

Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital	Manual Corporate	Cluster Bloorview Research Institute
	Theme Roles and Responsibilities	Number 00115
Scientific Advisor Appointment		


Preamble

The establishment of a productive research program is a very difficult process and many new scientists and investigators have little success in their initial years. This policy provides a formal mechanism for BRI scientists and investigators to receive mentorship and engage in a formal review process. The purpose of this policy is to support the development of the highest calibre of scientists and investigators in the Bloorview Research Institute and promote their success and productivity. A Scientific Advisor and a formal review process provides scientists and investigators with regular, constructive and critical feedback about the progress and standing of their research programs from experts in their respective fields.

Contributions to training and mentorship are highly valued within the BRI, hence Scientific Advisors from the BRI will be recognized for their efforts in annual performance assessments.

Policy Statement

All scientists and investigators shall have a Scientific Advisor and undergo a formal review process three years from their initial appointment to the BRI. Reviews will inform the appropriateness of appointments, renewals and promotions. The rank of the appointment to BRI will be considered in the formal review.

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Procedure:

Definitions

A Scientific Advisor is typically a Senior Scientist from BRI or a senior researcher from another institution. The Scientific Advisor provides scientific and career guidance in many aspects of research productivity, including, but not limited to, preparing and submitting grant applications, writing manuscripts, research management, graduate student recruitment, and career development strategies for a 3 year term. At the end of this 3 year term, the Scientific Advisor will initiate a formal review for the scientist/investigator with the administrative support of the Research Operations office.

Scientists/Investigators include BRI Scientists and Clinician Scientists, with an academic rank of Assistant Professor, as well as all Clinician Investigators and Clinical Study Investigators.

Appointment Process

Within the first month of employment, in consultation with the VP Research, all scientists and investigators will identify a Scientific Advisor. If the scientist/investigator is having trouble identifying an appropriate Scientific Advisor, potential advisors will be identified by the VP Research.

The VP Research will provide a letter of appointment to the selected Scientific Advisor. A formal agreement will be signed by the Scientific Advisor, the scientist/investigator and the VP Research.

Term


A Scientific Advisor is appointed for a three year term. If deemed helpful or appropriate by the review committee or the VP Research, the Scientific Advisor can be re-appointed for a second three-year term or another Scientific Advisor can be appointed if more appropriate. Mentorship activities may conclude prior to the conclusion of the three year term if promotion to Senior Investigator/Scientist occurs.

Scientific Advisor Eligibility

The Scientific Advisor must have the expertise to offer specific scientific direction and insights to the new scientist/investigator (as opposed to general advice). At any given time, the Scientific Advisor will be cautious to only accept as many mentees as they feel they can meaningfully support (a minimum of two is thought to be appropriate).The Scientific Advisor can collaborate with the new scientist/investigator; however, the extent of collaboration with them must not interfere with the mentorship role. The Scientific Advisor cannot be a direct administrative supervisor (including VP Research).

Responsibilities

The scientist/investigator is expected to meet at least four times a year with their Scientific Advisor during the three years of the formal relationship. It is the scientist/investigator’s

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responsibility to initiate these quarterly meetings. Further meetings may be scheduled by either the Scientific Advisor or the scientist/investigator as needed.

The primary purpose of these regular meetings is to provide constructive guidance and feedback to the scientist/investigator. If difficulties arise in scheduling meetings with the Scientific Advisor, or if the meetings are not occurring, the VP Research may intervene to ensure that the meetings occur.

Prior to each meeting, the scientist/investigator will prepare a brief summary of their progress, including proposed future research aims. These will be discussed in detail during the meeting, and problems that are affecting research productivity may be discussed. The Scientific Advisor will assist the scientist/investigator in setting specific, measurable annual goals, against which their progress can be measured.

After each meeting it is suggested that the Scientific Advisor complete a brief written summary of the meeting indicating that the meeting has taken place and the critical topics and issues that were discussed. The summary should include specific concerns of the Scientific Advisor. The content of the discussion between the Scientific Advisor and the new scientist/investigator will remain confidential unless the Scientific Advisor has specific concerns that require the attention of the VP Research.

At the end of the three year term the Scientific Advisor, in consultation with the VP Research, will initiate and chair a formal review of the scientist/investigator, with an ad-hoc committee consisting of internal and external scientists, as appropriate, the VP Research and a Senior member of the Program and Services team. External referee reports may be requested at the discretion of the chair and VP Research to augment the review. This committee will review the progress and standing of the scientist/investigator’s research program. The committee will complete a thorough review of the scientist/investigator’s dossier and make recommendations to promote the development/maintenance of a successful research program. This feedback will inform the setting of overall research directions, annual goals (as per the annual performance appraisal process) and deliverables within a research program, and the identification of strategic career development opportunities.

The scientist/investigator is responsible for providing the Scientific Advisor with a complete dossier for review. The dossier will include the following:

- Cover letter addressing the development of the research program over the last three years, performance areas (listed in the annual performance appraisal) and the alignment of the research program with Holland Bloorview’s strategic plan.
- Current CV
- Up to three reprints/preprints reflecting the scientist/investigator’s most impactful research

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Evaluation

The Scientific Advisor and the scientist/investigator will report on their experience/progress annually to the BRI through a feedback questionnaire provided by the BRI Operations Office. At the conclusion of the 3 year term, prior to the scientist/investigator’s formal review, the scientist/investigator and the advisor will both provide written feedback on their experience in writing to the VP Research.

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Policy Lead	Issued Date
Nadia Lise Tanel	Jun 01, 2012
Committee Chair	Review Date
Julia Hanigsberg	Oct 03, 2017
Committee Member(s)	Review Date
Tom Chau	Oct 03, 2017
Authorizer	Review Date
Tom Chau	Oct 03, 2017
Authorizer's Signature	