Public Health England

Terms of Reference
September 2014

Rapid Review Panel (RRP)

1.0 Issue

1.1 Healthcare associated infections (HCAI) present a burden on the NHS that can be alleviated with improved infection prevention and control (IPC) measures. The RRP supports improvements in infection prevention and control products that aim to reduce healthcare associated infections. The panel assesses products for use in healthcare settings and makes recommendations. It does this by assessment of evidence supplied in each application, taking efficacy, innovation, test results and ability to prevent the transmission of HCAI as its prime considerations. It will do so by assessment of the information supplied in each application and does not carry out further research, although it may provide the company with advice on what additional evidence is required

2.0 Membership

2.1 Membership of the panel will comprise experts in the fields related to IPC and HCAI. Members are selected by interview led by the Chair of the RRP and drawn from a range of disciplines allowing a comprehensive coverage of important aspects of a product review.

2.2 The panel can seek confidential external advice as required for any products where issues are identified beyond their expertise.

2.3 Members will provide an annual conflict of interest return; in addition members will state any potential conflicts of interest prior to and during the review of a product that could exclude them from participating in a review. The decision on whether they can attend and/or participate in a particular review will be the responsibility of the Chair.

2.4 RRP members are subject to the terms of the indemnity agreement the Secretary of State undertakes to indemnify panel members against any action or claim which may be brought or threatened to be brought against its members.

3.0 RRP Function

3.1 The RRP evaluates submitted products which meet the criteria outlined for submission. These products support improvements in IPC or to reduce HCAI and are reviewed on the basis of the scientific evidence that is supplied to demonstrate improved efficacy over existing products.

3.2 The Panel will not consider the commercial issues, including cost effectiveness of a product or its features.

3.3 The RRP will not undertake evaluation of products. It is for the manufacturer to initiate and complete such trials/evaluations.

3.3 The RRP provides information free of charge.

3.4 The RRP accepts no liability for any indirect or consequential loss or damage or for any loss of profit, revenue or business (whether direct or indirect) in each case, however caused.

3.5 The RRP will not "champion" products or act to influence procurement (other than informing the NHS Supply Chain of products with recommendations 1 or 2; see 6.2 below); the advice given by the RRP shall not be used as an endorsement or recommendation of the product.

4.0 Governance

4.1 Two-way communication with the Public Health England (PHE) Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy and Healthcare Associated Infections (AMRS & HCAI) Programme Board will be fostered to help identify areas of need for the RRP and to enhance connectivity across PHE.

4.2 RRP will provide twice yearly updates to the PHE HCAI & AMRS Programme Board with a written summary of reviewed products, and in so doing will seek feedback on its objectives, outputs and governance.

4.3 A risk register will be updated quarterly.

5.0 Meetings

5.1 The RRP will meet quarterly to review submitted product applications, in the event of no product submissions the meeting proceeds at the Chair's discretion.

6.0 Reporting Structure/Outputs and communications

6.1 The RRP will make its final recommendations publically available through open publication on the RRP webpage.

6.2 The RRP will provide updates twice yearly to the PHE AMRS & HCAI Programme board and product recommendations 1 or 2 to the NHS Supply Chain.

6.3 All information submitted to the panel will be treated as commercial in confidence and stored securely. The panel will operate under confidentiality arrangements. None of the information submitted to the panel will be disclosed to any third party.

6.4 The RRP will inform applicants of recommendations and provide confidential detailed feedback prior to the publication of the recommendation statement online.

6.4 The RRP is not a scientific advisory committee; however, it endeavours to follow both "the Code" and "the Principles" of scientific advisory committees where possible and aims to be as transparent as possible. Due to the commercially sensitive nature of the applications and review process, the RRP cannot publish details of reviews undertaken, either in the form of minutes of the meeting or as full reports, without presenting potential significant liability to the Company and Panel.