

The Application Process for Health Information (unit record data)

Expression of Interest

Researchers wanting to obtain information from the Department of Health WA (DOHWA) collections or wanting to use [Data Linkage](#) services are strongly advised to discuss your requirements with the relevant Data Managers or with the Data Linkage Project Manager before applying for the data or requesting DOHWA Human Research Ethics Committee approval.

Consultation with the appropriate Data Managers will be arranged for you if you submit an Expression of Interest (EOI) for data. The EOI should be made on an Application for Data form. The Data Managers or Data Linkage Project Manager will ascertain whether the datasets required and the variables requested are appropriate for the purpose of the study and can give valuable guidance on issues such as the availability and quality of the data. If necessary, they will discuss the feasibility of your request with you and may suggest changes.

You do not need to complete the signature section or Confidentiality Agreements on the form when submitting an EOI. Just send an electronic copy of your EOI to:

DataServices@health.wa.gov.au

Application for Data

After consultation with the relevant managers your EOI can be amended and/or completed, including all the necessary signatures and resubmitted as an Application for Data request form.

Your Application for Data request will be formally reviewed by the appropriate Data Managers in order to provide advice to the Director General's delegate on release of the data.

If you are applying for:

- Any DOHWA personal health information* (linked or otherwise)
- The creation of new links between datasets
- Mental Health Information System data
- Birth Defects Registry data
- Geocoded information

You will require ethics approval from the DOHWA HREC.

For some categories of data, such as aggregated data or non-identifiable data extracted by using existing links, approval from an institutional HREC external to the Department of Health will be sufficient.

*Personal health information is information or opinions that relate to the health of a person where the identity of a person is apparent or can reasonably be ascertained from the information. For a more detailed explanation see the *Practice Code For the Use of Personal Health Information*. All project personnel who will have access to personal health information provided by the DOHWA must enter into a Confidentiality Agreement.

DOHWA Human Research Ethics Committee approval

The application form for ethical review by the DOHWA HREC is available under Forms on the website. New applications must show evidence from the researchers' host institution that approval has been given to undertake the research, and that the host institution accepts legal liability for the conduct of the research project.

For assistance with completing the requirements for an application to DOHWA HREC contact the HREC Executive Officer telephone +61 08 9222 4278 or e-mail hrec@health.wa.gov.au or the Privacy Officer +61 08 9222 4223.

If the data requested is to perform health-related research involving Indigenous peoples, ethics approval must also be sought from the Western Australian Aboriginal Health Information and Ethics Committee (WAAHIEC). In particular, projects should be submitted to WAAHIEC if one or more of the following apply:

- Indigenous status is a key determinant
- Data collection is explicitly directed at Indigenous peoples
- Indigenous peoples, as a group, will be examined in the results
- The information has an impact on one or more Indigenous communities
- Indigenous health funds are a source of funding

Submission of your Application for Data where DOHWA HREC approval is required

Meetings of the DOHWA HREC take place on the second Wednesday of each month except January, when the Committee is in recess.

New applications must be received by the deadline for receipt of new business, which is normally two weeks before the scheduled meeting.

1 original and **12** copies of the Application for Data form and the Application for DOWHA HREC Ethics Approval form or NEAF 2 must be provided to the Executive Officer HREC by the deadline date to be considered at the next scheduled meeting. Copies of all required supporting documentation must be attached to each application.

Only the **original Confidentiality Agreement/s must be** attached to the Application for Data form. Copies are not required. Once signed by the DOHWA representative copies of signed Agreements will be returned to the applicant.

Please send applications to:

HREC Executive Officer
1st Floor, C Block
189 Royal Street
East Perth WA 6004

Submission of your Application for Data where DOHWA HREC approval is not required

Submission of an Application for Data must be provided in hard-copy.

If you have an application for linkable data that does not require DOHWA HREC approval (existing links with non-identifiable data) then your completed Application form must be submitted with all current ethics approvals attached.

Please send applications to:

Data Services
Information Management and Reporting
Department of Health WA
1st Floor, C Block
189 Royal Street
East Perth WA 6004