

RACGP National Research and Evaluation Ethics Committee (NREEC) Complaints Procedures

Complaints from Researchers

- 1.1 Consistently with the NH&MRC [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research \(2007\)](#), the NREEC provides for complaints about the process of ethical review, but does not provide for an appeal against a final decision to reject a proposal.
- 1.2 If an application is being considered for rejection, it must be reviewed by the NREEC, and the Researcher/s must have had an opportunity to address NREEC's concerns. The decision by NREEC to reject an application is final and may not be appealed.
- 1.3 Complaints about the process of ethical review must be made in writing to the RACGP Program Administrator - Research, who will inform the NREEC Chairperson of the complaint, and investigate and attempt to resolve the matter. This action may include nominating an RACGP representative who is external to the NREEC to have a direct discussion with the Principal Investigator of the project in question. Researchers have the right to attend one meeting of the NREEC to present their complaint in person.

Complaints from research participants

- 1.4 Complaints by research participants will be made normally to the RACGP Program Administrator - Research. Researchers who receive a complaint from a research participant must notify the Program Administrator – Research as soon as possible. The Program Administrator - Research will advise the NREEC Chairperson of the complaint at the earliest opportunity.
- 1.5 The Chairperson will consider the complaint and will take action he/she deems appropriate, as soon as possible. This action may include nominating an RACGP representative who is external to the NREEC to have a direct discussion with the relevant research participant and/or direct contact with the Principal Investigator. The process will usually involve verification that the protocol approved by the Committee has been followed and subsequent action may include temporary withholding of ethics approval. All discussions will be conducted in a confidential manner.

Complaints from other parties

- 1.6 Any complaint from other interested parties will be managed normally according to the procedure set out in section 1.4 above 'Complaints from research participants'.