

# Adventist HealthCare Research

---

## Complaints About the Ethical Conduct of Research

Complaints about the ethical conduct of a research study approved by Adventist HealthCare Limited Human Research Ethics Committee (AHCL HREC) are handled in compliance with Chapter 5.7 of the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (NHMRC, 2023)* and the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018)*.

### PROCEDURE

1. Complaints about the ethical conduct of an AHCL HREC ethically approved research project should be reported to the HREC Executive Officer (EO) who is the person nominated by the AHCL HREC to receive complaints.

#### Contact details are:

Mail: AHCL HREC Executive Officer  
Human Research Ethics Committee  
c/o Research Office  
Sydney Adventist Hospital  
185 Fox Valley Road  
Wahroonga NSW 2076

Phone: 02 9480 9604

Email: [research@sah.org.au](mailto:research@sah.org.au)

The EO will provide acknowledgement of the complaint in writing and refer the matter to the AHCL HREC for consideration at the next scheduled meeting. Where there is a risk of harm to participants, researchers or other persons, the matter will be referred to the AHCL HREC for immediate review.

2. The EO will present the complaint to the AHCL HREC for consideration and the AHCL HREC will make a recommendation on the appropriate course of action.

Recommended action may include:

- Determining the allegations have no substance and dismissing the complaint.
- Determining that there is no evidence of misconduct or fraud but issue a caution.
- Initiating increased monitoring by the AHCL HREC.
- Requesting an amendment to the research plan / protocol.
- Suspending ethical approval.
- Terminating ethical approval.

# Adventist HealthCare Research

---

3. Where the complaint relates to suspected research misconduct and the allegation of misconduct is upheld by the AHCL Executive Committee, the AHCL HREC Chairperson will:
  - Advise the Principal Investigator, in writing, of the outcome of the investigation.
  - Inform grant funding bodies and/or other parties with a direct interest in the matter.
  - Take other action as may be necessary to protect the interests of Adventist HealthCare Limited and exercise a duty of care towards staff members, students, the public and any other parties involved in the matter.
  - Adventist HealthCare Limited may exercise its right to take legal or other action against the researcher or a third party.