**National Institute for Health and Care Excellence**

Senior Management Team

# Minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2019

## Present

Andrew Dillon Chief Executive

Ben Bennett Director – Business Planning and Resources

Meindert Boysen Director – Centre for Health Technology Evaluation

Paul Chrisp Director – Centre for Guidelines

Jane Gizbert Director – Communications

Gill Leng Director – Health and Social Care

Alexia Tonnel Director – Evidence Resources (item 7.1 onwards)

## In attendance

David Coombs Associate Director – Corporate Office (minutes)

Chris Carson Programme Director – Centre for Guidelines (item 7.4)

Lori Farrar Senior Manager, Horizon Scanning, Topic Selection and Scoping – Centre for Health Technology Evaluation (item 7.2)

James Kirk Head of Software Engineering – Digital Services (item 7.3)

Lorna Scoular Senior HR Business Partner (item 7.1)

## Apologies (item 1)

1. None.

## Freedom of Information and publication scheme (item 2)

1. The final minutes will be made available on the NICE website subject to the redaction of any exempt material.

## Declarations of interest (item 3)

1. The previously declared interests were noted. There were no conflicts of interest relevant to the meeting.

## Notes of the previous meeting (item 4)

1. The minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

## Matters arising (item 5)

1. The actions from the meeting held on 12 November 2019 were noted as complete or in hand.

## November Board meetings (item 6)

1. SMT noted the agenda, papers and arrangements for the Board meetings on 20 November.
2. SMT discussed the Board paper on the changes made by the abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) guideline committee in response to the Board’s feedback on the previously proposed recommendations on endovascular repair (EVAR) and open surgical repair (OSR). SMT noted the revised wording and discussed whether this now provides sufficient flexibility for clinicians to select EVAR where appropriate, given the continued use of the language ‘do not offer’. In addition, SMT noted that the Board will also need to consider whether the revised recommendations sufficiently take account of the context for implementing the guideline and that EVAR is currently more commonly used than OSR.

## Buying of additional holidays (item 7.1)

1. Lorna Scoular presented the paper that provided an update on last year’s pilot to allow staff to purchase up to 5 days additional annual leave, and asked SMT to consider making this a permanent staff benefit.
2. SMT noted the positive response to the pilot and that the HR and payroll teams are happy to provide the required administrative support. It was therefore agreed to implement this facility as an ongoing staff benefit, which should be noted in the time off work policy. It was agreed that SMT should receive a further update on the implementation of this staff benefit in 12 months.

ACTION: LS/GM

## CHTE topic selection re-consideration of Mexiletine for treating myotonia in adults with non-dystrophic myotonic disorders (item 7.2)

1. Meindert Boysen presented the paper that outlined the outcome of the re-consideration of the routing decision for mexiletine for treating myotonia in adults with non-dystrophic myotonic disorders. He sought SMT’s approval for a final routing decision to the technology appraisal programme in line with SMT’s agreed role in reviewing the outcome of topic selection reconsideration requests.
2. SMT reviewed the topic selection panel’s evaluation against the highly specialised technologies (HST) criteria and agreed that mexiletine for treating myotonia in adults with non-dystrophic myotonic disorders should be routed to the technology appraisal programme. It was agreed that prior to publication, the checklist should be reviewed to ensure the references to the condition’s impact are consistent throughout.

ACTION: MB

## Digital services recruitment and retention scheme (item 7.3)

1. Alexia Tonnel presented the update on the use of the recruitment and retention (R&R) premia for Digital Services developer staff. The scheme was first introduced in 2014 on the basis that it would be an ongoing benefit, but reviewed every two years. The latest review has now taken place, with input from HR and finance colleagues. SMT is asked to confirm the scheme’s continuation given its positive impact on retention and recruitment.
2. SMT agreed the R&R scheme for developers in Digital Services should continue, with a further review in two years.

ACTION: AT

## Depression in adults: treatment and management guideline update (item 7.4)

1. Chris Carson presented the paper that outlined the current position with the work to update NICE’s guideline on depression in adults and presented two options for responding to the concerns raised by a coalition of stakeholders.
2. SMT noted the financial resources incurred on the guideline update since this work began in 2015, and queried whether either option in the paper would fully address the concerns, particularly if the recommendations remain in line with the version previously submitted to public consultation. Chris Carson stated that undertaking the extensive work proposed in option 2 would ensure the guideline recommendations can be robustly defended, and bring the guideline in line with improvements made to the guideline structure and format since the update began.
3. SMT therefore supported option 2 in the paper. It was agreed that the coalition of stakeholders should be informed of the agreed actions after the general election purdah period. This communication should highlight the extent of the additional action exceptionally agreed for this guideline and note this will be the final set of work on the update. Andrew Dillon asked that a response is drafted for him to send to any of the 50 MPs who signed the letter to NICE on this issue in September and are re-elected in December.

ACTION: CC/PC

## EU exit (item 8)

1. Meindert Boysen noted that planning for EU exit is on hold following the extension of the article 50 period. A list of topics in the TA and HST process at 31 January 2020 will be developed, given the potential impact of a ‘no-deal’ exit on the medicines regulatory process.

## NICE Connect project (item 9)

1. Gill Leng noted that work is underway on the governance structure for NICE Connect, including considering how the expert groups will work together.
2. Alexia Tonnel fed back from a recent meeting with Matthew Gould, Chief Executive of NHSX, and highlighted that Andrew Dillon will be invited to a workshop for ALB Chief Executives in January about artificial intelligence and algorithms. Andrew asked that SMT colleagues let him know of any issues they would like him to raise at this workshop and/or a 1:1 meeting he has with Matthew in December.

ACTION: SMT

## London office move (item 10)

1. Ben Bennett noted that a new project manager has been appointed to start on Monday, and assured SMT that planning remains on track. Alexia Tonnel updated SMT on the planning for the deployment of laptops to all NICE staff in the London office, and the current proposed specifications for these.

## Chair and Chief Executive appointments (item 11)

1. David Coombs was asked to confirm if SMT members are still due to meet the short-listed candidates for the Chief Executive role on 17 January.

ACTION: DC

## Weekly staff SMT updates (item 12)

1. SMT agreed the staff updates.

ACTION: DC

## Other business (item 13)

1. Alexia Tonnel noted that currently SMT members have read/write access to shared drives outside of their own centre/directorate. She proposed amending this to read-only access to provide additional safeguards against a virus attack. SMT supported this proposal, subject to ensuring directors have full access to a location for saving work on NICE Connect that requires collaboration across centres and directorates.

ACTION: AT