

Animals in Teaching and Research Statement

Throughout history, animals have made an invaluable contribution to medical research, enabling the discovery of treatments and cures for many serious diseases and conditions. While the number of animals used in medical research around the world is decreasing, some work with animals must continue in order to progress vital medical advances through teaching and research, resulting in countless lives saved and new life saving therapies becoming clinical practice.

The husbandry, monitoring, and use of animals in any teaching or research complies with all relevant legislation, including the NSW Animal Research Act 1985 No 123, NSW Animal Research Regulation 2021 and the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes 8th Edition 2013 (updated 2021).

When animal research or teaching is undertaken at The Westmead Institute for Medical Research (WIMR), it is subject to thorough review on submission of an application to the Western Sydney Local Health District (WSLHD) Animal Ethics Committee (AEC). If approved, the Committee is responsible for regular ongoing scrutiny over the duration of the project to ensure compliance with the Australian Code. The Animal Research Review Panel (NSW Department of Primary Industry) has oversight of the operations of all AECs within NSW through their inspection and assessment policy.

At WIMR, animal research is funded by external funding bodies such as the NHMRC, which means it is externally peer reviewed, and must be innovative and of high value. This protects against unnecessary duplication.

WIMR is absolutely committed to ensuring the humane and ethical treatment of animals and is committed to the application of the '3 R's', as required by the NHMRC. This involves applying the below principles at every stage of a research project that uses animals in the work. The 3 Rs are:

- Replacement: where possible, replacing the use of animals with other research methods
- Reduction: taking steps to use the fewest animals possible
- Refinement: using methods that support the wellbeing of the animal.

WIMR recognises that the use of animals in research is not a right, but a privilege that must be earned by demonstration of our staff's commitment to achieving the highest standards of animal welfare and an ongoing commitment to replacement, reduction, and refinement.

WIMR is also a Signatory to the Openness Agreement on Animal Research and Teaching in Australia.