Policy for access to samples for strategy research

The overall aim of the IVRN is to facilitate strategic immunology and virology research in relation to Australians with HIV or HCV.

The structure of the IVRN includes four components: Tier 1, and Tier 2 laboratories, a Central specimen repository, and a laboratory QA program (QAP). A diagrammatic representation of the structure and the functions of the components are included in Appendix 1.

The scope of the research activities supported by the Network are outlined in the Operational Strategic Plan for the Australian Centre for HIV and Hepatitis Virology Research (ACH^2) (see The Challenge of Renewal at http://www.hiv.edu.au/). A summary of these research activities is included in Appendix 2.

This document defines the criteria for access to samples collected via the Network in clinical trials and cohort studies in HIV and HCV.

Applications for access to samples must be completed using the format described in Appendix 7. The applications will be considered by the IVRN Steering Committee (Appendix 3). The criteria for evaluation are four-fold:

- the degree to which the proposed project will facilitate Australian HIV and HCV strategy research;
- the scientific merit of the proposed study (when necessary external scientific advice may be sought);
- the degree to which alternative sources of samples are available;
- the competing demands on the available samples in the Network repository.

All applications should be submitted electronically plus one signed (paper) copy to:

The IVRN Project Coordinator, c/- Prof Andrew Lloyd
School of Medical Sciences, UNSW
Ph: 02-9385-1390
Fax: 02-9385-1389
Email: a.lloyd@unsw.edu.au

There is no closing date for applications. All applications will be considered. The decision will be made within one month of receipt.

Once the application is approved, the availability of samples from the IVRN will be contingent upon the applicant(s) providing institutional ethics committee approval for the use of IVRN samples in their project and signing a copy of the IVRN Material Transfer Agreement form. Clinical and laboratory data about the samples will be made available via read-only access to a custom online database. Appendix 8 describes the process for accessing samples from the IVRN in detail.