

**Independent Scientific Advisory Committee for MHRA database research (ISAC)**

Minutes of the meeting held on **Wednesday January 22, 2014 at 11:00am** in [R-T-310], 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, **151 Buckingham Palace Road, Victoria, SW1W 9SZ.**

**Present****ISAC Members:**

Prof Patrick Waller (Chair)  
Dr Krishnan Bhaskaran  
Dr Benjamin Cairns  
Prof Jacqueline Cassell  
Dr Christopher Edwards  
Prof Martin Gulliford  
Prof Peter Helms  
Dr Iskandar Idris  
Dr Umesh Kadam  
Prof Benjamin Lipsky  
Ms Sally Malin  
Ms Marcia Saunders  
Dr Richard Stevens  
Dr Ruben Thanacoody

**MHRA:**

Dr John Parkinson (CPRD) Items 4-7  
Ms Kendal Chidwick (CPRD Secretary) All items

**1. Introductions, apologies and announcements**

- 1.1. The Chair reminded members that the papers and proceedings were confidential and should not be disclosed. Members were also reminded to declare their personal specific, personal non-specific, non-personal specific and non-personal non-specific interests in the agenda items.
- 1.2. Apologies were received from Richard Martin, Ben Cairns and Umesh Kadam.

**2. Minutes of the ISAC meeting held on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2013 and summary minutes for publication on the MHRA website (Paper 1)**

- 2.1. Full and summary minutes were reviewed and approved with one minor change to the summary minutes.
  - 2.1.1. Point 9 of the summary minutes should include the line “The members agreed that advice be communicated to CPRD regarding the unresolved issues; including the transparency issue around health research”
- 2.2. A copy of the minutes was endorsed by the Chair.
- 2.3. Summary minutes will be published on the MHRA website. Action **MHRA**.

**3. Matters arising from the minutes**

- 3.1. None

**CPRD Data****4. Verbal Update from Dr. Parkinson on CPRD matters**

- 4.1. Dr John Parkinson provided an overview on the CPRD since the October 2013 meeting:

**5. Update from Dr. Parkinson on the Deputy Chairmanship of ISAC**

- 5.1. Dr. Parkinson informed ISAC that recruitment of a deputy chair would proceed very soon and that the post would be advertised in a suitable journal as well as on DH/MHRA websites
- 5.2. Jackie Cassell informed the Committee that she will need to stand down in July 2014 if no deputy had been appointed by then

**6. Protocol 13\_217 - A relative survival analysis to identify prognostic markers for common morbidities in older people (Paper 2)**

- 6.1. Members found that the protocol would require substantial revision from a scientific perspective in order for it to be approvable.
- 6.2. The ISAC was particularly concerned that the source of the funding was not explicit in the application form, and the affiliation of the PI with the funder was not disclosed
- 6.3. Dr Parkinson stated the CPRD was fully supportive of research that has a true health component, and in the context of the Health & Wealth Agenda, such research can be funded by as many non-government routes as possible providing the research is managed and controlled in the right way, the funding source is acceptable and the results are published in peer reviewed journal.
- 6.4. ISAC recognised that aggregate actuarial tables are in the public interest, so long as they are produced by health researchers and published in scientific journals

**7. CPRD Deviations Policy (Paper 3)**

- 7.1.1. The policy was noted and accepted by the Committee
- 7.1.2. Proposal from CPRD for a workshop on deviations welcomed; suggested timing is mid 2015 so that preliminary data from the audit project will be available
- 7.1.3. Regarding handling of deviations by ISAC, existing Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) guidance may be useful and will be discussed at the next meeting.

**8. ISAC Audit Project – Comparing publications with protocols to identify deviations (Paper 4)**

- 8.1. Krishnan Bhaskaran declared a conflict of interest which precluded his involvement in decision making in relation to protocol 11\_110A; he left the room when this was discussed
- 8.2. Martin Gulliford declared a conflict of interest in relation to 11\_110A; members agreed this did not preclude his involvement in the discussion
- 8.3. Protocol 11\_110A was considered to be a major deviation
- 8.4. The Chair is to write to applicant requiring that an explanatory letter be submitted to the journal for publication; the letter should be submitted to ISAC for review prior to submission
- 8.5. The members agreed a number of changes to the definition of a major deviation:
  - 8.5.1. Current points 3 and 5 to become minor deviations, with the caveat “providing the change is mentioned and justified in the paper/output”
  - 8.5.2.
  - 8.5.3. Point 6 to be changed to ‘non-trivial’ changes to ‘analysis strategy’, rather than analysis plan which is too general a term.
  - 8.5.4. Slight changes to the methods used in the analysis plan would be considered minor eg change from Cox regression analysis to Cox proportional analysis
- 8.6. Members agreed that the audit project should proceed using this updated definition from April 2014.

8.7. Results of the audit should be educational and can be discussed at the proposed workshop on deviations.

8.8. In regard to agenda item 16, amendments should also be published.

**9. Finalising the update to the ISAC Protocol Guidance (Paper 5)**

9.1. Members agreed that the new guidance can be published following the meeting with all changes highlighted.

**10. Amendment to Chair Feedback (Paper 7)**

10.1. The proposed change was agreed.

**11. Multiple studies of the same issue (Paper 6)**

11.1. Agreed that this was not a major concern but that guidance should encourage applicants to contact the CPRD knowledge centre to find out if similar studies are on-going.

**Information Items**

**12. Protocols 11\_127RA/13\_201: For information in relation to discussions on defining and handling deviations and the audit project (Paper 8)**

12.1. Noted

**13. Proposed meeting dates for 2015 (Paper 9)**

13.1. Agreed

**14. Review of outcomes for protocols received since the last meeting (Paper to be tabled)**

14.1. Noted.

**15. AOB**

15.1. None.

**16. Additional item: Transparency of ISAC protocols (Paper 10)**

16.1. ISAC welcomed CPRD proposals for greater transparency subject to legal and contractual issues being resolved.

**Date and time of next meeting: Wednesday the 16<sup>th</sup> of April at 11.00 a.m.**