



STARS Education and Research Alliance

CREATING KNOWLEDGE | TRANSFORMING CARE

Clinical Research Think-Tanks at STARS

Purpose

Think-Tanks aim to provide a stimulating and supportive forum for clinical researchers interested in collaborating on research at the Surgical, Treatment and Rehabilitation Service (STARS) Hospital, within Metro North Health. The think-tanks are an opportunity to discuss and share ideas to develop and strengthen study protocols, through in-depth discussion and constructive feedback.

Aims

- to provide a peer review forum for clinical research being considered for collaboration with, or delivery in, STARS
- to provide a supportive forum for presentation, discussion and review of research studies in development
- to provide clinical, methodological and practical advice to teams developing research studies in order to ensure the clinical relevance, scientific excellence and feasibility of research plans
- to ensure the expertise of experienced clinical researchers is shared with others involved in developing and delivering clinical studies, thereby contributing to the capacity development of future clinical research leaders
- to encourage and engage consumers in Think-Tanks to ensure research plans are influenced by consumer perspectives
- to make recommendations to research teams and to the STARS Research Committee regarding research collaboration to share best practice in the set-up and delivery of clinical research studies
- to provide a forum for discussion of issues related to the design, conduct and dissemination of clinical research studies
- to provide pro-active support in STARS to help develop high quality research funding applications that underpin the research portfolio

Guiding principles

- Think-Tanks may be organised to help shape studies at any point in their development – from the point of refining research questions to protocol development sessions.
- Think-Tanks will ideally take place before the point of grant application, in sufficient time for changes to be made to the research plans following discussion and key recommendations.
- The default position is that the project leader(s) putting forward topics to discuss at the Think-Tanks present at the Think-Tank meeting.
- Invitations to Think-Tanks will be sent to small numbers of key relevant teams in STARS, UQ and other relevant clinical and/or research staff, in sufficient time to permit participation and they will be chaired and facilitated by members of the STARS research conjoint team and research committee members.

Proposals for Think-Tanks

Proposals for Clinical Studies Think-Tanks may come from a number of sources, for example:

- Potential clinical research leads may request a Think-Tank prior to developing and submitting their research protocol to STARS for potential clinical research collaboration approval
- STARS research conjoint team or research committee members may ask the project leader and/or team members to participate in a Think-Tank in order to discuss the clinical research study, to clarify the plans and project needs, and/or to refine and develop the research idea and methods.
- Research project team or STARS research committee members may request a think-tank for advice and input regarding “next steps” following feasibility and pilot studies

Process

Participation will be offered in face-to-face and virtual Think-Tank meetings to maximise participation. The STARS Research Manager is the main point of contact regarding organisational aspects of the Think-Tanks and will assist with provision of information before the Think-Tank, the set-up and brief reporting of key discussion points and recommendations. Project leaders and team members wishing to present at a STARS Clinical Research Think-Tank will e-mail the STARS Research Support Officer STARS_Research@health.qld.gov.au to organise date/time and venue details.

Prior to the Think Tank, project team leaders will be asked to email a short presentation or summary to the Alliance Manager for dissemination to invited Think-Tank participants to facilitate time being spent as efficiently as possible in the Think-Tank meeting.

Think-Tanks should include a Think-Tank chair, note-taker, clinical research leader(s) and team members and other relevant stakeholders such as clinicians, researchers, and service managers. Consumer engagement is strongly encouraged, and as the STARS research consumer group is developed over time, the Think-Tanks will provide opportunities for consumers to participate in the discussions and decisions about research studies in STARS.

Typically, each Think-Tank will last up to 60 minutes, aiming for the clinical research study presentation to last no more than 15 minutes (maximum of 10 slides) to allow sufficient time for discussion and recommendations to be agreed. Recommendations may include the need for further advice, from other subject experts, following the Think Tank.

Clinical research leads and teams will have the opportunity to modify and improve their proposals in the light of the feedback and discussions at the Think-Tank.

Next steps after Think Tanks may include the following:

- Further development of the project plans or applications in conjunction with STARS conjoint research team, UQ research teams and/or others where appropriate
- Development of a full study protocol and grant submission
- Decision not to proceed further, or not to proceed further within STARS
- The recommendations from the Clinical Research Think-Tanks will be shared with the STARS Clinical Research Committee, to help inform decisions about the STARS research portfolio and collaborations