


How do we set national health research priorities for New Zealand?

Outcome of Consultation and Submissions Review Process
May 2018



Background Information



Public consultation on the proposed process for setting national health research priorities was open from **5 to 19 March 2018**.

Consultation feedback was published on the [HRC's website](#) on 2 May 2018.

Following publication, a review process was run: if after reviewing the revised process stakeholders felt that important feedback was not fully addressed, they were able to notify the HRC before Wednesday 16 May. Any concerns would be reviewed by the NZHRS Implementation Steering Group.

Outcome of the review process

One submitter commented on two aspects of the revised scope of Strategic Investment Areas (SIAs) (see Appendix A for the scope).

FEEDBACK

Feedback on the proposal that ‘multidisciplinary approaches that facilitate collaboration will be *encouraged* but not required’:

- The submitter commented that the NZHRS is a ‘real opportunity for New Zealand to do things differently, leverage our existing capability and drive collaboration across the [health research] ecosystem’ and that the ‘game-changing future innovations will sprout at the interface between existing disciplines and approaches.’
- It was acknowledged there can be challenges associated with ensuring researchers collaborate across disciplines and with end-users and clinicians.
- The submitter suggested that if the scope of SIAs is amended **from** multidisciplinary approaches are required **to** encouraged but not required, then the scope should act to **incentivise multidisciplinary working** ‘so that it becomes more of an ‘opt-out’ rather than ‘opt-in’.
- Although recognising the priorities will be for all New Zealand, it was suggested incentivisation could be achieved by weighting the grant assessment criteria in favour of multidisciplinary approaches, including with international efforts.

Feedback on the proposal that SIAs ‘will develop workforce capability and capacity to enable NZ to address its future health research needs’:

- The submitter suggested the wording be amended to ‘will develop workforce capability and capacity to enable New Zealand to address its future health research needs **and translate research outputs into improved outcomes for New Zealanders**’.
- The suggested amendment was made on the basis that one significant outcome of health research and one of many pathways to impact ‘involves the development of new products or services, [and] this brings in the commercialisation strand of the NZHRS.’ Therefore, there is a need to build ‘commercial awareness and entrepreneurial capability within the research community’ and a way to do this could be by embedding it into the scope of SIAs.


OUTCOME OF REVIEW

The proposed amendments were put to the NZHRS Implementation Steering Group to consider at their meeting on 22 June 2018. **All amendments were approved.**

Appendix A: The final framework

What does a SIA look like?


Five to ten broad areas of investment will endure for the life of the New Zealand Health Research Strategy (to 2027) and encompass a range of key knowledge needs that:

- 
- address the **current** and **future needs** of New Zealanders, including **future generations**;
 - consider health research underway in New Zealand and internationally;
 - will **develop workforce capability** and capacity to enable New Zealand to address its future health research needs and **translate research outputs into improved outcomes for New Zealanders**; and
 - advance the principles of **Te Tiriti o Waitangi**.

The breadth of the Strategic Investment Areas means that they are likely to benefit from **collaboration across health research disciplines**, and the health, and science, and technology and innovation sectors.

How will Themes for research be selected?

Within ‘Strategic Investment Areas’, there will be more specific ‘Themes’ which should meet as many as possible of the following objectives:

- 
- advance Māori health outcomes and research capacity;
 - advance Pacific health outcomes and research capacity;
 - achieve health equity for those populations experiencing the greatest inequities of access and outcomes;
 - reduce the burden of disease in New Zealand and meet identified needs for improving health and wellbeing;
 - have potential for translation into policy or practice to improve the standard of care;
 - improve cost-effectiveness for the New Zealand health system;
 - respond to unique opportunities (e.g. research that can only be done in New Zealand, or innovations with commercial potential);
 - address confirmed knowledge gaps;
 - build the health research workforce New Zealand needs; and
 - be feasible, in terms of research capability, capacity, and strengths.

Themes will be refreshed every 3–5 years.