AN INVITATION TO ATTEND a Qualitative Health Research Collaboration Forum

Supported by the Sydney School of Public Health and the Centre for Values, Ethics and the Law in Medicine

When:  21st September 2010
       9.00 am to 1.00 pm

Where:  Medical Foundation Auditorium
        92-94 Parramatta Road, Camperdown
        (see map below))

What:  ‘TRUST ME, I’M A RESEARCHER’: HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS IN PRACTICE

Facilitated by Marilys Guillemin and Lynn Gillam
Centre for Health and Society
School of Population Health
University of Melbourne

We hope you can join us for this exciting forum at the University of Sydney.

Our aims in organising the forum are to:
1. provide opportunities for researchers and ethics committee members to meet;
2. encourage committee members and researchers to hear one another’s perspectives on research ethics processes; and
3. encourage detailed discussion of current Australian ethics oversight processes.

The forum will be primarily, but not exclusively, concerned with oversight of qualitative inquiry.

The morning will include a formal presentation and open discussion of an empirical study of ethics committee processes conducted by Marilys Guillemin and Lynn Gillam. This will be followed by a conversation between members of an expert panel of qualitative researchers and ethics committee members. At the end of the morning you will have an opportunity to discuss the findings of the study, and the panel members’ contributions, in relation to your own experience of researching, being a member of a committee, or both.

An abstract of Marilys and Lynn’s presentation, and their short bios, are provided below.

Please RSVP by 14 September to kathy.flitcroft@sydney.edu.au for catering purposes.
Abstract
It is widely agreed that conducting research in an ethical manner is important and that trust in the research process is crucial. However, there is little research that has systematically investigated what happens in the practice of research ethics. Findings will be presented from an ARC-funded, three year project examining how human research ethics committee members and health researchers make decisions about ethical issues in health research. Eighty-eight individual, in-depth interviews were undertaken: 34 ethics committee members across all categories of membership, and 54 health researchers in fields including biomedicine, epidemiology, clinical and qualitative health research. The research examined how health researchers and ethics committee members understand and think about research ethics and how, in practice, they address ethical issues in research. The cultures and practices of ethics committee members engaged in the process of ethics review will be discussed, together with how the relationship between ethics committee members and health researchers both assists and impedes trust in the human research enterprise. The presentation will focus on the ways that health researchers, in particular health researchers using social science approaches, understand and practice research ethics. For this group of health researchers, research ethics is not separate or distinct to their practice of doing research; ethics is embedded in their research practice, from the early stages of research design, to their relationships with their participants, through to the dissemination of findings. These findings will be discussed in context of establishing and ensuring trust in the process of human research.

Marilys Guillemin is the Director and Associate Professor at the Centre for Health and Society at the University of Melbourne. Her professional academic experience is in sociology of health and illness, particularly in the areas of understandings of illness, health and technology studies, and women's health. Marilys is an established health researcher whose past major research projects include the management of menopause within specialised clinic settings examining the needs and practices of both women and medical practitioners; research on mid-age women and heart disease particularly focusing on women's understanding of risk and prevention of heart disease; and research on deafness and genetic testing. At postgraduate level, Marilys and Lynn teach subjects in qualitative research design and research methods, social health and health ethics. Lynn and Marilys have been honoured with a number of teaching awards for their team teaching, including the national Carrick award for teaching excellence in 2007.

Lynn Gillam holds appointments as Associate Professor in Health Ethics at the Centre for Health and Society at the University of Melbourne, and the Murdoch Children’s Research Institute and is also the Clinical Ethicist at the Royal Children’s Hospital, Melbourne. Lynn's background is in philosophy, theology and bioethics. She teaches ethics in the medical curriculum and the postgraduate social health program. Her research interests include pre-natal diagnosis, genetic testing, and clinical ethics. She also has a strong interest in the intersections between ethics and sociology, and the development of inter-disciplinary qualitative methods suitable for research in ethics. Lynn has 15 years experience on human research ethics committees. She is currently a member of the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of Melbourne, and the clinical ethics committee of the Royal Children’s Hospital. Lynn has published widely in bioethics, on a range of issues, including clinical ethics, research ethics and ethics committees, the use of human foetal tissue, reproductive technologies and genetic testing.
Directions to the Medical Foundation Auditorium

The MFA is located in the Medical Foundation Building complex, which is just off the main campus, at
92-94 Parramatta Road,
Camperdown.

Getting here:

By bus The closest bus stop to the Medical Foundation Building is located virtually directly opposite outside the BP Service Station on the corner of Missenden Road and Parramatta Road. Buses from the city or Central Station (Railway Square (Nos. 435, 436, 437, 438 and 440) running along Parramatta Road and stopping at Missenden Road are recommended.

By car or taxi The closest major cross street is Missenden Road. The Medical Foundation Building is located between Barr Street and Larkin Street, Barr Street being the first street on the left heading towards the city after Missenden Road. Parking is limited in the back streets, and Missenden Road has some four hour parking spots.
Locating the MFA
The Medical Foundation Building is comprised of two separate buildings joined by a walkway. The MFA comes off a very large open courtyard, adjoining the main Medical Foundation Building. When you enter from Parramatta Road, go through the covered walkway to courtyard. When you get as far as the grassed area, look to your right. The MFA will be through the glass doors on your right. If you reached the main entrance of the Medical Foundation near the list, ask the friendly attendant to point you in the right direction.