**National Institute for Health and Care Excellence**

Executive Team

# Minutes of the meeting held on 6 July 2021

## Present

Gill Leng Chief Executive (chair for items 4.2 – 9)

Meindert Boysen Director, Centre for Health Technology Evaluation and Deputy Chief Executive (chair for items 1 – 4.1)

Paul Chrisp Director, Centre for Guidelines

Felix Greaves Director, Science, Evidence and Analytics

Judith Richardson Acting Director, Health & Social Care

Alexia Tonnel Director, Digital, Information and Technology

## In attendance

Boryana Stambolova Deputy Director, Finance, Strategy and Commercial

Danielle Mason Associate Director, Brand and Marketing

Rebecca Threlfall Chief of Staff

Elaine Repton Corporate Governance and Risk Manager (minutes)

Jenniffer Prescott Programme Director, Planning and Operations (items 4.2 and 6.2)

Jeanette Kusel Director, NICE Scientific Advice (item 5.1)

Carole Longson Life Sciences Adviser (item 5.2)

Nick Baillie Associate Director, Health and Social Care (items 5.2)

Moya Alcock Acting Programme Director, Health and Social Care (items 5.2 and 5.3)

Deborah Collis Associate Director, System Engagement (item 5.3)

Anne Weist Education Manager, Health and Social Care (item 5.3)

David Coombs Associate Director, Corporate Office (item 5.4)

Helen Knight Programme Director, Technical Appraisals and HST (item 6.2)

## Apologies (item 1)

1. Apologies were received from Gill Leng for the first 30 minutes of the meeting during which Meindert Boysen was chair. Apologies were also received from Jennifer Howells and Jane Gizbert, who were represented by Boryana Stambolova and Danielle Mason, respectively.

## Declarations of interest (item 2)

1. The previously declared interests were noted.

## Notes of the previous meeting (item 3.1)

1. The minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

## Matters arising (item 3.2)

1. The actions from the meeting held on 30 June 2021 were noted as complete or in hand.
2. Rebecca Threlfall advised that she is liaising with Eric Power and Fiona Glen regarding NICE’s potential involvement in the COVID-19 public inquiry. David Wright, the DHSC sponsor team lead, has been asked to share the inquiry Terms of Reference and confirm whether NICE is to be invited. It was agreed that planning for the inquiry should continue even if NICE is not formally invited to give evidence, as the process of going through a lessons learned review will be a useful exercise. Rebecca agreed to bring a next steps paper to the gold group meeting on 19 July 2021.

ACTION: RT

1. It was noted that members of the gold group and CRG have been asked to reflect on which aspects of their work should be retained in preparation for a discussion at the final meeting of the gold group on 19 July, when the group will consider an appropriate replacement forum for operational issues which do not require submission to ET. David Coombs has been asked to join the meeting, to give an update on the governance review.
2. The actions from the ET retreat on 29 June will be included on next week’s ET agenda.

**ACTION: RT**

1. Following the discussion at Publication Executive regarding different NICE programmes using different prices for the same technology, it was agreed that a further discussion was needed at a separate meeting involving Meindert Boysen, Judith Richardson, Alexia Tonnel, Elaine Cartwright and a rep from Comms.

**ACTION: MB**

## Hot topics (item 4.1)

1. **ET and senior leader’s retreat** - Rebecca Threlfall shared a draft agenda for the ET and senior leader’s retreat on 14 July and sought feedback on the proposed format for the session and the discussion topics. It was noted that SCW will facilitate the sessions.
2. ET were supportive of the proposals and agreed that Rebecca would finalise the agenda and arrangements with Gill Leng before circulating details to the invitees.

**ACTION: RT**

1. **All staff event** – ET noted that the Kimpton Clocktower Hotel, Oxford Road, Manchester has provisionally been reserved as the venue for the NICE all staff event in September, subject to final agreement of the costs. The proposed theme was “Refuel”. Some ET members had reservations about the ‘motor car’ analogy and suggested testing the proposed theme with different teams beforehand to assess staff responses.

**ACTION: RT**

1. **Health Tech Partners meeting** – Gill Leng gave an update from the discussions at the HTP meeting she attended which could potentially lead to a programme of work for NICE looking at digital health technologies. It was agreed that Gill, Felix Greaves and Meindert Boysen would meet separately to discuss this further.

**ACTION: GL/MB/FG**

1. It was noted that the papers for the meeting would be of interest to other ET members and also to the Board. Meindert agreed to share the meeting pack and Rebecca Threlfall was asked to work with Gill to include some items in her CEO report to the July Board.

**ACTION: MB & RT**

1. On the issue of external meeting packs, it was agreed that it would be helpful to have a process for sharing key meeting packs eg the AAC board papers and others. Rebecca Threlfall was asked to work with ET members to agree which of their external meeting packs would be helpful to share and how this would be managed.

**ACTION: RT**

## TA capacity planning update (item 4.2)

1. Jenniffer Prescott gave an update on some interim solutions agreed to address the capacity challenges within the TA and HST programmes, notably the use of a fast track technology appraisal which involved a lighter touch evidence review by a small group of committee members. ET discussed the use of fast track appraisals (FTA lite), the potential risks and communication to companies and wider stakeholders. Jenniffer advised that an FTA lite was currently being piloted on two low risk appraisals for cost comparators, with the full support of the company involved. The ABPI has also been notified of the shorter appraisal, but ET was concerned that communication to date has been limited and requested that further communication of the FTA should take place.

**ACTION: JP**

1. ET was supportive of the FTA lite pilot which they recognised as a new approach to utilising committees in a more proportionate way, with the caveat that communications to the system must emphasise that any FTA lite recommendations are ratified by the full, independent TA committee.

## Critical Needs Access Pathway (CNAP) (item 5.1)

1. ET was advised of the new Critical Needs Access Pathway (CNAP), which is a joint project between MHRA and NICE to offer a co-ordinated and early access route for innovative medical technologies and digital devices that meet a critical need in the NHS. The pathway will allow manufacturers to provide their innovative device to healthcare professionals and patients at the earliest, yet safe, opportunity. It will be piloted with digital health technologies and need to be docked into the reimbursement pathways being developed. It will be funded by NHSX and will provide an additional income to NICE of £255,450 to fund a band 8b post plus additional support.
2. ET considered the implications of the project for NICE, and the need for the CNAP to integrate with existing pathways which will add to an already complex picture. It was queried whether it would be better linked to the new Accelerated Transitional Adoption Scheme (ATAS). Jeanette Kusel was asked to include a process flowchart in the report to clearly explain the routes for medicines and for digital/medical technologies.

**ACTION: JK**

1. It was agreed that assessing the unmet clinical need will require the input of the National Clinical Directors, and that NICE will need to be co-ordinated across all its programmes to be effective in its support to companies. Topic selection and understanding what has contingent approval will be crucial. Meindert Boysen noted that Sarah Byron is looking specifically at contingent approvals and will come back to ET with a paper in the near future.

**ACTION: MB/SB**

## Autumn ‘external input’ events (item 5.2)

1. Rebecca Threlfall and Carole Longson sought ET’s reflections on draft outlines and potential invite lists for the two ‘round table-like’ sessions, one focussed on life sciences horizon scanning, and the second the clinical environment, agreed to be held in autumn 2021 to seek strategic external input and expertise on an ongoing basis.
2. Clinical health care event (30 September) – varying views were expressed about the key topic in order to maximise the contributions from the invitees. The options considered were - how NICE can help the NHS to recover from COVID; how NICE can support Integrated Care Systems, and how NICE can help to address health inequalities. It was agreed to finalise the topic outside of the meeting.

**ACTION: GL/CL/RT**

1. In terms of the invitee list, it was agreed to include one or two patient representatives, probably National Voices, plus NHS Providers, NHS Confederation or NHS Clinical Commissioners. It was agreed that Rebecca Threlfall would draft a letter for the CEOs of the organisations to ask for their nominated rep, and to finalise an invite list of approx. 30 people, based on ET’s suggestions. The event will be a 90 minute session, held virtually.

**ACTION: RT**

1. Life sciences event (7 October) – this is planned to be a smaller event for around 14 people to focus on Integrated Care Systems and innovation. It was agreed to include NHS Digital and the AAC. Rebecca Threlfall was asked to finalise the topic and the invitee list with Gill Leng and Carole Longson and write out to the organisations. It was agreed to progress a separate event looking at the pipeline of new technologies.

ACTION: RT

## NICE Student champions scheme (item 5.3)

1. Deborah Collis and Anne Weist joined the meeting to request ET approval to close the NICE student champion programme as its original purpose is not aligned to the new 5-year strategy, and there are other ways to support undergraduate clinical education which are able to reach more students through digital platforms which will also be less resource intensive for NICE.
2. ET expressed thanks to Anne Weist for her immense contribution to the scheme over the last 10 years and asked that Anne shares her thoughts on how NICE can retain its link with the educational establishments in the future to maintain the legacy of the scheme.

ACTION: JR/AW

## Integrated performance report (item 5.4)

1. ET reviewed the proposed integrated performance report for public board meetings, which has been refined following feedback from non-executive directors. It was noted that further executive summary text was required, including where additional explanation will assist the NED’s understanding – eg on commercial briefings. Pages 7 – 16 of the report will not be included in the version presented to the board but the indicators will still be measured for NICE’s purposes and for discussion with the DHSC. It was expected that the report will develop overtime, with further refinements as and when requested by the board.
2. Boryana Stambolova was asked to make some minor amendments to the report for the July public board meeting – the staff turnover and vacancy rate arrows to indicate an upward trend; take out the cost improvement target and agree the TA/HST income budget and target with Meindert Boysen.

ACTION: BS

## MHRA and NICE board to board meeting (item 6.1)

1. This paper was deferred until next week.

## CHTE methods and process review (item 6.2)

1. ET reviewed a draft paper for the July public board on the progress of the CHTE methods and process review. A fuller paper will come to ET next week for a discussion at the private board session.
2. The paper for the public board proposed a second consultation from 11 August to 6 October. ET noted that the consultation period has been extended from 6 to 8 weeks to allow participants to fully engage with the broad range of proposals, and to seek the board’s approval to publish the final manual in January 2022 rather than December 2021 (Q3), as stated in the business plan.
3. Meindert Boysen was requested to make some minor amendments to the paper ahead of the July public board meeting, to include reference to the UK Life Sciences Vision, and a note to state that the final manual will require HM Treasury approval in the paper for the morning session.

**ACTION: MB**

## Gold group (item 7)

1. ET noted the actions agreed at the meeting on 5 July.

## Review of the meeting (item 8)

1. ET reviewed the meeting and commented that the papers were interesting and relevant but too many to get through, with one paper having to be deferred to next week.

## Other business (item 9)

1. **COVID-19: Government easing of restrictions** – In light of the announcement on 5 July that the Government plans to lift all social distancing restrictions on 19 July, ET considered what changes will need to be made to the offices and how to communicate this to staff. Gill Leng agreed to speak with Michelle Rowlands and to advise staff via her daily messages, that ET was considering the latest guidance and will keep staff informed of the changes as the position develops in the coming weeks. It was agreed to include this as a hot topic on next week’s agenda.

**ACTION: GL/ER**