

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE

Senior Management Team

Minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2017

Present

Andrew Dillon	Chief Executive
Mark Baker	Director – Centre for Guidelines
Ben Bennett	Director – Business Planning and Resources
Jane Gizbert	Director – Communications
Carole Longson	Director – Centre for Health Technology Evaluation
Alexia Tonnel	Director – Evidence Resources

In attendance

David Coombs	Associate Director – Corporate Office (minutes)
Paul Chrisp	Programme Director – Health and Social Care directorate (Deputy Health and Social Care Director)
Mirella Marlow	Programme Director – Centre for Health Technology Evaluation (item 6.2)

Apologies (item 1)

1. Apologies were received from Gill Leng who was represented by Paul Chrisp.

Freedom of Information and publication scheme (item 2)

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

Notes of the previous meeting (item 3)

3. The minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2017 were approved.

Matters arising (item 4)

4. The meeting reviewed the actions from the meeting held on 14 February 2017 and noted that all actions were complete or in hand.

Consultation on changes to the Technology Appraisal (TA) and Highly Specialised Technologies (HST) programmes (item 6.3)

5. Andrew Dillon briefed SMT on his recent discussions with NHS England on the next steps following the consultation, in particular on the matters discussed at last week's SMT and Board Strategy meetings. The NHS England Specialised Services Commissioning sub-committee will now consider the next steps on 22 February, followed by the NICE Board on 15 March. Next week's SMT meeting will review the draft paper to the NICE Board.

NICE Scientific Advice award (item 6.4)

6. SMT considered further the proposal for NICE Scientific Advice to launch a competition for life science start-ups, small and medium sized enterprises and academic groups developing new healthcare technologies, following the initial discussion of the proposal at last week's SMT meeting.

7. Andrew Dillon noted the need to consider three issues in particular: any reputational risks arising from the award; whether the proposal represents the most effective use of resources to promote NICE Scientific Advice; and whether the proposal complies with the regulations around managing public money.
8. In relation to the reputational risk, it was noted that the award seeks to promote the Scientific Advice service, which is separate to NICE guidance programmes. Matters of reputational risk and the appropriateness of offering a consultancy service were considered when establishing the NICE Scientific Advice service. Therefore, SMT agreed the additional reputational risks were minimal. SMT then considered whether alternative options could be utilised to promote NICE Scientific Advice more effectively. Carole Longson confirmed competitions of this type have been positively received in this sector, and she felt this proposal would be effective.
9. SMT then considered the risks around whether the proposal complies with HM Treasury requirements on managing public money. Ben Bennett asked about the direct marginal cost of providing the advice products that will be awarded, indicating the need for care in managing the risk of cross-subsidization. Carole Longson stated that she did not believe the prizes would displace fee-paying advice products, as the time spent delivering the advice products to the winning applicants would otherwise be spent on business development activities. She stated that the combined direct cost of the two advice products is approximately £16k. Ben Bennett noted this is likely, in any case, be viewed as 'trivial', in audit terms, when set against the overall income for NICE Scientific Advice.
10. Jane Gizbert highlighted the capacity challenges facing the communications team and asked about the expected level of support from the communications team for publicising the award. Carole Longson confirmed that the NICE Scientific Advice team will undertake the activities to promote the award. Andrew Dillon highlighted the proposal at last week's meeting to promote the award at NHS England's Expo event.
11. In response to a query from Mark Baker, Carole Longson confirmed that NICE would retain the right to not allocate the award if no bids of sufficient quality are received.
12. SMT agreed to run the awards for a one year trial. There should be appropriate measures to evaluate the impact of the awards in raising awareness of NICE Scientific Advice amongst the target audience. The accompanying material to publicise the awards should reiterate that the advice to the award winners does not guarantee approval by NICE in any future evaluation in the relevant guidance programme.

ACTION: CL

Finance and resources report (item 6.1)

13. Ben Bennett presented the report outlining the financial position as at 31 January 2017, and the forecast outturn for 2016-17. He highlighted the information in the report on recent resourcing issues, including the reporting on pay differentials between male and female staff. Ben noted the summary analysis of expenditure on mobile phone contracts for staff and stated that further detail will be provided in the upcoming directorate budget reports. He asked Directors to review this information when circulated, in order to ensure usage is appropriate.

14. SMT discussed the information on pay by gender, noting the mean pay per hour for male and female staff. It was agreed further analysis is required to understand the basis for this differential, including consideration of whether it arises from the balance of male and female in each pay band. Reporting of the gender pay difference at each pay band would therefore be helpful. Ben Bennett noted that the Department of Health is providing further information and support on meeting the reporting obligations.
15. SMT noted the position of the holding account for funding non-business events. Alexia Tonnel stated that it may be necessary to review the allocation of speaking fees, if these significantly increase following initiatives to promote income generation activities.
16. SMT noted the report.

MedTechScan development (item 6.2)

17. Mirella Marlow presented the update on the proposal for NICE to develop a comprehensive horizon scanning system for medical technologies. The proposed system – MedTechScan – would offer NICE, NHS England and other organisations a single national, systematic approach to receiving timely information about emerging medical technologies in development via a secure shared database. It would have similar design and functionality as UK PharmaScan, developed by NICE for the identification and tracking of medicines.
18. Mirella highlighted that the proposal aligns with NHS England's business plan, commitments under the Five Year Forward View, and recent recommendations of the Accelerated Access Review. NHS England have indicated potential funding to 'pump prime' the development of the database in 2017-18 and 2018-19. However, this will not cover the full costs NICE is likely to incur during this period, which include IT costs and those arising from the Centre for Health Technology Evaluation administering the database. The longer-term funding for the database from 2019-20 onwards is currently unclear.
19. SMT noted the potential benefits of the proposed database and the links to national policy initiatives. It was agreed however that given the challenging financial environment, greater clarity is required on the long-term funding for the database. The issue should be discussed further with the Office of Life Sciences and other key stakeholders. Following which, SMT could then consider whether to proceed with any further activity to develop the database.

ACTION: MM / CL

Board meetings (item 5)

20. SMT reviewed the actions arising from the February Board Strategy meeting, noting these are in hand.
21. SMT agreed the agenda items for the March Board meeting. Subject to agreement with David Haslam, the morning session would include an oral item to consider the action required in response to the recommendation in the Board effectiveness review on Board behaviours.

ACTION: AD

22. Andrew Dillon noted that due to another meeting commitment, he is not due to arrive in Durham until approximately 1.30pm. Gill Leng will deputise at the morning session and the public question time. The public meeting will revert to an advertised start time of 1.45pm.

ACTION: DC

Strategy (item 7)

23. None.

Weekly staff SMT updates (item 8)

24. SMT agreed the staff updates.

ACTION: DC

Any other business (item 9)

25. None.

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