Public Health Research Committee

(August 2026)

Terms of Reference

Refer to HRC Act 1990 (Sections 15 to 19) and HRC Policy Document - Description, Interpretation and Implementation of the Statutory Functions for Research Committees.

Membership Composition

Section 20 of the HRC Act 1990 states:

Membership of research committees

1. Each research committee shall consist of seven members.
2. At least five of the seven members of each research committee shall have research experience that is relevant to the kind of health research in respect of which the committee is established.
3. The members of each research committee –
   (a) Shall be appointed from time to time by the Council; and
   (b) May include both members of the Council and persons who are not members of the Council.
4. In appointing members of a research committee, the Council shall have regard to –
   (a) Their personal attributes; and
   (b) Their ability to contribute to the discharge of the functions of the research committee.
5. The chairperson of each research committee shall be a member of the Council from time to time appointed for the purpose by the Council.
6. Subject to subsection (7) of this section, every member of a research committee shall be appointed for a term of three years, but may from time to time be reappointed.
7. Upon the completion by any person of two consecutive terms as a member of a research committee, that person shall cease to be eligible for reappointment as a member of that research committee until after the lapse of three years during which that person did not hold office as a member of that research committee.

Council agreed in principle to the co-option of members to the Research Committee (Refer HRC Council minutes April 1993).

Term of Office

Refer to HRC Act 1990 (Section 20).

Process for Appointment of Committee Members

The Council taking into consideration the matters referred to in Part 1, Section 20(4) of the HRC Act 1990 and consulting with the Committee, appoints members. The Chief Executive formally invites the proposed member recommended by the Committee and confirmed by Council.

Current Membership	Date Appointed	End of Term	Expertise	Location
Professor Jeroen Douwes	08.2011	08.2014	Environmental health	Wellington
Reappointment	09.2014	09.2017		
Appointed as Chair	*08.2015*	*08.2018*		
Reappointed as Chair	*08.2018*	*07.2025*		
Reappointed as Chair	*05.2026*	*05.2029*		
Professor Jason Gurney (co-opted one-year term)	01.2023	01.2024	Māori Health & epidemiology	Auckland
Appointed as member	01.2024	01.2027		
Reappointed as a member	08.2026	08.2029		
Dr Kirsten Smiler (co-opted one-year term)	01.2023	01.2024	Māori Health & youth health	Wellington
Appointed as member	01.2024	01.2027		
Reappointed as a member	08.2026	08.2029		
Professor Rachael Taylor (co-opted two-year term)	04.2025	04.2027	Child Health	Dunedin
Appointed as member	02.2026	02.2029		
Professor El-Shadan Tautolo (co-opted two-year term)	04.2025	04.2027	Pacific Health	Auckland
Appointed as member	08.2026	08.2029		
Professor Janet Hoek (co-opted two-year term)	04.2025	04.2027	Health promotion & tobacco control	Wellington
Appointed as member	02.2026	02.2029		
Professor Cliona Ni Mhurchu (co-opted two-year term)	04.2025	04.2027	Nutrition	Auckland
Appointed as member	02.2026	02.2029		

Secretary:	Dr Katie Palastanga
Quorum:	Four
Meetings per annum:	Three to four
Reports to:	Council
Established by:	HRC Act 1990
Reviewed:	
Disbanded:	