

Position Description

Position title: Senior Research Officer, Aboriginal Health

Date established: June 2025

Reports to: Head, Aboriginal Health

Direct reports: None

Employment status: Full time (5 days per week)

About the Sax Institute

The Sax Institute is an independent, not-for-profit organisation that improves health and wellbeing by driving better use of evidence in policies, programs and services.

The Institute has an international reputation as an Evidence Specialist, and over 20 years' experience in translating research findings into policy drawing on our own expertise as well as that of our more than 60 member organisations. We work with governments, health organisations, research organisations and a network of experts nationwide to analyse policy problems and find the best evidence-based solutions.

About Aboriginal Health Division

The Aboriginal Health Division is a newly formed Division of the Sax Institute. The Sax Institute is deeply committed to advancing the health and wellbeing of First Nations peoples and has a proud history of collaborating with the ACCHS sector and other key stakeholders in research, evaluation and policy. The Sax Institute has worked in partnership with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHSs) in NSW for more than a decade conducting a program of research that aligns with ACCHS priorities. Our work involves ACCHSs and government partners, as well as multidisciplinary teams of researchers. The program has evolved an integrated approach to using data to generate health improvements and has already resulted in increased knowledge about health and its determinants in Aboriginal children and young people and strengthened services and new programs to improve Aboriginal health through the Study of Environment on Aboriginal Resilience and Child Health (SEARCH). More recently, the program has expanded to focus on other areas of Aboriginal health research including healthy ageing, patient care, food security, evaluation of Aboriginal-led programs and social and emotional wellbeing of their staff throughout the COVID 19 pandemic.

Purpose of position

The Senior Research Associate will be part of the Aboriginal Health Division to assist in the development of a future strategy for the Aboriginal Health Division at the Sax Institute, contributing ideas and innovative approaches. The Associate will play a key role in co-ordinating the collection and analysis of quantitative data for the projects on patient care and healthy ageing. The role will help manage the development of grant applications and ethics applications, provide operational support to testing the approach to research implementation and develop communication resources on research findings for use by ACCHS and policy partners.

The position requires: strong research skills; a strong understanding of ethical research and methodological options; excellent communication skills; personal initiative, flexibility, an innovative perspective; and the capacity to work with a wide range of people including leading researchers and ACCHS partners.

Note that this position requires occasional travel.

Key accountabilities

Key accountabilities	Performance expectations
Support the Aboriginal health division	Provide internal operational support, lead internal meetings and contributing ideas and innovative approaches.
Draft study protocols, tools and methods for evaluation design	- Develop research protocols, evaluation frameworks and tools for complex programs and policies. - Other key evaluation and research activities as necessary (e.g. literature searches, development of monitoring dashboards)
Prepare ethics applications and reports, progress reports to partners and funders and annual stakeholder reports	Develop and manage ethics applications (responding to ethics committees) and produce high quality reports for funding agencies and stakeholders
Coordinate and conduct data collection and analysis	- Design and implement quantitative data collection tools and instruments - Implement and manage evaluation and research projects on time and to budget - Conduct quantitative data analysis as required
Prepare data summaries for ACCHSs partners and communication resources (findings briefs, infographics) from data generated for use by ACCHSs and policy partners	- Assist in the development of new approaches to the delivery of evidence to support ACCHSs and decision makers - Develop tools and techniques for communicating and translating evaluation and research findings to key stakeholders
Draft papers and presentations arising from the research and supporting the team in delivering the findings in stakeholder meetings	- Prepare high-quality evaluation reports and research outputs for publication in peer reviewed journals - Findings from the projects shared regularly with partner ACCHSs, at governance and stakeholder meetings and at conferences (where possible)

Selection Criteria

To be successful the Senior Research Associate should demonstrate the following technical and behavioural competencies:

- Aboriginality is a genuine occupational requirement of this position
- A PhD in epidemiology, population health, health services research or relevant Master's degree or relevant experience
- Strong background in Aboriginal health research and policy
- Excellent organisational skills and experience in managing projects, with a demonstrated capacity to manage complexities and diverse stakeholders
- Demonstrated ability to contribute ideas and innovations, develop and implement initiatives
- Demonstrated experience with writing research protocols, reports, findings briefs, ethics applications and/or academic manuscripts and grant applications
- Excellent interpersonal skills and proven ability to work as part of a team, and build successful working relationships with a variety of people and to deliver on commitments