

Policy for collection and storage of samples

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 is 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 (ACH²) (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 inclusion of clinical trials and cohort studies in HIV and HCV for funded specimen collection via the Network.

Applications for inclusion of clinical trials and cohort studies must be completed using the format described in Appendix 6. The Tier 1 laboratories available to participate in handling and storage of samples are listed in Appendix 1. The applications will be considered by the IVRN Steering Committee (Appendix 3). The criteria for evaluation are five-fold:

1. the degree to which the proposed sample collection will facilitate Australian HIV and HCV strategy research;
2. the scientific merit of the clinical trial or cohort study (when necessary external scientific advice may be sought);
3. the extent to which samples collected will be made broadly available to other Australian investigators via the Network;
4. the degree to which alternative collection and storage systems are available (e.g., pharmaceutical industry sponsored sample collection and storage);
5. the competing demands on the resources of the Network.

In principle agreement to utilise the Tier One Network for Australia-wide specimen collection (without formal application) may be provided upon request to individuals seeking to incorporate this statement into the research plan for applications to public sector funding agencies (e.g. NHMRC). If funding is awarded, a formal application (as above) should follow.

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.