



Research Strategy to 2030



Foreword

A strong research culture is vital for achieving equity and delivering outstanding health outcomes for our diverse communities. The South Western Sydney Local Health District (SWSLHD) Research Strategy to 2023 laid the foundations for significant improvements in health and healthcare delivery. We enhanced our clinical trials capacity, ensuring trials addressed the unique needs of our community. The establishment of local training programs will provide ongoing opportunities for staff to build their skills as they undertake local research. We also expanded existing research partnerships and established new connections with like-minded organisations. Research is integral for optimal health service delivery, patient care and changes in clinical practice as there is an impact on patient outcomes by enabling access to new and novel treatments, procedures and technologies. Research also informs clinical decision making and promotes innovation in health practices, which drive continuous improvements to address healthcare challenges.

As healthcare is complex and ever evolving, it is important we remain agile in our research priorities. We will continue to review and interrogate the health challenges affecting individuals in south western Sydney, and develop projects aimed at

addressing these challenges.

We are pleased to present our Research Strategy to 2030. Aligned to the NSW Health Research and Innovation Strategy 2025-2030, this strategy outlines how we will continue to build on the successes of our previous strategy through five strategic directions. We will prioritise translational research, lead research that is inclusive and culturally responsive, enhance systems to foster better integration across services, continue to build expertise in our staff, and foster a collaborative research culture with local and international partnerships.

The Research Strategy to 2030 was developed through extensive consultations with our clinical and research staff, consumer and community representatives, NSW Ministry of Health, the Agency for Clinical Innovation, and partner organisations. We sincerely thank everyone for their contributions to this strategy and ongoing support of research development in our District.

We acknowledge the Research Directorate for developing the Strategy, and the Strategic Communications and Media Team for the design and launch of the Strategy.



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Acknowledgment

South Western Sydney Local Health District would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land that falls within the boundaries of South Western Local Health District - the peoples of the Darug, Dharawal and Gundungurra Nations.

We also acknowledge that all of the health facilities across the District are built on their Traditional Lands. We pay our respects to Aboriginal Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal peoples.

Key Achievements from the Research Strategy to 2023

Our District has made significant progress across all five strategic areas within the SWSLHD Research Strategy to 2023. A vibrant research culture was fostered through a significant investment of \$15.3 million (since 2015) for ten new Academic Units as well as recruitment of senior researchers and clinical leaders. Initiatives to promote and develop emerging researchers were achieved in part due to dedicated mentoring and a pilot of protected time to conduct research. The recruitment of senior leaders and initiatives focused on developing our staff has ensured the sustainability of ongoing research development in south western Sydney that will be continued with the next strategy.

The strategy prioritised consumer and community partnerships with the establishment of a Consumer Research Committee and launched targeted projects aimed at engaging culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

SWSLHD research is strengthened by adhering to the unique foundational and constitutional strategic partnership with the Ingham Institute for Applied Medical Research. Our university partnerships have been enhanced by mechanisms established to enhance dialogue and align strategies.

Agile, responsive systems have been enhanced by centralising support systems, including streamlining recruitment, facilitating grant applications and supporting the onboarding of new academic units.

For clinical trials, the implementation of a mandatory Clinical Trials Management System (CTMS) has improved oversight and increased participation in clinical trials. Clinical Trials governance is being implemented in line with the National Clinical Trials Governance Framework. Through all research initiatives, there has been emphasis on the existing and emerging strategic collaborations, integrating research into hospital redevelopments and fostering partnerships with educational institutions, government, and industry on local, national and international levels to achieve shared goals.



SWSLHD Research Strategy to 2030 at a glance

Vision

To lead research that allows us to deliver a sustainable and equitable future for south western Sydney.

Values

- Collaborate with partners on research for local, national and global impact
- Open and transparent in our research processes
- Respect and value diverse perspectives to enrich research outcomes
- Empower our communities and all staff to actively participate and shape research

Strategic Alignment

The SWSLHD Research Strategy to 2030 aligns to numerous national and statewide relevant strategies and frameworks, including:

- SWSLHD Strategic Plan to 2027
- SWSLHD Health Care Services Plan to 2031
- SWSLHD Innovation Strategy
- South West Sydney Clinical Trials Strategy to December 2025
- NSW Health Research and Innovation Strategy 2025-2030
- Future Health: Strategic Framework 2022-2032
- National Clinical Trials Governance Framework

Strategic Directions



Prioritise translational research for local and global impact.



Drive equity through research that is inclusive and culturally-led.








Increase access to clinical trials for our community.



Leverage local, national and international research partnerships.



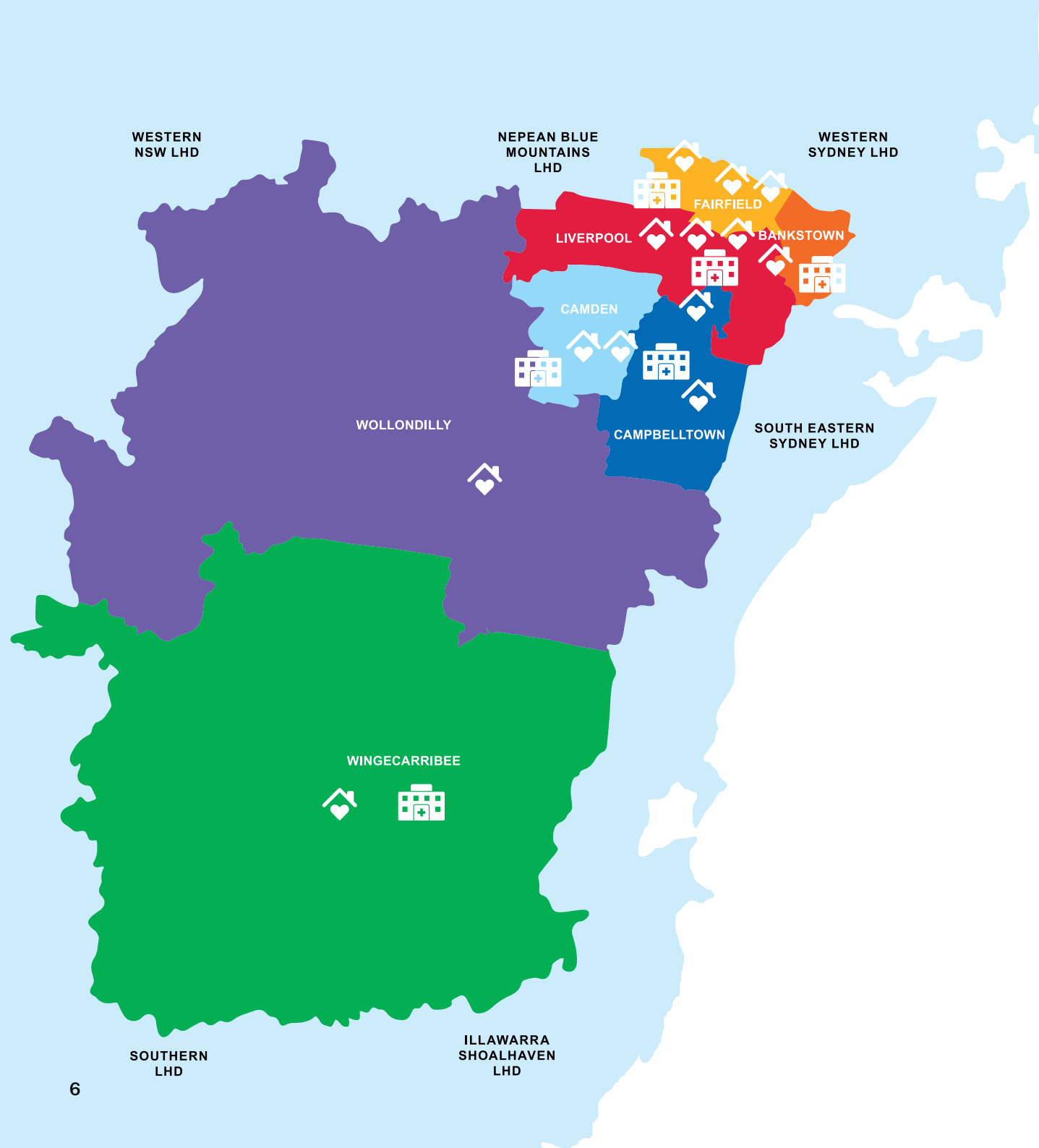
Enhance research capacity and capability through agile, responsive systems that support our people.

Performance Measure – by 2030, SWSLHD will have:					
Increase in funded translational research projects, across all stages of the research translational continuum.	■				
Increase in research grants.	■				
Documented change in policy or practice resulting from research findings.	■				
Increase in number of, and quality of peer-reviewed research publications with increased production of findings on translational and equity focused research.		■			
Exceeded performance measures for ethics and research governance timelines.					■
Increase in proportion/number of staff involved in research.					■
Stable retention rates (including vacancies) in research-specific roles within SWSLHD.					■
Increase in consumer co-creation, collaboration, facilitation of focus groups, design survey questions, analysis, co-authoring, dissemination in research.				■	■
Increase in volume of research conducted.			■	■	■
Increase in consumer engagement as named investigators on grant applications.				■	
Documenting consumer and community engagement as partners in research activities, ensuring that engagement reflects the diversity of the local community.				■	
Broadening base of multidisciplinary research.				■	
Increase in clinical trial activity.			■		
Increase in participation in clinical trials, ensuring that participation reflects the diversity of the local community.			■		
Enhanced our clinical trials centre support and lead statewide, national and global clinical trials.			■		

Our District

SWSLHD provides healthcare to one of the most culturally diverse and fastest growing regions in Australia across a geographical area of approximately 6,243 square kilometres. It is one of the largest local health districts in NSW providing services to 1.1 million residents across local government areas of Fairfield, Liverpool, Campbelltown, Camden, Wollondilly, Wingecarribee and part of Canterbury Bankstown. The Traditional Custodians of the land that falls within the boundaries of SWSLHD are the peoples of the Darug, Dharawal and Gundungurra Nations.

Research that is conducted in south western Sydney is recognised as being generalisable and reflective of the real-world, creating opportunity for our research to have far-reaching and global impact. One of the greatest strengths of south western Sydney as a research population is its cultural and linguistic diversity. Unique challenges associated with south western Sydney diversity is that approximately 10 per cent of our population self-report speaking English 'not well' or 'not at all', with 20 per cent of people in Fairfield indicating they have little or no English language proficiency (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2021). Between 2013 and 2022, one-in-five people entering Australia under the Humanitarian Program settled in SWSLHD. In 2021, 45% of the population lived in areas that were the most socially disadvantaged.



Four out of seven Local Government Areas in SWSLHD score lower than the average of 1000. Around 35 per cent of residents of SWSLHD reported having private health insurance in 2022/23 (Social Health Atlases, PHIDU, Torrens University). These factors increase the demand on public hospitals and services and emphasise a need for research that delivers innovative solutions tailored to the local population.

There is significant hospital redevelopment within SWSLHD, including at Campbelltown Hospital, Liverpool Hospital, Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital, Fairfield Hospital and Bowral Hospital. The Liverpool Innovation Precinct (LIP) and Campbelltown Health and Education Precinct (CHEP) have emerged as a result of this infrastructure investment, with research and innovation key themes underpinning these partnerships. Our hospitals and services are a part of a network across the District and State to ensure patients receive the care they need. We will continue to apply this networked approach to research systems across SWSLHD, promoting collaboration, equity of access and research.



Prioritise translational research for local and global impact

SWSLHD will harness our unique relationship between our clinicians and our researchers, many of whom are clinician scientists. This, in addition to partnering with our community, research institutes and academic partners will allow us to translate research to achieve better care with our community.

Key Objectives:

1. Facilitate and promote the research pipeline to translate research to clinical care and encourage community engagement in this process.
2. Develop specific translational research plans for priority areas within the District.
3. Establish a sustainable mechanism to attract grant funding including strong governance structure.
4. Identify the means by which we can amplify research impact, streamlining growth and scalability throughout the District.

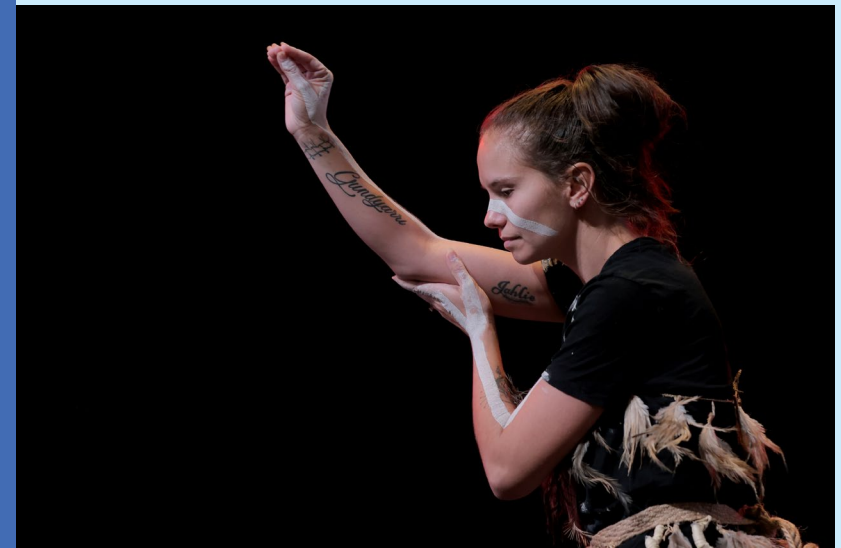


Drive equity through research that is inclusive and culturally-led

Recognising the rich diversity in the community, SWSLHD is committed to ensuring equity in health research by collaborating with our diverse communities and priority populations to address specific health inequities affecting our local community.

Key Objectives:

1. Embed equity principles within research design, implementation, and outcomes and provide training and support to implement the principles.
2. Develop culturally-led research and advance outcomes for culturally diverse communities within south western Sydney.
3. Develop Aboriginal led research and advance health outcomes through research with Aboriginal people in line with the NSW Aboriginal Health plan.
4. Advance health outcomes through research with diverse communities and priority populations in line with the SWSLHD Multicultural Partnership Plan and SWSLHD Equity Strategy.
5. Drive impactful research in SWSLHD that addresses and improves social determinants of health, that is culturally safe and appropriate.
6. Communicate and celebrate success and achievements with SWSLHD communities.



Enhance research capacity and capability through agile, responsive systems that support our people



We acknowledge that people are pivotal to research success. SWSLHD is committed to nurturing the next generation of researchers, supporting current and future researchers through programs aimed at attracting and retaining a skilled workforce.

SWSLHD is committed to establishing systems that enhance integration across our services. By reviewing existing systems and seeking opportunities to embed automation and other improvements, we can better support researchers across the research lifecycle.

Key Objectives:

1. Increasing competency and capacity of our people to drive research and inspire the next generation of researchers by establishing research career pathways and embedding research across all Health careers.
2. Establish systems to support researchers to have protected time for research.
3. Exceed performance measures for ethics and research governance timelines and consider the use of automation and technological enablers to optimise system efficiency.
4. Develop a cohesive approach to integrate and align quality improvement, innovation, and research.
5. Develop infrastructure and technologies that enable seamless data collection and analytics to support research and clinical practice.
6. Increase the availability of accurate and up-to-date research information on the SWSLHD website.
7. Develop and embed a robust Research Governance Framework.



Leverage local, national and international research partnerships



SWSLHD recognise that achieving meaningful and impactful research outcomes relies on strong partnerships.

Key Objectives:

1. Engage with consumers and the community at all stages of the research.
2. Maximise efficiency and improve system responsiveness and sustainability through the sharing of resources and assets across the District.
3. Collaborate locally, nationally and globally with research partners and increasing the scope and direction of our partnerships.
4. Integrate research infrastructure into capital redevelopments across the District.
5. Encourage cross-disciplinary and cross-institutional collaborations.

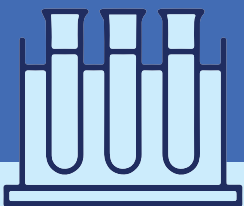
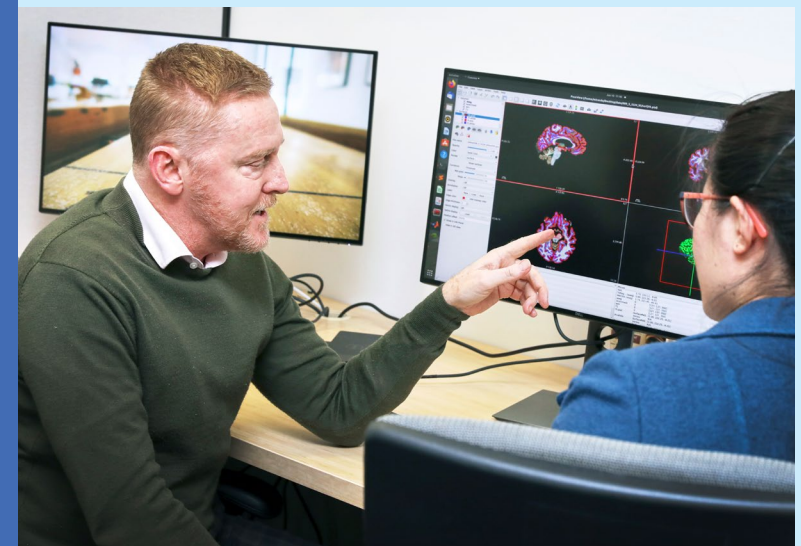


Increase access to clinical trials for our community

SWSLHD is dedicated to working in partnership with the Ingham Institute for Applied Medical Research to ensure our clinicians and community have optimal access to new therapies and interventions through clinical trials. A Clinical Trials Strategy to December 2025 is in place to develop clinical trials in south western Sydney in alignment with the National Clinical Trials Governance Framework.

Key Objectives:

1. Embed clinical trials corporate and clinical governance and planning at an organisational level.
2. Ensure that clinical trials that are conducted are of high integrity and conducted ethically.
3. Embed clinical trials in clinical practice.
4. Work in partnership with consumers and the community as partners to increase access to and participation in clinical trials, particularly for those from diverse communities and priority populations.
5. Attract and retain skilled clinical trials workforce.
6. Ensure financial sustainability of clinical trials within the District.
7. Expand access to clinical trials to ensure equitable participation in research, particularly in our Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander, diverse and vulnerable communities.



Glossary:

Term	Definition
CALD	CALD is an acronym that means 'Culturally and Linguistically Diverse'. In Australia, CALD people are those who have various religious beliefs and come from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The term CALD was introduced in the late 1990s to replace 'Non-English-Speaking Background' (NESB) and was intended to be a broader, more flexible, and inclusive term.
CHEP	The Campbelltown Health and Education Precinct (CHEP) is a partnership of Western Sydney's complementary network of health and education precincts, including public and private hospitals, council, medical research institutes and education providers.
CTMS	The Clinical Trial Management System (CTMS) is a shared online repository for clinical trial management. Which includes storage and organisation of clinical trial operational data for financial management, participant management, forecasting and reporting.
Diversity	Diversity refers to people who identify as Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, LGBTIQ+, from a Refugee background, people with disability and gender diverse.
ELT	The SWSLHD Executive Leadership Team (ELT) provides executive level leadership for SWSLHD activities.
Equity	Health equity means ensuring that everyone has fair access to the resources they need for good health, taking into account factors like genetics, social and environmental influences, and economic conditions, for individuals, families, and communities.
Key stakeholders	Key stakeholders are people or groups who are directly affected by or play an important role in the outcome of a particular activity. These stakeholders can include community members, consumers, government, education, and academic organisations, and they may vary depending on the focus of the activity.
LIP	The Liverpool Innovation Precinct (LIP) is a unique partnership of nine major stakeholders in the City of Liverpool, NSW. The LIP brings together key stakeholders from across government, education, and business sectors in a collaborative effort to deliver an aspirational vision for the Precinct, with a focus on developing the area as a growth precinct focusing on health, education and research sectors.
Research pipeline	The research pipeline describes the journey of scientific discoveries as they move through various stages; from basic research to preclinical or translational studies, and finally to clinical trials, before they can be used to help patients.
Scalability	Scalability refers to the ability of a health intervention that works in smaller or controlled settings to be expanded and successfully used in real-world conditions, reaching more people who can benefit, while still being effective.
Translational research	Translational research is about taking discoveries from lab studies and clinical trials and applying them to real-world health settings, with the goal of improving care and outcomes for communities.

¹ World Health Organisation (WHO), Health Equity accessed via: https://www.who.int/health-topics/universal-health-coverage/health-equity#tab=tab_1 (25 November 2024)

Governance

The SWSLHD Research Strategy to 2030 is underpinned by the SWSLHD Strategic Plan 2022-27 strategic direction 'Lead Innovation and Research', primarily key objectives:

- Build capacity in research aligned with clinical service planning.
- Enable evidence-based and innovative models to improve healthcare and service delivery.
- Advance and translate research and innovation with institutions, industry partners, consumers and our communities.

Research in SWSLHD is governed by key stakeholders and committees. Governance escalates from operational (bottom) to strategic (top), with the following roles at each level:

SWSLHD Board: The Board ensures robust governance and oversight mechanisms are in place to oversee research activities in alignment with regulatory and legislative requirements. The Board also oversees adherence to key Office of Health and Medical Research (OHMR) performance metrics, and advocates where required for necessary funding and infrastructure for research excellence.

SWSLHD Executive Leadership Team (ELT):

The ELT ensures the delivery of the strategic vision and direction for research within SWSLHD, including the alignment with the District's goals and priorities by ensuring the successful implementation of the Strategy. The ELT also promote a culture driving translational research and capacity, and maintain key relationships with stakeholders including the Ingham Institute for Applied Medical Research, academic institutions, government agencies, and industry partners.

SWSLHD Research Leadership Committee:

The Committee advocates for research both internally and externally to the District, advocating and representing priorities to enable research opportunities and initiatives. The Committee also oversees the implementation and monitoring of the Strategy, ensuring performance indicators and risks relating to clinical trials and research are managed. The Committee provides advice to the Chief Executive and ELT on research and clinical trials matters and escalates, as appropriate.



SWSLHD Research Operational Committee:

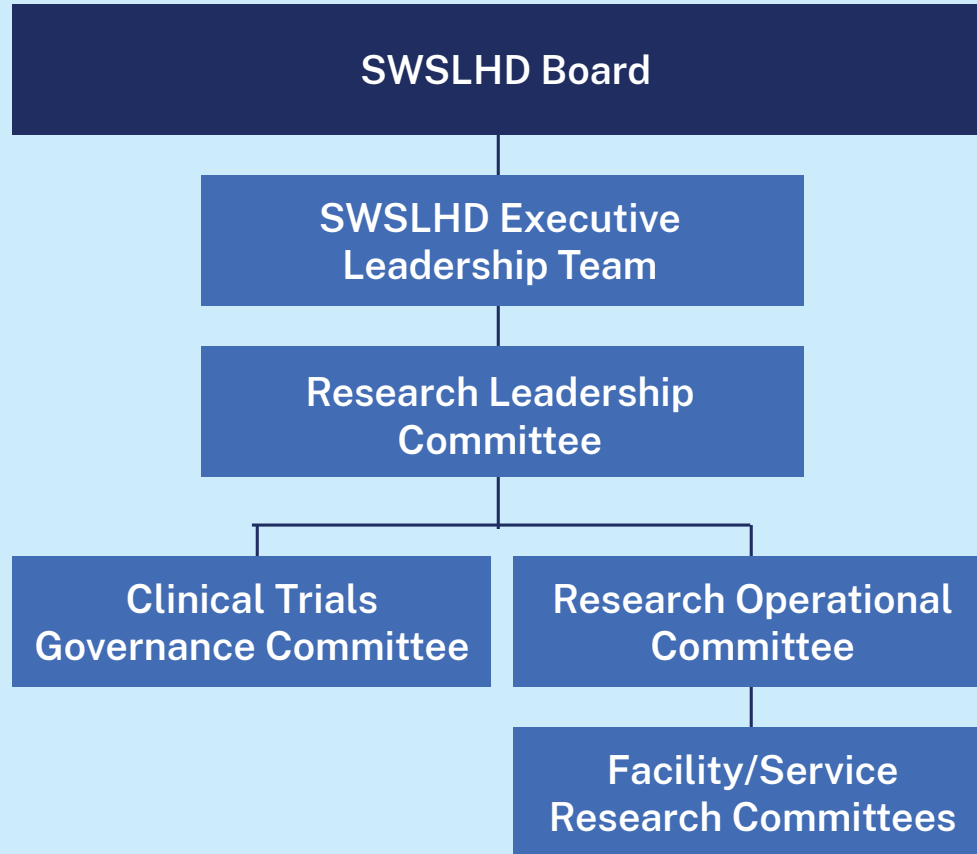
The Committee actions the SWSLHD Research Strategy, and provides advice to the SWSLHD Research Leadership Committee, and other stakeholders on operational aspects of research, including escalation of governance issues and recommend necessary actions for resolution. The Committee also oversees practical implementation of research projects, ensuring alignment with strategic plans and priorities.

SWS Clinical Trials Governance Committee:

The Committee provides leadership to develop a culture of safety and quality improvement within Clinical Trials and adherence to the National Clinical Trials Governance Framework, in collaboration with the Ingham Institute for Applied Medical Research. The Committee also monitors and manages clinical incidents occurring within clinical trial services.

SWSLHD Facility/Service Research

Committees: These Committees support the development and implementation of a research culture at their respective facilities, supporting activities and research networks to build local research capacity and capability.



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