**NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE**

Public Board Meeting – meeting as the Board Committee   
held on 18 November 2020 via Zoom

These notes are a summary record of the main points discussed at the meeting and the decisions made. They are not intended to provide a verbatim record of the Board’s discussion. The agenda and the full documents considered are available in accordance with the NICE Publication Scheme.

# Board members present

Sharmila Nebhrajani Chairman

Dame Elaine Inglesby-Burke Non-Executive Director

Professor Tim Irish Non-Executive Director

Dr Rima Makarem Non-Executive Director

Tom Wright Non-Executive Director

Professor Gillian Leng Chief Executive

Meindert Boysen Centre for Health Technology Evaluation Director

Dr Paul Chrisp Centre for Guidelines Director

Alexia Tonnel Digital, Information and Technology Director

# Directors in attendance

Jane Gizbert Communications Director

Dr Felix Greaves Science, Evidence and Analytics Director

# In attendance

Sarah Acton Senior HR Business Partner (item 20/108)

Hilary Baker Acting Transformation Programme Director and Deputy Finance, Strategy and Transformation Director

David Coombs Associate Director – Corporate Office (minutes)

Nick Crabb Programme Director – Scientific Affairs (item 20/107)

Martin Davison Acting Associate Director – Finance (item 20/103)

Fiona Glen Programme Director – Centre for Guidelines (item 20/108)

Dr Kevin Harris Senior Responsible Officer for Patient Safety (item 20/106)

Grace Marguerie Associate Director – HR (items 20/103 and 20/108)

Dominick Moran Analyst – Health and Social Care (item 20/109)

Pilar Pinilla-Dominguez Senior Scientific Adviser – NICE Scientific Advice (item 20/110)

Shaun Rowark Senior Analyst – Health and Social Care (item 20/109)

Victoria Thomas Head of Public Involvement

# 20/093 Apologies for absence

1. Apologies were received from Jennifer Howells and Judith Richardson who were represented by Hilary Baker and Victoria Thomas respectively.

# 20/094 Declarations of interest

1. The previously declared interests recorded on the register were noted and it was confirmed there were no conflicts of interest relevant to the meeting.

# 20/095 Minutes of the last meeting

1. The minutes of the Board meeting held on 16 September 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

# 20/096 Action log

1. The Board noted the progress with the actions arising from the Board meeting on 16 September 2020 and the preceding meetings. Those marked closed on the log were confirmed as complete.

# 20/097 Chief Executive’s report

1. Gill Leng presented the Chief Executive’s report which provided an update on the outputs from the main programmes for the first 7 months of the year together with information on other matters of interest to the Board. This was an unprecedented period, with staff working extremely hard to deliver a range of initiatives including the new COVID-19 rapid guidelines, develop a new 5 year strategy, and progress the technology evaluation methods review, while also responding to the challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic including the shift to remote working.
2. The Board noted these achievements and thanked the organisation for the ongoing response to these challenges. It was noted that performance is largely in line with the business plan targets, although the number of completed guideline surveillance reviews is below plan due to the reallocation of resources to the COVID-19 rapid guidelines. It was noted that exceptional and high priority reviews had though been completed. The Board welcomed that the senior management team have looked at the lessons that can be learnt from the pandemic and agreed this learning should be shared with the Board.

ACTION: Gill Leng

1. Subject to the comments and action above, the Board received the report.

# 20/098 Centre for Guidelines progress report

1. Paul Chrisp presented the update on key issues and developments in the Centre for Guidelines in September and October 2020, including the ongoing work on COVID-19 rapid guidelines.
2. The Board noted and welcomed the activities underway to shape the future approach to guideline development, including the use of broader sources of data. The Board asked about the current impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on committee member availability and stakeholders’ ability to engage with the guidance development process. In response, Paul Chrisp advised that no issues have been raised by the team so far, but it will be important to look at how the field team and medicines associates can provide feedback on any issues of concern in this regard.
3. The Board received the report.

# 20/099 Centre for Health Technology Evaluation progress report

1. Meindert Boysen presented the update on key issues and developments in the Centre for Health Technology Evaluation in September and October 2020. He highlighted the extensive work to deliver the Centre’s core business in addition to the high profile initiatives noted in the report such as the methods review and RAPID-C19 programme – a multi-agency approach that enables safe and timely patient access to medicines showing evidence of benefit in treating or preventing COVID-19.
2. The Board noted the positive initial stakeholder response to the methods review and thanked staff for their extensive work on this high profile and challenging piece of work.
3. The Board received the report.

# 20/100 Digital, Information and Technology Directorate progress report

1. Alexia Tonnel presented the update from the Digital, Information and Technology Directorate and summarised the various teams’ key activities in September and October 2020, including to support the transformation programme in guidance development, and to prepare for the move to the new London office.
2. The Board received the report.

# 20/101 Science, Evidence and Analytics progress report

1. Felix Greaves presented the update from the Science, Evidence and Analytics Directorate covering September and October 2020. Of particular note was the work on long COVID, which brought together the different strands of the Directorate’s work and represents the future model of working across the disciplines of information services, data and analytics, and science policy and research.
2. The Board received the report and welcomed the ongoing work on data analytics, which will be subject of a further report to the Board in January.

# 20/102 Health and Social Care Directorate progress report

1. Victoria Thomas presented the update on key issues and developments in the Health and Social Care Directorate in September and October 2020. This included the public involvement programme’s work with the audience insight team to seek feedback from the voluntary and community sector on how NICE can facilitate their engagement with the guidance development process in light of the sector’s capacity challenges arising from COVID-19.
2. The Board discussed the report and noted the activity underway to work through the feedback on the draft quality standard on foetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD). The use of a podcast, which had been accessed over 2000 times, to engage with social work leaders was welcomed. The Board requested that the next progress report in January includes further information on the level of ambition for future similar engagement activity. A progress update on NICE’s work on the national library of quality indicators was also requested to be circulated outside of the meeting.

ACTION: Judith Richardson

1. Subject to the above action, the Board received the report.

# 20/103 Resources report

1. Hilary Baker, Martin Davison and Grace Marguerie presented the report which outlined the financial position at 30 September 2020, and provided an update on the NICE Connect transformation programme, Human Resources and organisational development. At the end of September the forecast year-end underspend is £1.3m, although this is subject to change depending on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. The Board noted the range of workforce initiatives underway, including the development of new values and behaviours, and the establishment of a working group to discuss and implement innovative ideas for workforce planning and resourcing. Board members highlighted the equality, diversity and inclusion implications of virtual recruitment and onboarding processes, which it was noted would be considered as part of the new equality objectives later in the meeting.
3. The Board discussed progress with the NICE Connect programme and noted the overall rating remains amber due to resource capacity, but is improving. It was suggested that the milestones in the summary update were internally focused and it was requested that future updates, starting with the next report in January, provide a more externally focused overview of progress.

ACTION: Jennifer Howells

1. Subject to the above action, the Board received the report.

# 20/104 Communications Directorate progress report

1. Jane Gizbert presented the update on key issues and developments in the Communications Directorate in September and October 2020, and highlighted the feedback from the survey to assess the usage and perceptions of NICE’s COVID-19 rapid guidelines.
2. The Board received the report.
3. The Board welcomed the informative progress reports provided by the directors and asked that in future, the directors’ reports include a brief update on the key risks to delivery in their respective centre/directorate, which would help inform the Board’s review of the corporate risk register.

ACTION: SMT

**20/105 NICE Listens: policy development through interactive conversations with the public**

1. Felix Greaves and Rosie Lovett presented the proposed new process for deliberative public engagement on moral, ethical, and social value issues. The proposals have been revised in response to the Board’s feedback and the flexible process would be used to ensure NICE's policies on complex and controversial issues reflect the values of informed members of the public.
2. The Board discussed and approved the proposals. The Board highlighted the need to carefully consider the approach to recruiting participants in order to manage the risk of potential under-representation of groups most affected by the topics under review, especially if the engagement is taking place online. In addition, it will be important to consider the trade-off between the number of participants (to increase representativeness) and the depth of engagement. There was encouragement to consider how the process could be used to consider challenging systemic issues that are relevant across NICE’s work programmes.

# 20/106 Patient safety update

1. Kevin Harris presented the update on patient safety matters at NICE in the 12 months to September 2020, following his appointment as the Institute’s senior responsible officer (SRO) for patient safety. He noted that the new role has helped coordinate internal patient safety activities and act as a central point of contact for external initiatives.
2. The Board received the report and noted the achievements to date. There was support for the planned next steps, including the establishment of a working group to both oversee NICE’s response to the Independent Medicines and Medical Devices Safety (IMMDS) review and make recommendations for further strengthening NICE’s approach for managing patient safety issues more generally.

# 20/107 NICE and MHRA partnership working to develop an Innovative Licensing and Access Pathway

1. Meindert Boysen and Nick Crabb presented the update on partnership working between the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and NICE, in particular the work to deliver an Innovative Licensing and Access Pathway for medicines.
2. The Board discussed the report and noted that the aim is to establish the pathway from 1 January 2021 as part of the regulatory arrangements following the end of the UK-EU Transition Period. The Board welcomed the proposals, and asked about the pathway’s coverage and the implications on the timescales for market access. In response, Nick Crabb explained that it is currently envisaged the innovation passport could potentially apply to around half of the products approved by the CHMP. Early engagement in the development of clinical trials and the changes in the regulatory process published by the MHRA are together likely to deliver reduced timelines for market access.
3. The Board noted the progress update and welcomed NICE’s ongoing work in this initiative.

# 20/108 Annual equality report and objectives

1. Hilary Baker, supported by Grace Marguerie, Sarah Acton, and Fiona Glen, presented the annual equality report for 2019/20 and the proposed new equality objectives to cover a four-year period from 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2024.
2. The Board noted the progress with the previous objectives and the equalities data provided for 2019/20, including the Workforce Race and Disability Equality Standards (WRES and WDES). The Board welcomed the intention to adopt ambitious new objectives and approved the proposed new equality objectives for 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2024 as set out in the paper.
3. The Board highlighted the importance of delivering these new objectives given their importance for the organisation, its staff, and stakeholders. A range of suggested activities and initiatives to help deliver the objectives were noted, including reverse mentoring, cultural ambassadors, and seeking to identify and challenge unwritten social norms. The Board welcomed the work underway to review the staff recruitment process with a focus on increasing the diversity of appointees, and supported the proposal to share further information with the Board in January.

ACTION: Jennifer Howells

# 20/109 NICE Impact report: prostate cancer

1. Victoria Thomas presented the latest impact report, which this month focused on how NICE’s guidance is being used to help improve outcomes for people with prostate cancer.
2. The Board received and welcomed the report. The Board asked how the reports are used to drive improvements in care and were pleased to note that from January, the impact reports will be accompanied by a report that sets out the action being taken in response to the information on the varying levels of uptake of NICE guidance in each report. The Board noted the benefit of also looking at whether there are consistent themes across the impact reports and asked that the scope for undertaking this activity in future is explored as part of the Board’s implementation ‘deep-dive’ in December.

ACTION: Judith Richardson

# 20/110 NICE International: annual review 2020

1. Pilar Pinilla-Dominguez presented the report that outlined NICE International’s work since its relaunch in November 2019. The team are working on an international strategy which will align with NICE’s new strategy, and are seeking to increase NICE International’s visibility both internationally and with UK bodies that have an international focus, such as the All Parliamentary Party Group on Global Health.
2. The Board received the report and expressed strong support for NICE International’s activities, which were noted to enhance the Institute’s influence and impact while helping improve outcomes for patients outside of the UK. The Board noted the spread of engagement to date and highlighted the scope to engage at the sub-national level where responsibility for health care is devolved from the federal government.

# 20/111 Audit and Risk Committee minutes

1. The Board received the unconfirmed minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 9 September 2020.

# 20/112 Any other business

1. None.

# Next meeting

1. The next public meeting of the Board (meeting as the Board Committee) will be held on 27 January 2021 at 1:30pm via Zoom.