
The Melbourne Children's Campus Qualitative Research Interest Group | Terms of Reference

Background

The Melbourne Children's Campus Qualitative Research Interest Group was piloted in 2017 after increasing interest across campus to formally support researchers in undertaking qualitative and mixed methods methodologies and methods. Following the success of the pilot, the Qualitative Research Interest Group was formally established in January 2018.

Terms of reference

1. Purpose:

- Support researchers designing and implementing rigorous, methodologically and ethically sound qualitative and mixed methods projects at Melbourne Children's Campus. This will be achieved by:
 - Fostering relationships within and between research groups,
 - Establishing peer to peer support networks,
 - Raising awareness of qualitative and mixed methods research across campus,
 - Developing a programme for cross campus capacity building in qualitative and mixed methods methodologies and methods,
 - Building expertise in qualitative and mixed methods research skills within clinical departments and research groups,
 - Promoting consultation and collaboration across the Melbourne Children's Campus on qualitative and mixed methods research.

2. Term

These Terms of Reference are effective from 1 July 2018 and will be ongoing until terminated by agreement between the committee members.

3. Membership

This Qualitative Research Interest Group has broad representation from professional, clinical and academic staff and students within MCRI, RCH and the University of Melbourne. The Qualitative Research Interest Group consists of a Steering Committee and Qualitative Research Champions. Membership is inclusive; any interested person may join by emailing the Steering Committee at qual.research@mcri.edu.au.

Steering Committee members can serve as many terms as they wish. The Steering Committee has a Convenor and 3 members, but may increase or decrease depending on needs and function of the Qualitative Research Interest Group.

The Qualitative Research Champions are MCRI, RCH and University of Melbourne staff who act as local champions within their research groups to disseminate the Qualitative Research Interest Group's information and provide support when needed and if appropriate.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1. Members of the Steering Committee are responsible for:

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- Identifying and approaching potential speakers to present at the meetings,
 - Preparing for and organising meetings,
 - Taking minutes which will rotate among members,
 - Seeking funding,
 - Strategic planning,
 - Providing regular updated internal communications,
 - Seeking and considering relevant ideas from staff and students.
 - Developing and reviewing Annual plan to prioritise Qualitative Research Interest Group's efforts.

4.2. The Qualitative Research Champions are responsible for:

- Acting as local champions within their network of colleagues,
- Supporting researchers in designing and implementing their qualitative and mixed methods research by providing advice and direction including peer review for ethics applications,
- Disseminating updates and relevant information,
- Reporting back ideas and suggestions from staff and students to the Steering Committee.

In addition, specific support will be provided by: Chriselle Hickerton and Stephanie Best (research) and Stephanie Firth (administration).

5. Meeting times

- The Steering Committee meets once a month.
- At minimum one annual open meeting will be held to provide an update on the work of the group.

6. Process

- Annual plan to be reviewed annually by the Steering Committee to prioritise the Qualitative Research Interest Group's efforts.

7. Sharing of information

Updates from the Qualitative Research Interest Group will be made available on the Group's intranet page, along with minutes of each Group meeting. All Group meetings have an open door policy, and any interested person may attend.

8. Groups/Programs of Interest

The Qualitative Research Interest Group will foster relationships with the following groups/programs:

- The Jack Brockhoff Child Health Wellbeing program at the University of Melbourne
- Other Qualitative Interest Groups in Universities' and Research Institutes as appropriate

9. Review

In order to ensure that the Research Interest Group is effectively meeting the needs of its members in accordance with these "Terms of Reference", members will annually:

- Formally discuss its performance against the requirements of the Terms of Reference and discuss on the outcomes of this assessment.
- Formally review and assess the adequacy of the Terms of Reference.

The Melbourne Children's Qualitative Research Interest Group's current membership: 200

The Qualitative Research Interest Steering Committee for 2022 is comprised of:

- Kate Paton, Clinical Research Development Office (CRDO), MCRI
- Danya Vears, Biomedical Ethics, MCRI
- Free Coulston, Victorian Infant Brain Studies (ViBES) MCRI
- Al Giles -Kaye, Policy and Equity, MCRI
- Belinda McClaren, Genomics in Society, MCRI

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