



Cancer Screening Programmes

NATIONAL BOWEL CANCER SCREENING PROGRAMME

Remit of Research Committee

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1. Background

The National Health Service Bowel Cancer Screening Programme (NHS BCSP) has been phased in since 2006 and is intended to achieve coverage throughout England by 2009. About 1 in 20 people in the UK will develop bowel cancer during their lifetime. It is the third most common cancer in the UK and the second leading cause of cancer deaths, with 16,000 people dying from it each year. Regular bowel cancer screening has been shown to reduce the risk of dying from bowel cancer by 16%.

Five programme hubs operate a national call and recall system to send out faecal occult blood (FOB) test kits analyse samples and despatch results. Screening centres provide endoscopy services and specialist screening nurse clinics for people receiving abnormal results. The NHS Bowel Cancer Screening Programme in England currently offers screening every two years to men and women aged 60-69.

Further information on the screening programme can be found on <http://www.cancerscreening.nhs.uk/bowel/index.html>. It is being extended up to 75th birthday from April 2010.

As a result of the NHS BCSP a large number of screening participants (as opposed to patients) will be available for participation in research projects; consequently many research project applications will be submitted and require review to consider scientific value and feasibility. The NHS BCSP has already had numerous requests to use tissue collected for specific research activities including collection of samples (e.g. blood, urine, faeces).

In order to manage the research potential associated with the NHS BCSP it has been decided to set up a Research Committee chaired by Professor John Scholefield to facilitate and monitor the research activity in the NHS BCSP. The Research Committee will not be awarding grants for research activities it supports, but its support is likely to be a pre-requisite in any application to the major funding bodies.

2. Composition and Structure

The NHS BCSP Research Committee (RC) aims to bring together the expertise and enthusiasm necessary to establish them as an authoritative voice in the cancer research community.

In the first instance Professor John Scholefield chairs the Committee. It should be small in number but include the following membership

- Director of the NHS Bowel Cancer Screening Programme (Director of NHS Cancer Screening Programmes)
- The Chair of the NCRI Colorectal Clinical Studies Group
- The Chair of the Colorectal Clinical Studies Screening and Prevention Subgroup
- The Chair of the NCRI Primary Care Screening and Prevention Subgroup
- A consumer who has participated in the screening programme
- Other individuals identified by the Chair of the Research Committee and the Director for the NHS Bowel Cancer Screening Programme

Membership will be for three years in the first instance.

Membership will be terminated if a scientific member fails to attend three consecutive meetings.

3. The Committee's Role and Remit

The Committee's role will be to

- Receive research applications which include the use of samples and data collected as part of the NHS BCSP
- Ensure that the research does not adversely affect the uptake, acceptability and delivery of the Bowel Cancer Screening Programme
- Consider the scientific value and feasibility of each research application
- Ensure that there is subsequent full scientific review and ethical support
- Determine which research applications will have access to persons invited as part of the NHS BCSP
- Determine which research applications will have access to samples and data collected as part of the NHS BCSP
- Maintain a database of all applications and their outcomes
- Facilitate coordination of research activities and avoidance of duplication wherever possible
- Inform applicants of the outcome of their request within four weeks of a committee decision
- Advise the DH Bowel Screening Advisory Committee on scientific policy decisions as required
- Respond to queries from funding bodies regarding applications which involve the use of NHS BCSP samples
- The Committee is responsible to the NHS Cancer Screening Programmes via the Director of the Screening Programme
- Collaborate with the NCRI Primary Care Clinical Studies Group through the Chair of their Screening and Prevention sub-group.

The committee will **not** award grants for research activities it supports. These must be sought from research funding bodies.

The Committee's business will be serviced by a part time administrator; half will be carried out through teleconferences and the other half through face to face meetings in London.

4. Members Rights and Responsibilities

- Members are asked on appointment to confirm that they have accepted the Seven Principles of Public Life ("Nolan Principles") and to complete a Declaration of Interests form.
- Members are expected to attend all meetings and teleconferences of the Committee.
- Members should ensure they understand why they are being appointed and in what capacity and the role they are to play on the Committee
- Unless specifically stated otherwise, members are appointed in their own right to fulfil the role of the Committee and not as representatives of their profession, employer or interest group
- Members should ensure that the assessment of research applications is carried out objectively and impartially
- Committee papers, discussions and any correspondence relating to applications are strictly confidential
- Work relating to the Committee is regarded as National Work for the purposes of the consultant contract and job planning. Membership of the Committee is unpaid. Reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed for any face to face meetings of the committee.

5. Conflicts of Interest

- Members must declare any potential conflicts of interest or if their declaration of interests change
- Potential conflicts of interest highlighted by declarations of interest may normally be resolved by the individual concerned not participating in the relevant decision and being restricted to information only
- In rare circumstances, declarations of interest may highlight major conflicts of interest that might not be compatible with membership of the Committee. The Chair and Director of NHS Cancer Screening Programmes shall determine whether the declared interest is compatible with continued membership of the Committee
- Other conflicts of interest may arise with individual items. One example might be where an application is received by the Committee that is similar to one prepared or in preparation by a member
- Individuals must exempt themselves from the relevant part of any meeting where matters concerning a research application with which they are connected are discussed (sole applicant, joint applicant, relative of one of the applicants, business partner of applicant, a member of or employee of the same university or other institution, as one of the applicants)
- If an individual is in any doubt as to the relevance of an interest that he or she has, such interest should be disclosed to the Chair before the meeting
- An individual who is concerned about another individual's potential or actual conflict of interest should raise their concerns with the chair.

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