



Department
of Health &
Social Care

Member of the Committee on the Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment (COMARE)

Information pack for applicants

Closing date: midday on 23 September 2020

Reference no: VAC-1721



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Section 1 – The Role

1.1 Role and Responsibilities of a Member of COMARE

Introduction

The Department of Health and Social Care is seeking to make 6 appointments (5 expert, 1 lay) to the board of COMARE

Role and Responsibilities of a Member

As a member of COMARE, you will:

- be at least nationally or ideally internationally recognised as a technical expert in one or more of the areas outlined in the “Qualities required” (not applicable for lay member);
- contribute to discussions of the committee working alongside other recognised experts assessing the detailed technical data under consideration;
- assist the committee in helping to draft advice appropriate for wider dissemination to the general public;
- contribute to other discussions (such as COMARE subcommittees or working groups) as required.

Qualities required for the role of a Member

The Department of Health and Social Care values and promotes diversity and encourages applications from all sections of the community. The boards of public bodies should reflect the population they are there to serve. Boards also benefit from fresh perspectives, and we are always keen to encourage candidates with private sector experience to consider applying for our roles.

Qualities required for the role of an expert member:

Candidates must be a recognised expert with a track record of national or international achievement as the following:

- Radiation scientist with an interest in non-ionising radiation
- Diagnostic radiologist
- Radiochemist / radio-ecologist
- Nuclear medicine / radiation protection expert/scientist
- Public Health Scientist

Qualities required for the role of a lay member:

As a lay member, you should not have a background in fields related to ionising/non-ionising radiation. You should have the ability to work with a wide range of experts, other professionals and with scientific members of the Committee to ensure the Committee's advice addresses the concerns of, and can be understood by, the UK population as a whole.

Applicants for the lay member position on COMARE should have a good track record of communicating complex information to a non-technical audience, experience in the assessment and interpretation of issues, and strong analytical skills. Applications are particularly sought from those with experience and expertise in working with expert and advisory committees, or in governance roles.

Essential Criteria for all candidates:

To be considered, you must be able to demonstrate that you have the qualities, skills and experience to meet all the essential criteria for appointment.

- Have good interpersonal skills, with the ability to secure the confidence of those in the field and develop constructive relationships with these and other stakeholders.
- Be able to use personal experience and skills, and sound judgment, to guide the strategic direction of the Committee.
- Be committed to public health issues and to public service values; and have the ability to consider issues from an impartial and balanced viewpoint.
- The ability to work as an individual and as part of a team, with a positive and constructive style and good communication skills.

Essential Criteria for the Expert Member:

- Be nationally or ideally internationally recognised with a substantial publication record, having given presentations at international and national meetings and with membership of professional societies in one of the above disciplines.
- Be able to demonstrate ability to produce high quality independent analyses of data and ideas and be able to demonstrate ability to articulate scientific issues and information clearly, comprehensively and concisely.

Essential Criteria for the Lay Member:

- Demonstrable experience of articulating patient, carer or public experiences and perspectives in the discussions of a multi-disciplinary committee;
- Experience of getting to grips with technically demanding subject areas and translating this to improve accessibility to wider audiences.

Remuneration

- There is no remuneration for this post, but your expenses will be paid in line with Department of Health and Social Care policy
- You may claim travel and subsistence expenses, which are properly and necessarily incurred in carrying out your role and responsibilities as a Member of COMARE, in line

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with travel and subsistence policy and rates for COMARE. A copy of the policy and rates can be obtained from COMARE.

Time commitment

You can expect that this role would carry a time commitment of around 4 days per year.

Meeting dates:

128th meeting – Thursday 11th March 2021

129th meeting – Thursday 8th July 2021

130th meeting – Thursday 18th November 2021

It is anticipated that the above meetings will be conducted via video-conference

Location

London

Tenure of office

The Department of Health and Social Care senior responsible officer determines that the length of the appointment will be up to 3 years.

Accountability

Members are appointed by the Departmental Senior Responsible Officer and are accountable to the Senior Responsible Officer via the Chair for carrying out their duties and for their performance.

For further information regarding the role of COMARE and the role of a Member please contact:

Email: comare@phe.gov.uk

1.2 COMARE role and responsibilities

A message from Dr Chris Gibson, Chair of COMARE

Dear Candidate

Thank you for your interest in this post and for your time reading this candidate information pack.

The Committee on Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment (COMARE) is a scientific advisory committee providing independent expert advice on all aspects of health risks to people exposed to natural and man-made radiation. Members are chosen for their medical and scientific expertise and recruited from Universities, and Research and Medical Institutes. Members have never been drawn directly from commercial or industrial sectors where conflicts of interest may arise.

COMARE offers independent advice to all Government Departments and Devolved Authorities, not just the Health Departments, and is responsible for assessing and advising them on the health effects of both ionising and non-ionising radiation. It is also asked to assess the adequacy of the available data and recommend the need for further research as required.

As a member of COMARE you will contribute to discussions of the committee, working alongside other recognised experts assessing the detailed technical data under consideration. You will need to be at least nationally or ideally internationally recognised as an expert in the area outlined in the personal specification. You will be expected to assist the committee in helping to draft advice appropriate for wider dissemination to the general public.

The work of the committee requires a high commitment to Public Health issues and Public Service values.

The committee has a diverse work programme and you may be asked to serve on specialist subcommittees and working groups to address specific issues.

I do hope you are excited by the challenges this opportunity presents and that you will be inspired to apply.

Dr Chris Gibson
Chair of COMARE

Roles and Responsibilities

COMARE is an expert committee of the Department of Health and Social Care. Its Terms of Reference are: "To assess and advise government and the devolved administrations on the health effects of natural and man-made radiation, and to assess the adequacy of the available data and the need for further research."

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The Committee is comprised of a chair and members appointed as independent scientific and medical experts based on their special skills and knowledge. Lay members also sit on the committee to help ensure that COMARE's advice is appropriate for wider dissemination to the general public. There are specialist working groups that report to COMARE, for example to consider updates on monitoring programmes near nuclear installations.

COMARE has produced 18 reports to date in response to requests for advice from government departments. The Committee has been active in assessing the possible association between radioactive discharges and childhood cancer and has produced a number of reports on issues with nuclear sites. The Committee has advised the Government on the possible health effects from exposure to UV radiation in artificial tanning devices and radiation dose issues from CT scans. COMARE is currently reviewing radiation dose issues associated with interventional radiology.

Members of COMARE are supported in their work by a Secretariat provided by Public Health England (PHE). PHE has expertise that enables the Secretariat to provide members with comprehensive background information and briefing papers which inform the decision-making processes of the committee.

Further background information on COMARE and previous committee reports can be found on the [COMARE.gov.uk webpage](http://COMARE.gov.uk).

Section 2: How to Apply

2.1 Making an application

Thank you for your interest in the appointment of a Member to the COMARE.

To make an application please email your CV, a supporting letter and completed monitoring forms to:

appointments.team@dhsc.gov.uk – please quote **VAC-1721** in the subject field.

If you are unable to apply by email, please contact Ryan Lloyd on 0113 254 5929 or 0113 254 6138 to discuss alternative options.

Applications must be received by midday on 23 September 2020.

In making an application please note the following:

Supporting letter

The supporting letter is your opportunity to demonstrate how you meet each of the criteria set out in the person specification. It will benefit the Advisory Assessment Panel if you can be clear which specific evidence you provide relates to which criteria. Providing separate paragraphs in relation to each criterion is common practice. Please write all acronyms in full first.

Please ensure your full name, the role to which you are applying and the corresponding reference number for the post are clearly noted at the top of your letter.

Please limit your letter to two pages, and type or write clearly in black ink.

Conflicts of interest

If you have any business or personal interests that might be relevant to the work of COMARE, and which could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest if you were to be appointed, please provide details in your Supporting letter.

If appointed, you will also be required to declare these interests on appointment and they will be entered on a register which is available to the public.

Standards in public life and ensuring public confidence

Given the nature of public appointments, it is important that those appointed as members of public bodies maintain the confidence of the public and Government. If there are any issues in your personal or professional history (including any convictions or bankruptcy) that could, if you were appointed, be misconstrued, cause embarrassment to Ministers or COMARE or cause public confidence in the appointment to be jeopardised, it is important that you bring them to the attention of the Advisory Assessment Panel and provide details of the issue/s in your Supporting letter. In considering whether you wish to declare any issues, you should also reflect on any public statements you have made, including through social media and blogs. Due Diligence may be carried out on any publicly available information and shared with the Advisory Assessment Panel.

The panel may explore any issues you declare with you before they make a recommendation on the appointment.

Failure to disclose such information could result in an appointment being terminated, as those who hold public appointments are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of corporate and personal conduct and are required to subscribe to the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies, as part of agreeing to the terms and conditions of appointment. You can access this document at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/board-members-of-public-bodies-code-of-conduct>

There are also circumstances in which individuals may not be considered for appointment, due to them not meeting certain eligibility criteria for appointment. For further information, please refer to **Section 2.3: Eligibility Criteria**

If you wish to discuss any queries on conflicts, please see the contacts section.

CV

Please ensure your CV includes:

- Your full name, title, home address, personal contact telephone numbers (land line and mobile), personal email address and details of any twitter accounts and LinkedIn accounts including your Twitter handle/username.
- Similar contact details for two referees who will support your application. One referee should be the person to whom you are/were accountable in your current/most recent appointment or position of employment. Please indicate the relationship of each referee to you. References will be requested for short-listed candidates prior to interview

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- Brief details of your current or most recent post and the dates you occupied this role. Please identify any past or present Ministerial appointments.

Monitoring form

Please complete the monitoring form. Diversity monitoring information will not be seen by the Advisory Assessment Panel assessing your application.

Guaranteed Interview Scheme

The Department of Health and Social Care operates a Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS) for disabled people. The Equality Act 2010 defines a person as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities. Under the GIS a disabled candidate will be selected for interview if they meet the essential criteria for the post.

If you wish to apply under the GIS please complete the GIS form and return it with your application.

All applications will be acknowledged by email after the closing date.

For further information regarding the selection process, please contact

Ryan Lloyd, Appointments Team

Tel: 0113 254 5929

Email: Ryan.Lloyd@dhsc.gov.uk

For further information regarding the role of COMARE and the role of a Member please contact:

Tel: Dr Emma Petty

Email: comare@phe.gov.uk

Please quote reference **VAC-1721** on all correspondence.

If you choose to apply, we would like to thank you in advance for your time and effort in making an application.

2.2 The Selection Process

The Appointments Team will deal with your application as quickly as possible and will advise you of the likely timetable at each stage.

Timetable:

- Closing date: Midday on 23 September 2020
- Shortlisting complete: 15 October 2020
- Interviews held: 16 & 18 November 2020

The selection panel will be:

- Chris Gibson, Chair of COMARE, as Panel Chair
- Joseph Hitchcock, Head of Environmental Health Protection, DHSC, as a panel member
- Ann Gill, as an Independent Panel Member

The Independent Panel Member is independent of both the Department of Health and Social Care and COMARE.

After the closing date for applications:

- The Department of Health and Social Care may commission a pre-assessment of candidate applications which would then be provided to the Panel for consideration and to inform the shortlisting process. By applying, you are agreeing to your application being shared with another party for pre-assessment. The pre-assessor and the panel are reliant on the information you provide in your CV and supporting letter to assess whether you have the skills and experience required. Please ensure that you provide evidence to support how you meet all the essential criteria. It is the responsibility of the panel to determine who it believes best meet the criteria for the role, and who will be invited to interview.
- Interviews will be held on 16 & 18 November 2020.
- The Advisory Assessment Panel will select for interview only the strongest applicants who it feels have demonstrated that they best meet the criteria set out in the person specification. However, if you have applied under the GIS and you meet all the essential criteria, then you will also be invited for interview

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- If you are invited to interview and if you are unable to attend on the set date, then an alternative date can only be offered at the discretion of the Advisory Assessment Panel
- The Appointments Team will email to let you know whether you have been invited to be interviewed. It is our intention that interviews will take place in a central London location
- If invited to interview, the Advisory Assessment Panel may invite you to make a brief presentation at the start of the interview and will go on to question you about your skills and experience, including asking specific questions to assess whether you meet the criteria set out for the post
- The Advisory Assessment Panel will also explore with candidates any potential conflicts of interest or any other issues arising from candidate's personal and professional history which may impact on an appointment decision (see section 2.1 for further details).
- Candidates who the panel believe are 'appointable', will be recommended to the Senior Responsible Officer who will make the final decision. The Senior Responsible Officer may choose to meet with shortlisted candidates, before or after interview, before making a decision. Candidates should therefore be prepared for a short time gap between interview and a final appointment decision being made. Candidates who have been interviewed will be kept informed of progress.
- If you are successful, you will receive a letter from the Senior Responsible Officer appointing you as a Member of COMARE, which will confirm the terms on which the appointment is offered
- **please note that due to the volume of applications that are received it is not possible to routinely provide feedback to those not shortlisted for interview**
- if you apply under the GIS scheme and you are not shortlisted for interview, we can provide a summary of the assessment of your written application, if you choose to request feedback
- If you are unsuccessful at interview, you will be notified by the Appointments Team. We appreciate it takes a lot of time and effort to apply for roles, and prepare for and attend an interview, and that feedback is a valuable part of the process. Following interviews, the letter which confirms the outcome of the appointment process will provide the details of who you may approach for feedback on your interview and application, if you so wish
- For further information on how we will manage the personal information that you have provided to us through your application, see **Section 2.4**

Queries

For queries about your application, please contact Ryan Lloyd on Ryan.Lloyd@dhsc.gov.uk

Standards in public life

You will be expected to demonstrate a commitment to and an understanding of the value and importance of the key principles of public life. All successful candidates will be asked to subscribe to the Code of Practice for Scientific Advisory Committees (CoPSAC); you can access this document at:

<http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/goscience/docs/c/11-1382-code-of-practice-scientific-advisory-committees.pdf>

If you are not completely satisfied

The Department of Health and Social Care will aim to process all applications as quickly as possible and to treat all applicants with courtesy. If you have any complaints about the way your application has been handled, please contact Sally Brough-Hirst in the Department of Health and Social Care by emailing Sally.Brough-Hirst@dhsc.gov.uk

2.3 Eligibility Criteria

There are circumstances in which an individual may not be considered for appointment. They include:

1. persons who have received a prison sentence or suspended sentence of 3 months or more in the last 5 years
2. persons who are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order, or a debt relief order or interim debt relief order under Schedule 4ZB to the Insolvency Act 1986
3. persons who have had an earlier term of appointment with a health service body terminated on the grounds:
 - that it was not conducive to the interests or good management of the body that the person should continue to hold office
 - that the person failed to attend a meeting of the body on three consecutive occasions
 - that the person failed to declare a pecuniary interest or withdraw from consideration of a matter in respect of which the person had a pecuniary interest
 - of misconduct or failure to carry out the person's duties
4. anyone who is under a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986; or
5. anyone who has been removed from trusteeship of a charity.

Further advice about the Eligibility Criteria can be provided by contacting Dr Emma Petty on comare@phe.gov.uk.

2.4 How we will manage your personal information

Your personal information will be held in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation. You will not receive unsolicited paper or electronic mail because of sending the Department of Health and Social Care any personal information. No personal information will be passed on to third parties for commercial purposes.

When we ask you for personal information, we promise we will:

- Only ask for what we need, and not collect too much or irrelevant information
- Ensure you know why we need it
- Protect it and insofar as is possible, make sure nobody has access to it who shouldn't
- Ensure you know what choice you have about giving us information
- Make sure we don't keep it longer than necessary
- Only use your information for the purposes you have authorised

We ask that you:

- Provide us with accurate information
- Inform us as soon as possible of any changes or if you notice mistakes in the information we hold about you

If you apply for a post, we will share some of the information you provide with the members of the selection panel for the post to which you are applying, so that your CV and supporting letter can be assessed.

The diversity information you provide will not be used in the selection process and will therefore not be shared with the Advisory Assessment Panel assessing your application at any stage.

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