2023

(Updated 20 May, 2024)

Compassion

Excellence

Collaboration

Accountability

Equity

Respect

Child and Adolescent Community Health:

Our vision

To provide accessible, community-based services that serve infants, children and young people across Perth so they can achieve their best health, development and wellbeing, now and into the future, working in partnership with their families and caregivers.

Our priorities

- Person-centred care
- Inclusivity, Diversity and Equity
- Collaborative Culture
- Contemporary Models of Care
- Prevention and Early Intervention
- Workforce Capability, Capacity and Development
- External Partnerships

Our research vision

To support Child and Adolescent Community Health's overarching vision by providing an evidence base, through high-quality innovative research activities related to child health, development and wellbeing outcomes in the community.

Where we want to be

- Well-resourced research program, supporting a well-resourced service.
- High-functioning team with clear strategic direction.
- High-quality research program having immediate translational impact within Child and Adolescent Community Health services.
- Enhanced profile resulting in Child and Adolescent Community Health being the "go-to" for excellent child health outcomes and advice based on best evidence.

Current research priorities

- Contemporary models of care
- Working with families
- Enhancing neurodevelopment, social and emotional wellbeing/mental health
- Healthy lifestyles

Why this approach?

Equitable child health and wellbeing outcomes only achieved within a public health service; innovative evidence-based, culturally safe, effective and efficient care is imperative to achieving these outcomes.

Our strengths:

- Research team embedded within the only free metropolitan-wide health service provider for children and young people in Perth.
- Ability to bring service-wide changes into practice due to connections with operational teams within health service.
- Highly qualified team of dedicated health professionals across multiple disciplines working alongside research team.
- Commitment to prioritising consumer voice to inform our priorities.
- Strong commitment to achieving equitable services through evidence-based health systems change.

Our challenges:

- Macro pressures: fiscally constrained funding environment, political oversight, competitive market with increasing privatisation and loss of health dollar, making innovation and health systems change difficult to achieve alongside operational demands.
- Micro pressures: ambiguous direction within industry and political environments, current state of reactivity.
- Internal pressures: operational burden, need to respond to external and broader organisational demands rather than proactive charting of research direction.
- Minimal track record in external research outputs.

Child and Adolescent Community Health research: How we will get there

- Well-resourced research program:
 - Success in grant funding for foundational research projects.
 - Diversification of funding sources.
 - Innovation fund to complete scoping and pilot projects.
 - Build research capability and capacity, prioritising Aboriginal engagement and capability.
- High-functioning team with clear strategic direction:
 - Current models of working and streams of research and evaluation to be reviewed as the research program evolves to achieve the best possible industry-facing research model, and value for money.
 - Proposals such as creating streams of work specific to research (undertaking systematic inquiry, using suitable methodologies, data collection strategies, documentation, analysis and interpretation of findings within full research cycle) and evaluation (assessing services/concepts for the purposes of service improvement) to be given consideration, noting the considerable overlap of these activities within a health service.
- High-quality translational research program having immediate impact within Child and Adolescent Community Health services:
 - Focus on translational research and implementation of outcomes.
 - Collaboration across Child and Adolescent Community Health and Child and Adolescent Health Services (CAHS) service areas in relation to research activities.
- Enhanced profile:
 - Promotion of a research and learning culture within Child and Adolescent Community Health.
 - Communication of research strategy.
 - Celebration of our success.
 - Publication and dissemination of our findings with allocated funding.
- Increased external partnerships to assist and accelerate research program:
 - Engagement with external stakeholders: Australasia-wide, Institutes, Universities, funders. Partnership with academic researchers to achieve our objectives.

Child and Adolescent Community Health research: Next steps

- Collaborative working on structure, accountabilities and tasks to achieve our strategy.
- Needs analysis, and gap analysis of current state to prepare for future state.
- Leadership team engagement to understand operational priorities requiring research and/or evaluation.
- Aboriginal health, refugee health and consumer engagement.
- Build a stable program of research.
- Regular strategic review.

Key documents

- CAHS Research Strategy 2021-2023
- CAHS Strategic Plan 2023-2025
- CAHS Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan
- The WA Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing Framework 2015-2030
- Aboriginal Empowerment Strategy – Western Australia 2021-2029
- National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Health and Social and Emotional Wellbeing 2017-2023
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2021-2031

This Research Strategy was endorsed by the Child and Adolescent Community Health Research Oversight Committee in August 2023 after alignment with the updated Child and Adolescent Community Health strategic direction and operational plan. It is the result of many hours of internal and external conversations and mapping, and we are grateful to everyone who has contributed. This strategy was intended to be a live document, and rebranding in keeping with the directorate has been adopted in this update. We look forward to partnering to achieve our research vision to provide excellent evidence-based health services for children and young people.

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