

## RISKS IN HUMAN RESEARCH

### What is Risk?

A risk is a potential for harm, discomfort or inconvenience (discussed below). It involves:

- the likelihood that a harm (or discomfort or inconvenience) will occur; and
- the severity of the harm, including its consequences

### Assessment of Risk

Assessment of risks involves:

- Identifying any risks;
- Gauging their probability and severity;
- Assessing the extent to which they can be minimised;
- Determining whether they are justified by the potential benefits of the research; and
- Determining how they can be managed.

Please note that risks involve not only risks associated with physical harms, but also other types of harms.

For a discussion of identifying, categorising and managing risks, please refer to Chapter 2.1 of the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)* available from <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/files/e72-jul09.pdf>