

Definition/Description:

Research is a systematic inquiry into a subject in order to discover or revise facts and/or theories¹. Research can be considered a set of activities designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. Generalizable knowledge consists of theories, principles, or relationships, or the accumulation of information on which these are based, that can be corroborated by acceptable scientific methods of observation, inference and/or experiment².

Methods

Information for this indicator was generated by reviewing relevant WRHA internal documents and processes. Additional information was obtained from key informants in April and May 2004.

Source:

Internal WRHA documents and key informants.

Findings:

- The WRHA's formal affiliation agreement with the University of Manitoba has recently been revised to accommodate the requirements of the Authority. One of these requirements is to have both internal research protocols reviewed by the Research Ethics Committee.
- The WRHA has Research Access Guidelines to address the needs of the organization with respect to conducting research involving human subjects. Policies have been established that relate to the access of data, information and maintaining confidentiality.

Highlights:

Use of Research

- The use of research and best practice information has been built into many ongoing activities, projects and programs within the WRHA. Examples include care maps; quality process and assurance activities; standards; clinical programs and the development and dissemination of population health information.
- The use of research and best practice information has been supported at a corporate level through the initiation of external reviews such as the one conducted in 2003 by Deloitte and Touche. Recent initiatives like the WRHA's Achieving Benchmarks Through Collaboration use research and best practice information to inform planning and decision-making activities.

Process

- The WRHA has Research Access Guidelines and has established a WRHA Research Review Committee.
- All externally funded research projects are required to be peer reviewed, obtain approval from a Research Ethics Board and the WRHA's Research Review Committee. Internal research projects are required to obtain approval from the University of Manitoba Research Ethics Board and the Research Review Committee.
- The organization adheres to the guidelines as set out in the Tri-Council Policy Statement, Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (August 1998, Medical Research Council of Canada, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and Social

¹ The Random House College Dictionary, Revised Edition, 1984, pp.1122

² Last, J. A Dictionary of Epidemiology, 4th Edition, 2001, pp.157

Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada). All research involving human subjects is to be reviewed by a formal Research Ethics Board.

- The Research Review Committee reviews all submitted research projects for compliance to the Personal Health Information Act, Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Mental Health Act and Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act. This legislation was established by the Government of Manitoba to protect and respect the rights of persons and their information.
- The Research Review Committee approves research using the following criteria: resource impact; system requirements; feasibility of timelines and resources; PHIA compliance and alignment to program needs and priorities.