



therapyfocus
growing potential

RESEARCH POLICY

DIVISION:	Executive
AREA/TEAM:	Executive
LAST REVIEWED:	January 2015
DUE TO BE REVIEWED:	January 2016



1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to employees intending to conduct research, and to detail the organisation's expectations and consequences for breaches. This policy applies to all employees of Therapy Focus who undertake research as part of their employment at Therapy Focus. This includes individuals on permanent, maximum term or casual employment contracts, students, volunteers and contractors.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 **Research:** Defined as "an original investigation undertaken to gain knowledge, understanding and insight".
- 2.2 **Practice:** any intervention that is designed solely to enhance the well-being of an individual and that has a reasonable expectation of success.
- 2.3 **Formal Research:** Where research relates to the first definition above (2.1), this policy refers to it as formal research.
- 2.4 **Informal Research:** Research is informal if its results will not be published or disseminated for peer review.

Research can also be differentiated from clinical audit or evaluation which is conducted as part of a quality assurance process to review practice.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

3.1 To achieve its purpose, Therapy Focus will undertake research to:

- Develop evidence based practice models of therapy to improve people's lives.
- Develop the confidence and professional profile of employees.

3.2 Research undertaken by Therapy Focus must meet the following criteria:

- Be in line with organisation's purpose
- Not duplicate previous research
- Consider follow-on implications
- Demonstrate genuine participant involvement
- Comply with Therapy Focus' policies and research principles
- Comply with all applicable external body and legislative requirements

3.3 Any formal research that is conducted by employees when acting as an employee, using Therapy Focus resources and/or clients as research participants, is required to obtain Executive approval prior to start and if approved, to follow any and all of Therapy Focus policies and procedures as well as those requirements defined by an ethics approval committee (or other) of a tertiary institution and/or relevant professional associations or groups.

3.4 Proposed research to be undertaken by Therapy Focus will be considered by the Executive Management team to ensure that the above criteria are met in addition to a formal evaluation of risks, strategic fit and availability of resources. Only after Executive Management approval, as well as the appropriate ethics approval for the formal research, will research be permitted to be undertaken.

3.5 In considering research proposals, Executive Managers will take into account (without being definitive): operation requirements, proposer's performance, relevance of proposed research, body of evidence related to proposed research, applied nature of proposed research, research team proposed, and access to research participants.

3.6 The publication of results of any form of research in any format (including verbal, written or other) requires Executive approval to ensure that it meets organisational requirements. The involvement of Therapy Focus resources must be appropriately acknowledged in any publication of results.

4. POLICY CONDITIONS

4.1 Ethics Approval

- 4.1.1 The employee is responsible for identifying the requirement for and institutions from which ethics approval may be obtained.
- 4.1.2 Any approach to an ethics approval body must be supported by an Executive Manager.

4.2 Compliance

- 4.2.1 Depending on circumstances, non-compliance with this policy may constitute misconduct (under Performance Management Policy).
- 4.2.2 Those who fail to comply with this policy may face disciplinary action and, in serious cases, termination of employment.

4.3 External Considerations

- 4.3.1 Where research is to be conducted by Therapy Focus with external agencies, stakeholder or academic institutions, all employees, students and contractors must give due consideration to issues of intellectual property, copyright, confidentiality, responsibility for ethics approval and reporting requirements.
- 4.3.2 Where intellectual property is created in the conduct of the research, the researcher grants to Therapy Focus non-exclusive rights to access and reproduce the intellectual property for the purpose of advancing the organisation's Purpose.
- 4.3.3 Where research is undertaken by third parties, and involves a Therapy Focus employee or stakeholder, that employee must give evidence that this policy is taken into account in the design and conduct of that research. Failure to demonstrate evidence may result in participation rights being withdrawn.
- 4.3.4 Therapy Focus does not endorse to our clients any particular research happening outside of the organisation, nor do we solicit their involvement and participation in the same.
- 4.3.5 Providing the research described in clause 4.3.3 has ethics approval from a recognised tertiary body or government agency, Therapy Focus may promote research via channels that may include Website, Social Media and / or printed newsletters.

5. RESEARCH PRINCIPLES

All individuals who conduct research at Therapy Focus are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with the organisation's values. All research conducted and/or supported by individuals of Therapy Focus is required to adhere to the following broad principles.

5.1 Respect for Persons; their values, beliefs and cultures

Respects individuals rights and decisions at all times as well as their opinions, choices and beliefs

5.2 Maximize benefits and minimize harm

Ensures that the risks and potential harm of participating in the research are minimised and the benefits are maximised.

5.3 Confidentiality and Privacy

Be conducted in an ethical manner that respects the privacy, confidentiality and dignity of the participants.

5.4 Informed consent/assent

Gains informed consent or assent from the participants involved

5.5 Contributes to evidence base

Contributes to the evidence base and best practice through the responsible conduct of research

5.6 Resultant Action

Prioritises resultant action for participants, especially where findings support change.

6. DATE OF REVIEW

This policy should be reviewed on a biennial basis to ensure that its contents remain appropriate. The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the deployment, implementation, modification and review of this policy.

7. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Therapy Focus Performance Management Suite
- Therapy Focus Code of Conduct
- Therapy Focus Privacy & Confidentiality Suite
- Therapy Focus Strategic Plan
- Disability Services Standards
- Australian Standard on Personal Privacy Protection
- Privacy Act 1988
- Copyright Act 1968