



KIDS+ RESEARCH STRATEGY
2022-2024

INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH STRATEGY

Kids+ provides a range of specialist allied health therapy services for infants, children and young people with a range of neurodevelopmental conditions. Our focus is on supporting young people with disabilities (hereafter referred to as Kids+ participants) and their families live the life they want to live. We also provide training for allied health therapists, convene the bi-annual Changemakers Conference, and more recently, have started to build a program of research.

Our motivation in building a research program at Kids+ relates to our commitment to:

- Reflect on the supports we provide, and seek out the best, and most current, practices available to support young people with disabilities and their families
- Publish, in a variety of formats, and in systematic ways, ideas and stories that are meaningful to young people, their families, and the broader public
- Advocate for change in policies and practices that impact a young person's ability to participate fully in their family and community life, and to have the same choices, opportunities, and experiences as others
- Partner with young people and families so that the right information finds its way into practice
- Support knowledge translation into everyday practice
- Support the inclusion and participation for everyone in our community

Our vision is a world with more possibilities for young people with neurodevelopmental disabilities. Research and its translation into practice has a key role in supporting the changes required. A Senior Research Fellow was appointed in January 2022 to support the development of research at Kids+. This research strategy, a first for Kids+, outlines our approach to research for the three-year period 2022-2024.



Purpose

To support young people with neurodevelopmental disabilities and their families to live the life they want to live through excellence in research

Priority Areas



Foundation Principles



OUR PURPOSE

Our purpose is to support young people with neurodevelopmental disabilities and their families to live the life they want to live through excellence in research.

We believe in creating a world with more possibilities, where young people with neurodevelopmental disabilities and their families can participate in life the way they want to.

Research at Kids+ will directly benefit young people and their families in day-to-day life.

FOUNDATION PRINCIPLES

We are committed to three foundation principles that will underpin all research activities:

- **Participatory:** We will use participatory research approaches to partner with young people with neurodevelopmental disabilities and their families throughout our research to enhance our research processes.
- **Human rights:** Young people with neurodevelopmental disabilities have the right to lead the life they want to and to have their voice heard and respected. Our work will promote this right.
- **Integrated knowledge translation:** We will partner with knowledge users at all stages of the research process to ensure our research has impact. Knowledge users may be young people with neurodevelopmental disabilities, their families, Kids+ staff, health and other service providers, and/or the broader community who identify a problem and have the authority to implement our research recommendations.



PRIORITY AREAS

PRIORITY AREA 1: BUILD A RESEARCH AGENDA

Rationale

We will develop a research agenda and implement processes to allow us to lay the foundations of what will become a sustainable research program that is impactful and makes a meaningful difference to the day-to-day life of young people with neurodevelopmental disabilities and their families.

Objectives

- 1.1 Identify and determine priority areas for research.
- 1.2 Develop and implement a research governance framework.
- 1.3 Establish our approach to research including developing a process for participatory research.
- 1.4 Define expected research outputs and outcomes across years 1, 2, and 3.

PRIORITY AREA 2: BUILD RESEARCH CAPACITY AND CULTURE

Rationale

We will engage in a process of individual and organisational development of research abilities and skills. We require skilled community researchers (Kids+ participants and their families), staff, and students to conduct impactful research. We will start to develop the capacity for research and knowledge translation in our staff, research students and community researchers.



Objectives

- 2.1 Develop an organisational research culture:
 - 2.1.1 Encourage and support the development of research abilities and skills in individual staff members, including the Senior Research Fellow.
 - 2.1.2 Support Kids+ advisory groups, including the Deakin-Kids+ Advisory Group, Kids+ Research Advisory group, Kids+ participant Advisory Group and the Kids+ parents' Advisory group, to strengthen their ability to support and advance Kids+' research program.
 - 2.1.3 Identify Kids+ participants and family members who would like to become community researchers and encourage and support their development of research abilities and skills.

PRIORITY AREA 3: BUILD RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS

Rationale

Kids+ considers collaboration key to increasing the pace, scale, and impact of our research. Collaboration and building research partnerships is integral to achieving our mission.

Objectives

- 3.1 Develop a strategy for building strong partnerships with Kids+ participants and their families to promote robust engagement in our research.
- 3.2 Maximise the opportunities from co-location with Deakin University and develop and implement pathways for Faculty of Health researchers, and doctoral, masters and honours students, to undertake research in partnership with Kids+.
- 3.3 Build partnerships with research and clinical leaders in the field, to enable us to lead and/or collaborate on research projects meeting the priorities of Kids+ participants, families, and staff.
- 3.4 Secure additional funding when required to support and sustain research partnerships and collaborations.

MEASURING OUR SUCCESS

In one year, we will have:

- Developed and implemented a research governance framework.
- Mapped and designed a way in which to do meaningful participatory research with Kids+ participants, including young people with complex communication needs and/or cognitive disability, and their families.
- Developed a way for Kids+ participants and their families to be engaged in research.

In two years, we will have:

- Developed and implemented functioning pathways for Deakin University Faculty of Health students to undertake research in partnership with Kids+.
- Started conducting research within at least one identified priority area using participatory methods.

In three years, we will have:

- Enhanced the research culture at Kids+

