

Research & Evaluation Management Committee (REMC)

Acknowledgement to Country

We acknowledge and respect Aboriginal people as the state's First Peoples and Nations, and recognise Aboriginal people as the Traditional Owners and occupants of Land and Waters in South Australia. We recognise that Aboriginal children and young people have the right to grow up in a safe and nurturing environment where their connections, language, culture and country are supported, respected and celebrated.

Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

The role of the Research and Evaluation Management Committee (REMC) is to provide governance to all research and evaluation associated with DCP data¹. The REMC ensures research and evaluation projects are accountable, transparent, and pursuing continuous improvements to promote the safety of children and young people. By guiding the focus of research and evaluation projects towards operational and strategic practice outputs, the REMC is responsible for ensuring research undertaken with DCP data, and all evaluation projects are meaningful and relevant to DCP's research and evaluation agenda.

The REMC also serves as an information conduit to coordinate and monitor all research and evaluation, and raise awareness about new DCP initiatives.

The REMC reports to the DCP Senior Executive Group (SEG) who set the strategic research and evaluation agenda to deliver against DCP's strategic goals.

2. Scope

The REMC will review all research and evaluations being conducted using DCP data. Its review function applies to all staff in DCP and research organisations, student researchers, external researchers and evaluators who are undertaking or propose to undertake research and evaluation regarding DCP sites, services, policies and programs, staff, clients or data. It also applies to research and evaluation related to services, programs, projects, policies, legislation, interventions, initiatives, and business processes undertaken or managed by, or on behalf of DCP.

¹ Data means any facts, statistics, instructions, concepts or other information in a form that is capable of being communicated, analysed or processed (whether by an individual or by a computer or other automated means ([Public Sector \(Data Sharing\) Act, 2016](#)))

3. Function and responsibilities

The REMC's functions and responsibilities will be:

- reviewing research applications and providing recommendations to the Chief Executive (CE) on high quality proposals that align with DCP's strategic priorities and guidelines
- considering and noting evaluation proposals
- monitoring the progress of approved research and evaluation projects
- ensuring that research and evaluation projects have appropriate ethics approval from a fully constituted Human Research Ethics Committee
- ensuring that research and evaluation projects related to Aboriginal children, young people, families, carers or staff have approval from the Aboriginal Health research Ethics Committee
- creating an information conduit about new DCP projects/programs/initiatives to promote evaluation planning and coordinate implementation efforts
- guiding research and evaluation projects to produce meaningful operational outputs
- assisting with setting the research and evaluation communication plans and championing research and evaluation findings.

4. Membership

Membership of the REMC will include:

- Director, Quality and Practice Directorate
- Research, Performance and Evaluation Manager (R P & E), or a suitable representative
- Lead Practitioner DCP
- Service Delivery and Practice representative
- Strategic Partnerships and Reform Directorate representative
- Aboriginal Practice Directorate Director or representative
- Out of Home Care Directorate representative
- Learning Practice and Professional Development Manager or an appropriate level representative
- DCP Legal representative
- DCP Data Analytics, ICT & Information Management representative
- A member of the R P & E team will act as the Executive Officer for the REMC.

The committee membership and function will be reviewed every three years, in conjunction with the review of the Research and Evaluation Framework.

Membership may also include (or seek access to) individuals who have expert knowledge in a range of areas relevant for the department. This will be determined on an as-needs basis by REMC members. In addition to the above members, the Chair may appoint additional members to the REMC who can be called upon as needed to provide advice related to any research under review.

The role of members is to:

- attend all meetings, or nominate and prepare a designated proxy to attend in their absence
- participate in meetings and work with other members to discuss issues and offer solutions
- champion child protection research and evaluation
- contribute to discussions that may be sensitive or confidential in nature, and must ensure those discussions remain confidential
- analyse research and evaluation applications to identify potential risks, benefits and considerations, and make approval recommendations for research applications
- review and recommend publication approval.

5. Conflict of Interest

Members must disclose any potential or actual conflict of interest on research and evaluation for consideration by the REMC. Potential conflicts are outlined in the [Conflict of Interest Policy](#) and include, but are not limited to:

- personal involvement or participation in research and/or evaluation
- financial or other interest or affiliation
- Involvement in competing research and/or evaluation in a similar field.

Members with identified conflicts of interest may either excuse themselves from discussion or remove themselves from the room whilst the research or evaluation is being considered. Members must remove themselves from proceedings if they are listed as the main or supporting researcher on any submission. All conflicts of interest and absence of members will be recorded in meeting minutes.

6. Chairperson

In the event the Chair cannot attend the meeting, the Chair will nominate a Chairperson.

The roles and responsibilities of the Chair are to:

- chair meetings of the REMC
- ensure matters referred to the REMC are addressed and that outcomes and decisions are accurately recorded
- ensure adherence to the Research and Evaluation Framework for the operation of the REMC
- ensure research and evaluation proposals are considered in an effective and timely manner
- ensure complaints are dealt with appropriately
- oversee procedures and monitoring of approved research and evaluation.

7. Executive Officer

The Executive Officer is a member of the Research and Evaluation team, R P & E, Quality and Practice. The Executive Officer will be responsible for facilitating the business of the Committee and ensuring

that the Chairperson and members are provided with appropriate information in order to fulfil the requirements of their membership.

8. Decision making

The REMC will reach decisions pertaining to recommendations about project proposals and publications by reviewing applications through the lens of their knowledge and experience of child protection operation, practice, strategic direction and policy.

Recommendations will prioritise weighting according but not limited to:

- alignment with DCP's research and evaluation strategic priorities, including avoiding duplication of research projects
- alignment with the principles outlined in the [Research and Evaluation Framework](#)
- identified risks
- potential value of the new information to be gained
- potential operational implications for DCP
- technical requirements including feasibility
- applicant(s) authentication and the appropriateness of the methodology
- information provided in the accompanying documents
- the level of cultural safety and appropriate cultural methodology of the project. The REMC will seek Aboriginal guidance to ensure there is a respectful process for discussion on these matters.

Due to the timeframes required by the publication clauses of the DCP Research/Evaluation Agreements and the need for timeliness of the delegate's decision on applications, recommendation decisions of the REMC may be sought through out-of-session processes.

9. Meetings

A schedule of meetings will be prepared yearly and distributed to members in advance. Meetings will be held every 6 weeks for one hour.

Meetings will, in the main, provide a forum for applications and reports to be presented to REMC members for decision.

In the absence of any business, or when relevant matters are attended to out of session, meetings may be cancelled at the discretion of the Chair. Extraordinary meetings can also be called by the Chair for matters of urgency or priority. The Chair also has the discretion to seek out-of-session advice on applications or requests as required.

10. Quorum

A quorum is required to ensure meeting decisions are representative of DCP. For the REMC, a quorum consists of the attendance by (or the written feedback from) more than 50% of the membership listed

in section 4. When there is no quorum reached, the Chair must be satisfied that the views of those absent members have been received and considered.

If a member is unable to attend, they will contact the Chair and/or the Executive Officer before the meeting and provide their views on items listed for consideration. Alternatively, a proxy will be nominated.

11. Proxies

Committee members are expected to arrange a proxy if they are unable to attend meetings. A proxy must be sufficiently briefed, have decision making powers and be able to make the time commitment to effectively participate. If a member is absent for one meeting they are to provide their update on any actions via email to the Executive Officer.

It is noted that meeting attendance will be recorded and should a member not be present for at least 50% of meetings in a 6-month period, they may be removed from the membership.

12. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings will be recorded and stored in accordance with the [State Records Act 1997](#) and DCP policies and guidelines. Members will receive the draft minutes within five working days following the meeting, and papers will be distributed five working days prior to the meeting.

13. Reporting

The REMC Chair will provide regular (6 monthly) reports to DCP Senior Executive Group (SEG), with a copy to the Quality, Safeguarding and Operations Subcommittee (QSOS). Reporting will cover:

- current research applications, evaluation requests, and their associated approvals
- progress updates on research or evaluations already in progress
- key research or evaluation findings and their potential impacts on practice
- research and evaluation communications and/or events.

Document Version History

Version	Date	Author	Comments
1.0	04/02/2019	J Petersen	Initial draft
1.2	6/5/2019	Y Tavkoff	Second draft
1.3 - 1.8	May 2019 – August 2021	J Petersen	Various drafts regarding membership, changed principles, strategic focus, templates and decision making. These were aligned to the previously approved Research Framework approved in February 2019.



Version	Date	Author	Comments
2.0	June 2023	A Bromley	Draft updated for new strategic plan and re-focused the role of REMC specified in the amalgamated Research and Evaluation Framework.
2.1	July 2023	K Harvey	SEG approval