CHAPTER 5.3: MINIMISING DUPLICATION OF ETHICAL REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Research projects that may generate duplication of ethical review in Australia include:

- a research project conducted at more than one institution, either by the same or different researchers;
- a research project conducted jointly by researchers affiliated with different institutions;
- a research project conducted at one institution by a researcher affiliated with another institution, for example, a university-based researcher conducting research at a hospital;
- a research project approved at one institution and transferred to another, for example, when a researcher changes institutions; and
- any other research for which more than one institution has responsibility for ethical review and approval.

GUIDELINES

5.3.1 Wherever more than one institution has a responsibility to ensure that a human research project is subject to ethical review (see paragraph 5.1.1), each institution has the further responsibility to adopt a review process that eliminates any unnecessary duplication of ethical review.

5.3.2 Different institutions that regularly have review responsibilities for the same research (for example, universities and related teaching hospitals) should agree on a single review body to review the research.

5.3.3 Where an institution decides to rely on ethical review by a body it has not established, it should undertake:

(a) to identify any local circumstances relevant to the ethical review of its research, disclose these circumstances to the review body/ies, and provide for their management;

(b) to exchange relevant information and advice with the review body/ies;

(c) not to duplicate an existing, duly authorised scientific/technological/methodological assessment of the research;

(d) to establish the roles, if any, the institution and the review body/ies may have in monitoring the research;

(e) to inform participants if the research is discontinued; and

(f) to adopt any other administrative procedures that will avoid unnecessary duplication of ethical review.

5.3.4 Where paragraphs 5.3.1 to 5.3.3 apply, researchers should inform the ethical review body that reviews and approves the research:

(a) of all other sites at which the research will be conducted, and of the name and location of any other body that will conduct an ethical review of the research; and

(b) of any previous decisions made about the research by other review bodies (in Australia or elsewhere).