



— HCB —

HUNTER CANCER BIOBANK

Scientific Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference

(Version dated_May 2019)

Hunter Cancer Biobank (HCB) Scientific Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference
Version dated: February 2019

Mission Statement: *development of a leading cutting edge biobank that provides comprehensive, validated, well annotated patient samples to facilitate quality cancer research.*

1. Background

- 1.1 The **Hunter Cancer Biobank (HCB)** was established in 2012 as a joint initiative of Hunter Cancer Research Alliance (HCRA; the Cancer Research Program of Hunter Medical Research Institute), NSW Health Pathology (NSWHP) and Hunter New England Local Health District (HNE LHD)
- 1.2 The HCB was setup to provide the infrastructure for solid and liquid tissue banking in the Hunter New England region.
- 1.3 The HCB will be governed by a HCB Management Committee (HCB MC), constituted from within HNE LHD, HMRI and UON in accordance with national and international guidelines.
- 1.4 All applications for access to tissue made to the HCB must be reviewed for scientific merit by a **HCB Scientific Advisory Committee (HCB SAC)**
- 1.5 This document establishes the authority and responsibility of the HCB Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) to ensure it functions effectively.

2. Objectives

- 2.1 Review and approve all research applications to access stored tissue samples.
- 2.2 Assess applications according to scientific and ethical validity, merit and integrity, availability of specimens and logistical considerations.
- 2.3 Improve the biobank's ability to provide researchers with fast, easy access to high quality tissue samples linked to data outcomes, facilitating the uptake of research evidence into clinical practice.
- 2.4 Provide scientific guidance in quality control for delivery of quality biospecimens for research.

3. Purpose

- 3.1 The purpose of the committee is to:
 - Act in an unbiased manner to review and assess all research applications for scientific validity, merit and integrity.
 - Provide advice to the HCB MC on the number and scientific rigour of research applications made to the Biobank for access to stored tissue samples.

- Ensure the standard evaluation process used is in line with current regulatory requirements and HCB SOPs.
- Assess, support and encourage the uptake of biobanking across key stakeholders in the Hunter New England region.
- Assist in the maintenance and development of a leading, cutting-edge biobank with culture and organisational values that are recognised on an international scale.

4. Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) Roles

- 4.1 The HCB SAC is responsible for providing independent, competent and timely review of research proposals submitted to HCB with respect to their scientific validity.
- 4.2 The HCB SAC is to review applications based on criteria specifications outlined in the HCB SOPs.
- 4.3 The HCB SAC will review requests via email at the time they are received by the biobank technical team and are to meet on a quarterly basis to discuss other matters of strategic or operational importance.
- 4.4 In the cases where research applications are made in an urgent manner, from local researchers and/or are non-commercial, an expedited reporting process must be used.
- 4.5 For all identified expedited applications, the HCB SAC are to review the application and provide recommendations online within a 3-day turnaround time from receipt of application. Applications will be approved on a majority vote, via written approval from a quorum of members (minimum 3).
- 4.6 The HCB SAC will be responsible for maintaining the content of the biospecimen collection with respect to relevance to recent research developments.
- 4.7 The HCB SAC will guide quality control and provide scientific input into the development of appropriate quality control measures to be utilised by the HCB.
- 4.8 The HCB SAC will be responsible for ensuring the HCB is promoted within the research community through marketing and research initiatives driven by the HCB SAC members.

5. Reporting

- 5.1 Reporting of review outcomes must be made based on the criteria specifications outlined in the HCB SOP.
- 5.2 Results of the review process are to be released to applicants within one (1) week of a decision being made on the application, whether expedited review or standard review timeline.
- 5.3 The Chair of the HCB SAC will be responsible for reporting to the HCB Management Committee on aspects relating to decisions and recommendations arising from the HCB SAC.

6. Membership

Committee Gender Inclusive Commitment

HCB SAC is committed to having balanced and inclusive gender representation (no more than two third's of the Committee will comprise of a single gender) with the aim of 50% of each gender where achievable.

The Chair of the HCB SAC will issue all members, the University of Newcastle's 'Gender Inclusive Membership of University Committee's Policy' which will be re-issued by the Chair each term of the Committee.

HCB SAC will ensure Committee meetings are held between the hours of 9am and 5pm on weekdays, unless impracticable for the majority of committee members. This supports the health and well-being of FHEAM staff and ensuring meeting times will not disadvantage or preclude participation of members with carer responsibilities, part time workers or other commitments outside of core business hours.

Where gender balance is not achievable in the first instance due to members being elected or appointed ex-officio, the committee (where practicable) will explore the following options to achieve gender balance:

- Appointing or co-opting members to achieve gender balance;
- Provide ex-officio members (including the option of a rotating Chair) to be represented by an appropriate nominee who is a member of the minority gender

- 6.1 To maintain a strategic focus, the membership of the HCB SAC will include members that can represent the needs of researchers across the translational spectrum.
- 6.2 Membership of the Committee consists of the substantive or acting post holders of the following positions:

Position Title	Role
CHAIR (Biobank pathologist)	Reports to HCB MC
DEPUTY CHAIR	Supports chair
HCB Manager/Team Leader Biobanking	Operations/Logistics
Clinician researcher	Scientific Advisory
Clinician researcher	Scientific Advisory
Implementation scientist	Scientific Advisory
BTT Researcher	Scientific Advisory
BTT Researcher / Implementation scientist	Scientific Advisory

- 6.3 A person acting in any of the above positions is considered to be a member of the Committee for the term of the acting arrangement.
- 6.4 To maintain membership, members must attend at least 50% of meetings conducted (i.e. 2 meetings/year).

6.5 No proxy representation is allowed at committee meetings.

6.6 Invitees as determined by the Chair.

7. Membership responsibilities

7.1 The Chair is responsible for:

- Reviewing the agenda and chairing meetings;
- Assignment of actions to committee members for HCB employees;
- Ensuring all appropriate topics are discussed and resolved;
- Review and sign off on minutes in a timely manner.
- Attending HCB Management Committee Meetings if required or providing written reports to advise on recommendations of the SAC

7.2 Members are responsible for:

- Reading meeting papers in advance of meetings;
- Attending meetings (or if unable to attend, provide comments to Chair / Deputy Chair in advance of meeting);
- Completion of individual actions assigned by the chair;
- Providing timely advice to the Chair/Deputy Chair (outside of scheduled meetings) on matters of strategic importance.

8. Meetings and procedures

8.1 Meetings:

- The HCB SAC will meet quarterly and at other times as required by the HCB SAC Chair or for operational needs.
- In absence of the Chair, the Deputy Chair will be the chair for that meeting.
- A meeting notice including agenda and relevant meeting papers will be forwarded to members at least one week prior to the date of the meeting.
- Meeting quorum will include 50% of membership.
- Where there is less than full attendance of the minimum membership at a meeting the Chair should be satisfied, before a decision is reached, that the views of those absent have been received and considered. This may require out of session correspondence via telephone or email.
- Minutes of each meeting and the actions arising will be taken by the Secretariat and circulated to all HCB SAC Members within two weeks of each meeting.

Date Ratified:

Chairperson's Signature: