



NICM

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THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF COMPLEMENTARY MEDICINE

NICM Forums provide valuable feedback!

A series of three Stakeholder Forums was convened in Sydney to enable NICM to communicate their progress to date and to receive timely input from stakeholders about their attitudes to matters pertaining to NICM's core areas of interest. The Researchers Forum was held on the 20th August and the Industry and Practitioners Forums were convened on the 27th August. Collectively, these forums were attended by almost 200 delegates and we are extremely grateful to all those who gave so generously of their time and provided so much valuable input into our thinking. The output from the forums enabled NICM to finalise our initial research priorities (see page 2); refine our scientific research structure; and fine tune our funding policy and assessment processes.

The NICM Research Operation

NICM does not intend to recruit large numbers of researchers to work as NICM employees. NICM sees its primary role as facilitating research, acting as "the glue" to bring together groups of researchers, and to provide them with the seed funding to enable them to attract further funding to conduct research. NICM recognises that the funds likely to be available to it will be insufficient in their own right to enable several large scale projects to be conducted by a NICM Centre, and to be successful researchers will need to leverage NICM funding with funding from other sources.

To achieve a national focus NICM proposes to create a network of NICM Collaborative Centres which specialise in a particular research theme. (See Structure Diagram). The selection of NICM Centres will be determined through a competitive application process, and those selected will be required to report on clearly defined deliverables and carefully determined KPIs. The number of NICM Centres is likely to increase over time.

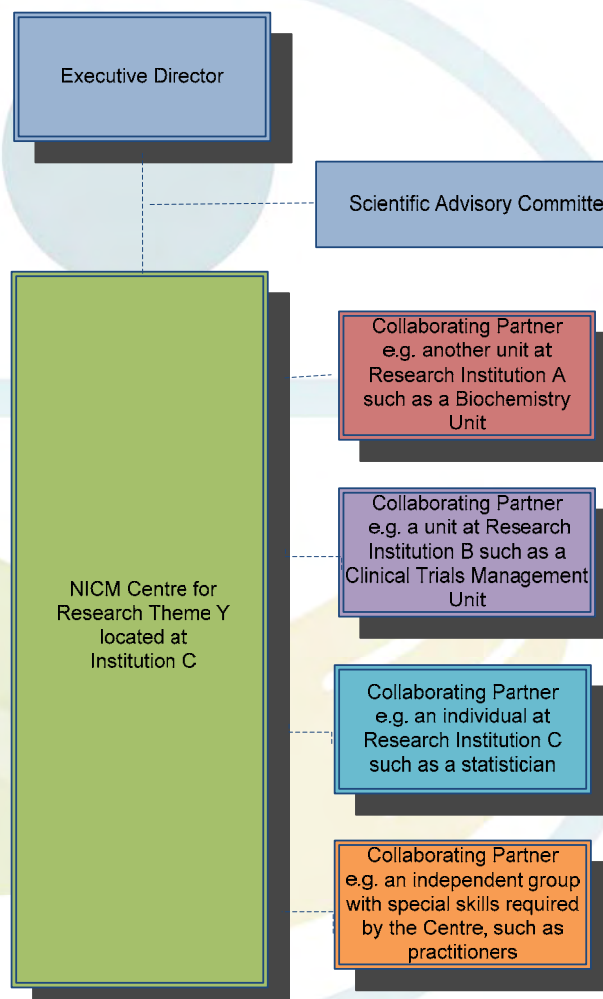
Two of NICM's core aims, collaboration and capacity building, will be met through the establishment of NICM Collaborative Centres.

There will be clear requirements placed on each of the NICM Centres to form collaborations across both CM and mainstream medical research groups. Collaboration is

critical to ensure broad engagement in CM research across the research community and to strengthen research performance.

As the purpose of NICM is to enable CM researchers to gain greater exposure to and experience with a broad range of research skills, engagement with well credentialed mainstream research groups is key.

Further details on NICM's research operation will soon be posted on our website.



Upcoming Events

The 3rd International Congress of CM Research 2008 in collaboration with ISCMR will be held 29-31 March 2008 at the Sydney Convention Centre Darling Harbour Sydney

Abstract Submissions and Earlybird Registrations close on 1 November 2007

www.iccmr2008.com



NICM National Research Priorities

As part of the activities of the three national stakeholder forums we explored views as to how best to determine national research priorities for complementary medicine and their degree of alignment with the national health priorities and the national research priority of 'promoting and maintaining good health'. Specifically, CM research may offer greater potential in some clinical areas than others. After much stakeholder input and discussion our team synthesised responses into broad categories. These categories summarise the views of participants.

1. Priority should be given to research that has the potential to impact positively on health and wellbeing of all Australians.

Rather than simply align research to national health priorities, emphasis should be given to the areas of high burden of disease where preliminary evidence is strong and demonstrates likelihood of positive impact. Preliminary data reviews may be required to assist this process.

2. Priority should be given to research that elucidates safety, efficacy & cost effectiveness of CM and translates this into policy and practice.

Safety, efficacy and cost-effectiveness studies with outcomes relevant to policy and practice help close the loop between research and its implementation.

3. Priority should be given to research that investigates methodological issues relevant to the complex nature of CM.

These include the development of methodological tools, such as measurement instruments, trial designs and pharmacological approaches which may impact on our understanding of the whole practice, concepts and mechanisms underpinning CM.

NICM Principles

Excellence

NICM is committed to achieving excellence in CM research.

Strategic direction

Research priorities for CM will be evaluated and reviewed within the context of the NICM mission, identified needs of the CM research sector, and national health priorities. Research programs will build on the existing strengths in CM research in Australia.

Accountability

All processes of operation within NICM will be transparent, performance driven, fair and equitable. NICM will be accountable to its stakeholders, including government, complementary and conventional medicine researchers and the wider community.

Capacity building

NICM is committed to capability building for complementary medicine research through leveraging and partnering with conventional research capacity and skills. NICM is

committed to addressing the lack of critical mass and depth in CM research through offering support for researchers at all career stages and through enhancing connectivity.

Collaboration

NICM is committed to encouraging and increasing collaboration among universities, research institutions, government, CM professionals, industry and the wider community.

Inclusiveness

NICM is committed to being inclusive in its approach. NICM is committed to working closely with medical and other research centres rather than developing separately.

The NICM definition of CM includes medicines as well as therapies; wellness as well as illness; and whole systems as well as isolated components.

Education

NICM is committed to facilitating the dissemination of authoritative CM research information to health professionals and the general public.

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Important dates

Call for Expressions of Interest—Establishment of NICM Collaborative Research Centres

The following dates are indicative only and subject to change.

- Call for Expressions of Interest (EOI) will take place during the second half of October 2007.
- EOIs due 15th November 2007 and feedback completed by 1st December 2007.
- Final applications close 20th December 2007.
- Assessment by mid February—early March 2008.
- Final announcement (by end March 2008).