



Department
of Health &
Social Care

Minutes of SPI-M meeting: 18 September 2023

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Meeting details

The meeting was held on 18 September from 3.30pm to 5pm on Microsoft Teams.

The co-chairs were Déirdre Hollingsworth (academic chair) and Thomas Waite (executive chair).

Attendees

From the Scientific Pandemic Infections group on Modelling (SPI-M):

- Daniela De Angelis
- Marc Baguelin
- Paul Birrell
- Ellen Brooks-Pollock
- Andre Charlett
- Louise Dyson
- John Edmunds
- Jessica Enright
- Neil Ferguson

- Thomas Finnie
- Christophe Fraser
- Julia Gog
- Michael Gravenor
- Ian Hall
- Thomas House
- Rowland Kao
- Matt Keeling
- Adam Kurcharski
- Steven Riley
- Chris Robertson
- Nick Watkins
- Christopher Williams

Participant apologies:

- Declan Bradley

Presenters and additional participants for first substantive agenda item:

- Paul Allen (Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC))
- Lucy Chappell (DHSC)
- Graham Medley
- Chris Whitty (DHSC)

Observers:

- John Bates (DHSC)
- Libby Richards (Office for National Statistics (ONS))

There were an additional 10 observers, 7 members of the secretariat and 2 presenters whose names have been redacted.

Introduction

The chairs opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.

Goodbye to outgoing academic chair, Professor Graham Medley

The committee thanked Graham Medley, academic chair of the group between 2017 to 2023, for his contributions to SPI-M and SPI-M-O.

Graham was thanked for his contributions to SPI-M and the Scientific Pandemic Influenza Group on Modelling (SPI-M-O) between 2017 and 2022 by:

- Chris Whitty, Chief Medical Officer for England
- Lucy Chappell, Chief Scientific Advisor for DHSC
- Thomas Waite, Deputy Chief Medical Officer for England and executive co-chair of SPI-M
- Paul Allen, former co-chair of SPI-M and former head of the SPI-M(-O) secretariat

Welcome to the new academic chair, Professor Déirdre Hollingsworth

The new academic chair, Déirdre Hollingsworth, introduced herself to the committee.

UKHSA H5 pandemic vaccine modelling

UKHSA gave a presentation on the epidemiological modelling they have carried out to assess the potential impact and benefits of stockpiling a H5 pandemic vaccine for use in a future pandemic.

UKHSA presented the methodology and initial results of a compartmental transmission model which runs for 6 months. Its core assumptions were informed by advice from SPI-M

and a joint meeting of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) and the New and Emerging Respiratory Virus Threats Advisory Group (NERVTAG).

The authors set out the next steps for updating the model further to consider scenarios where vaccine coverage diverges, the use of multi dose regimes and vaccine wastage.

The chairs requested feedback on the methodology and results of the modelling from committee participants. The committee noted that the benefits estimated by the model are conservative as it only estimates the direct health benefits and does not consider wider societal impacts. The executive co-chair noted that the conservative benefits estimates, and uncertainty of deployment costs would impact the cost effectiveness, and that any measure of the cost effectiveness will be highly dependent on many factors that will be unknown at the start of a pandemic.

The chairs thanked the authors for their work on the modelling to date.

Action: those working on the pandemic vaccine model should take on board the comments of the SPI-M committee and implement changes where possible.

Any other business

A member of the SPI-M Secretariat noted that the next meeting will likely fall in November.

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