

School for Public Health Research

ADVISORY BOARD MEETING NOTES, 14th JUNE 2013

**BAKERLOO ROOM, SKILLS FOR CARE, 4th FLOOR, LYNTON HOUSE
7 – 12 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, WC1H 9LT**

In attendance:

Sally Macintyre (SM) (Chair)	Cecily Kelleher (CK)	Paula Grey (PG)
Yvonne Doyle (YD)	John Frank (JF)	Catherine Law (CL)
David Pye (DP)	Jon Nicholl (JN) (Director)	Jennifer Bostock (JB)
Oliver Coles (OC)	Catherine Porter (CP) (notes)	

Apologies:

Catherine Doran (CD)	Johan Mackenbach (JM)	Jennie Popay (JP)
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1. Welcome and introductions	Action / Timeframe
SM welcomed members to the meeting. Introductions were made and apologies noted.	
The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 9 th October 2012, were accepted as a true record of the proceedings.	
2. Director's updates	
<p>i) General developments / issues JN reported on the following developments:</p> <p><u>Methods of working</u> The School is governed by the Executive Group (EG) with overall responsibility for SPHR activities. It is the School's major, collective decision-making body and is made up of one representative of each member of the School, each of whom has one vote.</p> <p>The EG delegates responsibility for the day-to-day running of the School to a Management Group (MG). The Group is made up of the School Director (JN), Deputy Director (JP), Prof Mark Petticrew from LSHTM and the Administrator (CP) and works well together.</p> <p><u>Project progress reporting</u> Lead investigators on all SPHR funded projects are required to submit six-monthly interim reports which document progress against objectives and identify any changes to the research plan. Reports are reviewed on a regular basis by the MG. This system is working effectively. Most projects are progressing well and any minor issues have been resolved with the investigators concerned.</p> <p>Three projects will complete during 2013 and lead investigators are required to write a final summary report which is submitted to the Director within two</p>	

<p>months of the project's end date.</p> <p>The Board discussed the need for an additional full report to include findings and methodology.</p> <p>Members agreed the School should trial the proposed final report format and urged JN to consider the proportionality of the final report requirements in relation to the cost of each project. It was suggested that JN consider the quality assessment tool used by the Cabinet Office for the What Works Centres.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ascertain details of quality assessment tool used by What Works Centres <p><u>Finance</u></p> <p>JN reported that it had taken some time for spending to get underway. Actual expenditure in Year 1 had been lower than forecasted. JN noted Department of Health's (DH) flexibility in allowing School members to re-profile underspend to subsequent years and expected the same flexibility this year. The Board encouraged re-profiling to take into account the expectation to spend from the outset and potential delays to projects. It was agreed it would be beneficial to ask DH for written confirmation of a continuing re-profiling facility.</p> <p>JN explained the School's financial reporting systems. Lead investigators complete a project costing template in order to obtain internal approval for their project. School members are required to submit a quarterly financial return to the Director, reporting on actual and predicted expenditure across SPHR activities. The School's annual financial report is sent directly to NIHR by JN.</p>	<p>JN</p>
<p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Request written confirmation of re-profiling from DH <p><u>Studentships</u></p> <p>NIHR agreed to allow SPHR to fund studentships, including a stipend and fees. One studentship started in 2012/13 with a further eleven planned this year, which represents a significant commitment and formed an important part of the School's activities.</p> <p><u>Website</u></p> <p>The School's website has launched at sphr.nihr.ac.uk JN invited Board members' comments and suggestions on navigability and accessibility.</p> <p><u>Annual Scientific Meeting</u></p> <p>The 2013 Meeting (conference format) will take place on 8th October at UCL's Institute of Child Health, with a drinks reception on the evening of 7th October at The Kings Fund. The Board discussed the content and format of the conference programme circulated prior to the meeting. The following suggestions were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ include a session led by practitioners in the evaluating complex interventions section ▪ include NICE with Public Health England (PHE) ▪ allow more time for project presentations ▪ reschedule PPI session in the middle of the programme ▪ cover researcher <i>and</i> public perspectives on PPI ▪ link coverage of PPI to specific project presentations ▪ feature the School's commitment to studentships 	<p>JN / asap</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ repeat the poster session included in last year's event <p>The Board welcomed a debate during the afternoon session and considered the ethical issues of using financial incentives to encourage behaviour change as a potential topic.</p>	
<p>ii) Research Programmes JN reported on the development and progress of the School's research programmes.</p> <p><u>Phase 1 (initial) projects</u> JN drew the Board's attention to progress reported in Section 5 of the School's Annual Report, circulated prior to the meeting. Twelve projects were initiated during the 2012-13 and were grouped into four themes. Results from three of these projects will emerge during 2013-14.</p> <p>The Board advised JN to consider how SPHR has enabled its experts to collaborate in new ways, when framing the School's unique selling point.</p> <p><u>School-wide programmes</u> At the last meeting, the Board endorsed finding a mechanism by which SPHR members could pursue research on School-wide topics. Subsequently, three programmes were developed and full proposals submitted to JN in May 2013. The overall programme proposals were sent to Board members for internal formative review to identify improvements. JN thanked Board members for their comments. Component projects within the programme are currently undergoing external scientific review, as SPHR EG members had agreed to seek external advice before approving spend on the programmes.</p> <p>Board members were pleased that the School had taken its strategic advice to develop School-wide programmes. All three demonstrate different approaches and styles whilst encompassing the wider determinants of health. JN noted he had encouraged synthesis and coherence throughout each programme. The Board confirmed it was happy to endorse the programmes.</p>	
<p>iii) Management and Governance The Board discussed the process for School members to agree spend on activities when all or most of the members are involved. The following governance was agreed:</p> <p><u>Approving spend on School-wide Programmes</u> JN will discuss Advisory Board comments and researcher responses with SM. JN to summarise the Board's advice and comments at EG meeting on 18th July. The key message to members should be to proceed with the research programmes using funds already received from NIHR.</p> <p><u>Approving spend on School-wide component projects</u> JN proposed that SPHR members not involved in an individual project could help decide how to proceed at the EG meeting in July. The Board strongly advised that only JN was sufficiently independent to communicate advice and comments about how to proceed, given he had not had direct involvement in the development of any of the programmes or their component projects.</p> <p>After lengthy discussion, the Board agreed that SPHR researchers should communicate their responses to external reviewer comments to JN, who will identify any conditions which need to be met before approval can be granted. If necessary, JN will also identify any critical issues which prevent a decision</p>	

<p>being taken at the EG meeting. If critical issues are identified, the Board instructed JN to seek its advice and report the actions required to researchers. The School would then convene an emergency EG meeting or teleconference in September to obtain approval of any outstanding projects.</p> <p>In addition, Board members agreed that researchers be required to check with the main research funders for any overlap and explain actions taken if any identified. If a project receives negative feedback from an external reviewer, the Board agreed that JN could seek their advice.</p> <p>In light of this discussion, Board members endorsed the above governance procedures for School-wide programmes and their component projects as sufficiently robust.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Confirm time / date for SM and JN to discuss programme comments and researcher responses ➤ Co-ordinate governance for approval of School-wide programmes 	<p>CP</p> <p>JN / CP / 18th Jul</p>
<p>iv) Engage with SPHR</p> <p>JN reported on aspects of SPHR’s engagement strategy, currently being developed by JP. This focuses primarily on local engagement and in particular on how the School should engage with public health commissioners and practitioners working in local public health systems in any sector, with members of the public and with the wider academic public health community.</p> <p><u>Public Health Practice Evaluation Scheme (PHPES)</u></p> <p>PHPES launched in early June. The scheme is practitioner initiated and designed for those working in public health practice, introducing well found initiatives, to obtain a rigorous evaluation. SPHR will help design the evaluation, to be conducted in partnership with practitioners. JN noted NIHR’s and CMO’s enthusiasm for the scheme.</p> <p>The scheme has been advertised on the SPHR website. Applicants complete an application form and are asked to seek the advice of researchers (their local SPHR member or other) prior to submitting an application. Members of SPHR’s Public Health Practitioner and Public Reference Panels will comment on the prioritisation of applications and review proposals. The window for applications is time-limited for the first round to help gauge interest and manage demand.</p> <p>JN confirmed that SPHR would welcome suggestions from members of the public if discussed with, and recommended by, their local authority public health team. It was agreed that SPHR would discuss public engagement with other parts of the NIHR.</p> <p><u>Evaluation Guide</u></p> <p>SPHR members recognised that PHPES has limited capacity so the EG has agreed to develop an evaluation guide for public health practitioners. This will be a legacy project for the School. Discussions are underway with practice colleagues in some areas and initial feedback has been enthusiastic.</p> <p><u>Other engagement activities</u></p> <p>JN confirmed that all SPHR-funded projects incorporate public involvement. SPHR is also establishing Public Health Practitioner and Public Reference Panels who will review and comment on the School’s research activities.</p>	

<p>The Board noted the increased focus on public involvement in co-design of research in addition to co-production.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Explore public engagement activities undertaken by other NIHR programmes. 	<p>JN / CP</p>
<p>3. Annual Report</p>	
<p><u>Review and comments</u></p> <p>The Board reviewed the School's narrative Annual Report (circulated prior to the meeting) and JN invited comments. JN highlighted emerging links with Public Health England and noted that the School has funded (either entirely or in part) 140 researchers during its first year.</p> <p>The Board agreed the report was excellent.</p>	
<p>4. Finance</p>	
<p><u>Budgets</u></p> <p>JN presented the School's actual / forecasted expenditure against the planned budget across the 5-year programme. Actual / forecasted expenditure was progressing as planned with the exception of practitioner engagement activities. JN reported that expenditure against commitment for the PHPES scheme was difficult to estimate at the current time, given PHPES was launched only recently.</p>	
<p>5. SPHR strategy and forward look</p>	
<p><u>Collegiality / buy-in</u></p> <p>JN raised the issue of how to ensure collegiality across the School, given SPHR's remit to establish an institution 'greater than the sum of its parts'.</p> <p>The Board noted that the School's structure was an unusual model and Board members expressed their support for the progress achieved so far. It was agreed that collegiality should remain a standing item on future Board meeting agendas.</p> <p>JN suggested it would be a good idea to capture collaborations between members (outside SPHR funding) which occurred as a result of SPHR membership.</p> <p><u>Communications</u></p> <p>JN confirmed that a Communications Strategy was in development and would be circulated to Board members for comment.</p> <p>JN is also developing a set of PowerPoint slides outlining the School's key messages and a leaflet about the School's research, for dissemination at events.</p> <p>The Board considered the relative merits and potential drawbacks of a SPHR Twitter account and advised JN to check if Tweets are classed as outputs by NIHR. SPHR should be mindful of the voice it wants to project if considering a Facebook profile. This could potentially be split into programmes / topic areas.</p> <p>JF circulated copies of the newsletter published by SCPHRP, for information.</p>	
<p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop a SPHR Communications Strategy and circulate to Board members for comment 	<p>JN / CP</p>

➤ Confirm if Tweets are classed as an output by NIHR	CP
6. A.O.B	
The Board discussed its member's potential involvement in steering groups for SPHR's School-wide programmes or larger projects. It was agreed this would not be appropriate, in order to maintain impartiality. It was suggested that public members of the Board could participate in steering groups for all three School-wide programmes (as an observer) as part of their induction. This would enable them to remain connected with SPHR activities on a regular basis and develop their knowledge of wider public health issues.	
It was agreed that CP would compile a single set of minutes for publication on SPHR's website. Comments made during the meeting would not be attributed to individuals.	
The Board agreed to reinforce its local authority representation and agreed to invite Martin Reeves (Chief Executive at Coventry City Council). Actions: ➤ Invite Martin Reeves to join the Advisory Board	JN
7. Next meeting - date / venue	
It was agreed that the next meeting would be held in London during the first half of June 2014. If interim discussions are necessary, these will be held by teleconference. Actions: ➤ Contact AB Board members' PA's to agree dates of future meetings	CP