

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 13 & 15 February 2013

Question: E13-008

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: Research Grants

Type of Question: Hansard Page 37, 13 February 2013

Senator: Senator Fierravanti-Wells

Question:

What protocols are in place to ensure that those on the research committee do not have a conflict of interest in recommending research project to persons or institutions with whom they have an affiliation? Could you also tell me if there were any conflicts or perceived conflicts of interest issues in relation to any of those decisions, who withdrew from what meeting and whether grants were given to an organisation affiliated with that person who withdrew from the meeting. Could you give me a list of the 16 grants?

Answer:

The Committee Guidelines make clear the responsibilities of committee members to notify the chair of any conflict of interest for any matter before the Research Committee. Members are required to make general statements about potential conflicts upon joining the Committee and the chair asks at the commencement of each meeting whether any member has a conflict in relation to any item requiring advice to the Australian National Preventive Health Agency on the agenda. All conflicts and the actions taken are recorded for the meetings.

As the Assessment Committee for the 2011-2012 grant round, the Committee operated under an additional protocol (Attachment A) requiring specific declarations of conflicts in association with applications. Conflicts of interests were verified prior to any member receiving their package of applications for which they were prime spokesperson. No member received copies of applications for which they declared any conflict for this initial phase.

At the meetings of the Research Committee of 25 October 2011 and 13 December 2011, conflicts of interest were ranked by the committee under the guidance of the chair as either low, moderate or high. The appropriate action was then taken. An independent external probity adviser was present at both meetings and confirmed that the process was procedurally sound.

The record of the conflicts of interest for the grants assessment, including the rankings of conflicts, is shown in Attachment B. Only those applications for which there was a declared conflict are listed. Attachment B indicates which of the grants in the list were shortlisted and which of those were successful.

A list of the sixteen funded grants is provided at Attachment C.

**ANPHA Expert Committee on Research
Protocol for handling conflicts of interests and duties**

A conflict of interest exists where there is a divergence between the individual interests of a person and their professional responsibilities such that an independent observer might reasonably conclude that the professional actions of that person are unduly influenced by their own interests. Financial conflicts of interest are foremost in the public mind but other conflicts of interest also occur in research, including professional and institutional advantages.

This protocol is drafted with the view that the decision making by the committee shall be independently conducted, but will not be restricted unnecessarily because of the possible relationships between members and those with the potential to benefit from decisions made by the committee. Because unavoidable conflicts of interest in the research area are common, guidance is required to derive the full benefit of members' expertise while being transparent about the potential conflicts of interest. It is important that conflicts of interest are disclosed and dealt with properly.

For the purposes of this protocol, references to conflicts of interest include references to conflicts of interests and duties and potential conflicts and perceptions of conflicts.

Disclosure of conflicts

1. On appointment to the ANPHA Research Committee, members will be asked to sign a Deed of Undertaking in relation to conflicts existing at that time.
2. If a member subsequently discovers that they have an interest of a kind that may constitute a conflict, the member must notify the chair as soon as practicable.
3. At the commencement of each committee meeting, members shall disclose whether they have an interest of a kind that may constitute a conflict relevant to an item on the agenda of the meeting. Members must also disclose conflicts prior to consideration of business outside of meetings (for example where a decision is made by email).
4. Disclosures must detail the nature and extent of the interest.

Process for dealing with disclosures

5. The chair will determine how the disclosure will be handled and ask that the issue and response dealing with the disclosure be recorded in the minutes of that meeting (or, if considered outside of a committee meeting, recorded at the commencement of the next meeting).
6. The chair may ask a member with a conflict relevant to a matter before the committee, to leave the meeting for the duration of any discussion about the matter. The chair has the discretion to allow the member to be present for the discussion and/or the vote on the matter.
7. A member may not vote on a matter about which they have a conflict.
8. At the discretion of the chair, a member with a conflict about a matter before the committee may also provide information in writing to the other members of the committee about that matter, particularly where that member has special expertise.
9. Where the chair discloses a conflict about a matter before the committee, the committee shall appoint another member to take the chair while the committee considers the matter.

Grant Program 2011-2012

ANPHA Expert Committee on Research Conflicts of Interest

Bold text for shortlisted applications

*successful applications

There were no conflicts declared for all other applications

Member	Conflicted applications ID code	Grade (see below for actions taken)
John McCallum	136SHA2011	low
Penny Hawe	1ALL2011* 2ALL2011 75DAN2011 127CLA2011* 128TER2011 159ARM2011 172CHR2011 173FOS2011 188PEE2011* 204GIB2011	high high high high high high high high high high
Kerin O'Dea	14WIT2011 33ELI2011 36ROB2011 44LOF2011 55HAV2011 73DOL2011 75DAN2011 78DAN2011 79DAN2011 80PAL2011* 81JON2011 110CHO2011 125DUN2011 136SHA2011 161EGG2011 162MYE2011 184SMI2011 200KAR2011	high high low low high low high low high high high high high high low high high high
Meredith Edwards	Nil	
Ian Anderson	93DOR2011 157ROO2011* 182BRA2011*	high low high
Mike Daube	55HAV2011 64FRE2011* 85COP2011 93DOR2011 140ALL2011*	high low low low moderate

	143CHI2011 147CHI2011* 149POLL2011 174PET2011	moderate moderate low high
Melanie Wakefield	11WIL2011 12CRA2011 23TIM2011 40KOR2011 45LOM2011 48HAR2011 51LAN2011 53WHI2011 63CHA2011 64FRE2011* 66KEL2011 68PHO2011 76PER2011 84HUD2011 86DIX2011* 101SAN2011 130FLO2011 147CHI2011* 156ROO2011 157ROO2011 188PEE2011* 203MIT2011* 205WAR2011 208DAV2011 209DAV2011	low high high high high low high high high high high moderate high high high low high high high high high high high high high

Actions taken

Low (e.g. the member of the panel wrote a paper ten years ago with one of the investigators on the current application)

Where the chair determined that a committee member had a low risk conflict of interest, they were eligible to view the application, participate in discussions and vote on whether the application should progress for further consideration.

Medium (e.g. the member of the panel is a staff member at the same institution but do not work in any way with the applicant investigators)

Where the chair determined that a committee member had a moderate risk of conflict of interest, they were able to review the application and contribute to discussions but not vote.

High (e.g. the member of the panel is currently working with one of the investigators on a different project or is an investigator themselves for the application)

Where the chair determined that a committee member had a high risk of conflict of interest, the committee member did not receive, view or vote on the application, and was not present for discussions about the application.

Grant Program 2011-2012

Successful grants

Steven Allender, Deakin University with SA Dept of Health \$207,080 (GST exclusive)
Evaluating network and capacity development in large scale community obesity prevention

Steve Allsop, Curtin University, with the University of New South Wales and Monash University \$393,813 (GST exclusive)
Young Australians alcohol reporting system

Cathy Banwell, Australian National University \$157,450 (GST exclusive)
What roles do time, money and social position play in driving participation in a workplace health promotion program

Annette Braunack-Mayer, University of Adelaide \$288,381 (GST exclusive)
Steward or nanny state: Consulting the public about the use of regulations and laws to address childhood obesity

Tanya Chikritzhs, Curtin University \$224,792 (GST exclusive)
The public health impacts of liquor outlets in Queensland communities: outlet numbers, alcohol sales and alcohol related morbidity

Rachel Clark, Centre of Excellence in Intervention and Prevention Science (CEIPS) \$88,725 (GST exclusive)
Identifying Systemic Drivers of the use of Evidence to Prevent Obesity: A Service Mapping Approach

Tracy Comans, Griffith University \$463,442 (GST exclusive)
The cost-effectiveness and consumer acceptability of taxation strategies to reduce rates of overweight and obesity amongst children in Australia

Helen Dixon, Cancer Council Victoria with Cancer Institute NSW \$339,976 (GST exclusive)
Lifestyle media message-testing: Finding the keys to successful public health campaigns promoting healthy weight

Becky Freeman, University of Sydney \$259,159 (GST exclusive)
Online food and beverage marketing to children and adolescents

Dennis Gray, Curtin University \$339,040 (GST exclusive)
Identifying opportunities for the prevention of harmful use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs among Noongar (aboriginal) people in the south-west of Western Australia

Andrew Mitchell, University of Melbourne with Cancer Council Victoria \$389,640 (GST exclusive)
A collaborative model for combating non-communicable diseases (NCDs): coherence between regulation on risk factors and international law

Kerry O'Brien, Monash University \$80,000 (GST exclusive)
Alcohol advertising and sponsorship in Australian sport: Associations with implicit and explicit alcohol attitudes and drinking behaviour

Claire Palermo, Monash University with Menzies School of Health Research \$77,500 (GST exclusive)

A community of practice model in supporting remote retail store public health nutrition workforce development

Anna Peeters Baker IDI and Monash University \$247,340 (GST exclusive)

The impact of obesity prevention policy on social inequalities in obesity

Robin Room, University of Melbourne \$532,468 (GST exclusive)

Drinking patterns, regulation and market influences in Australia: the international alcohol control survey

Luke Wolfenden, Hunter New England Local Health District and University of Newcastle \$662,778 (GST exclusive)

Creating childcare environments supportive of child obesity prevention effectiveness of an intensive population based dissemination intervention