**NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CARE EXCELLENCE**

Public Board Meeting – meeting as the Board Committee   
held on 27 January 2021 via Zoom

These notes are a summary record of the main points discussed at the meeting and the decisions made. They are not intended to provide a verbatim record of the Board’s discussion. The agenda and the full documents considered are available in accordance with the NICE Publication Scheme.

# Board members present

Sharmila Nebhrajani Chairman

Professor Tim Irish Non-Executive Director

Dr Rima Makarem Non-Executive Director

Tom Wright Non-Executive Director

Professor Gillian Leng Chief Executive

Meindert Boysen Centre for Health Technology Evaluation Director

Dr Paul Chrisp Centre for Guidelines Director

Jennifer Howells Finance, Strategy and Transformation Director

Alexia Tonnel Digital, Information and Technology Director

# Directors in attendance

Jane Gizbert Communications Director

Dr Felix Greaves Science, Evidence and Analytics Director

Dr Judith Richardson Acting Health and Social Care Director

# In attendance

Dr Hugh McIntyre Medical Adviser to the Board

David Coombs Associate Director – Corporate Office (minutes)

Jennifer Beveridge Analyst – Health and Social Care (item 21/015)

Lee Dobson Programme Manager – Centre for Health Technology Evaluation (item 21/013)

Adrian Jonas Associate Director – Science Evidence and Analytics (item 21/014)

Seamus Kent Scientific Adviser – Science Evidence and Analytics (item 21/014)

Jenniffer Prescott Programme Director – Centre for Health Technology Evaluation (item 21/013)

Xavier Vaz Senior Analytical Manager – Health and Social Care (item 21/015)

# 21/001 Apologies for absence

1. Apologies were received from Dame Elaine Inglesby-Burke.

# 21/002 Declarations of interest

1. Tim Irish highlighted that his entry in the register of interests had been updated to include his recent appointment as a Non-Executive Director of Deltex Medical. This and the Directors’ previously declared interests recorded on the register were noted and it was confirmed there were no conflicts of interest relevant to the meeting.

# 21/003 Minutes of the last meeting

1. The minutes of the Board meeting held on 18 November 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

# 21/004 Action log

1. The Board noted the progress with the actions arising from the Board meeting on 18 November 2020 and the preceding meetings. Those marked closed on the log were confirmed as complete.
2. The Board highlighted the need to remain alert to potential funding opportunities from NHSX that would support NICE develop methods for the evaluation of technologies with embedded Artificial Intelligence.

# 21/005 Chief Executive’s report

1. Gill Leng presented the Chief Executive’s report which provided an update on progress with NICE’s major programmes and business plan objectives to the end of December 2020 and other matters of interest. It has been an unprecedented year, with ongoing pressures on staff, however the balanced scorecard indicates it has been possible to maintain most outputs to plan. Gill noted that work is underway to review the performance measures that are reported to senior management and the Board.
2. Sharmila Nebhrajani acknowledged the work of staff in the very challenging circumstances, not only to deliver existing commitments but also to develop the new strategy and on behalf of the Board expressed her thanks.
3. The Board received the report and in particular welcomed the review of the performance reporting.

# 21/006 Centre for Guidelines progress report

1. Paul Chrisp presented the update on key issues and developments in the Centre for Guidelines in November and December 2020, including the guideline on managing the long-term effects of COVID-19, which had a number of innovative features. The guideline will be kept under regular review and tests the thinking underpinning the new vision of dynamic living guidelines. The team remain mindful of the impact of COVID on the context for developing and implementing guidelines, and the need to delay consultations and publications is considered on a case-by-case basis.
2. The Board discussed the report and welcomed the rollout of the NICE & Office for National Statistics Recommendations Matching Algorithm (NORMA) to support guidelines surveillance and updating, and NICE’s international engagement to ensure that the guidelines take account of the latest COVID guidance and research across the world. The Board highlighted the importance of guidelines addressing health inequalities, particularly in the context of the post-pandemic recovery. Paul Chrisp confirmed that an equalities impact assessment is undertaken at the start of every topic, and the impact on equalities will feature in the future criteria that are used to prioritise guideline topics for update.
3. The Board received the report.

# 21/007 Centre for Health Technology Evaluation progress report

1. Meindert Boysen presented the update on key issues and developments in the Centre for Health Technology Evaluation in November and December 2020. He highlighted NICE’s ongoing work with partners on the RAPID-C19 pathway to enable faster access to COVID-19 treatments; the publication of Zio XT for detecting cardiac arrhythmias following the digital health technologies evaluation pilot; and the conclusion of the first consultation on the methods review.
2. The Board discussed NICE’s ongoing engagement with NHS England and Improvement to develop the Innovative Medicines Fund. It was noted that NICE’s committees will be responsible for recommending which specific technologies enter the fund, and NICE is keen to ensure the arrangements for the fund are aligned with the Innovative Licensing and Access Pathway (ILAP). On the theme of innovative new technology, the Board highlighted the importance of ensuring that NICE’s processes and methods take account of the changes in the nature of future treatments, which may for example, combine pharmaceutical and digital elements.
3. The Board noted with concern the ongoing recruitment challenges and welcomed the range of actions underway to address these, including a cross-Institute approach to workforce planning, a review of vacancies and the future proposal to over-recruit to positions to mitigate against turnover. The Board requested that consideration is also given to greater use of secondments to bring staff in from other organisations and asked to receive further information on the actions to address the vacancies.

ACTION: Jennifer Howells

1. The Board received the report.

# 21/008 Digital, Information and Technology Directorate progress report

1. Alexia Tonnel presented the update from the Digital, Information and Technology Directorate and summarised the various teams’ key activities in November and December 2020, including to deliver aspects of the NICE Connect transformation and the infrastructure for the new London office.
2. The Board discussed the various web services’ performance and noted the ongoing reduced use of HDAS, which it has been agreed with Health Education England to decommission. Evidence Search has also seen reduced use, the reasons for which will be explored further. It was noted that the upcoming renewal of the British National Formulary (BNF) contract will provide the opportunity to ensure the content and format meet user needs.
3. The Board received the report.

# 21/009 Science, Evidence and Analytics progress report

1. Felix Greaves presented the update from the Science, Evidence and Analytics Directorate covering November and December 2020. The directorate continues to work collaboratively across NICE and with partners on a range of initiatives, including the Innovative Licensing and Access Pathway (ILAP); a pilot project to develop innovative reimbursement methods for new antimicrobials; and the upcoming establishment of the Office for Digital Health (ODH) within NICE.
2. The Board welcomed these initiatives and highlighted the importance of a ‘test and learn’ approach to our evaluation of new technologies such as digital health to deliver tangible benefits to stakeholders quickly. The Board discussed the ILAP and requested further information on the measures that will be used to quantify its success.

ACTION: Felix Greaves

1. The Board received the report, supported the innovative work underway, and highlighted the importance of NICE continuing to play an active ‘thought leadership’ role.

# 21/010 Health and Social Care Directorate progress report

1. Judith Richardson presented the update on key issues and developments in the Health and Social Care Directorate in November and December 2020. Highlights included ongoing work with partners to support the implementation of NICE guidance, and the Public Involvement Programme’s co-leadership of an international project to develop a Summary of Information for Patients (SIP) to provide plain language information about medicines under assessment.
2. The Board discussed the report, noting in particular NICE’s ongoing partnership work with the Care Quality Commission and Academic Health Sciences Network.
3. The Board received the report.

# 21/011 Resources report

1. Jennifer Howells presented the report which outlined the financial position at 31 December 2020 and provided an update on the NICE Connect transformation programme, Human Resources and organisational development. Jennifer stated that the financial position at the end of December 2020 is a £3.4m underspend, which is consistent with the year-end forecast out-turn. In relation to workforce, it was noted that the Executive Team will shortly review a draft action plan that has been developed to deliver the equalities objectives approved by the Board in November. On transformation, 5 of the 14 NICE Connect deliverables for 2020/21 are now complete and a further 6 are on track. The remaining deliverables will be reviewed and potentially reprioritised in light of the pressures on the organisation.
2. There was a question from the Board as to whether the new values and behaviours sufficiently align with the new strategy. Gill Leng highlighted the intention to reference the new values and behaviours in the strategy and therefore stated that it would be helpful for the Board to identify if these need to be amended prior to the Board approving the strategy in March. She would therefore raise this as part of the Chief Executive’s update to the February Board Strategy meeting.

ACTION: Gill Leng

1. The Board received the report.

# 21/012 Communications Directorate progress report

1. Jane Gizbert presented the update on key issues and developments in the Communications Directorate in November and December 2020, and highlighted the work that is being paused in light of the pressures on the directorate including the weekly policy digest and monthly Chief Executive’s update. Guidance will also be promoted in the media on a case by case basis. The directorate is working on a communications plan for the launch of the new strategy, and a wider communications enabling strategy to help deliver the overarching strategy. Resource availability remains a key risk to delivering the strategic priorities.
2. The Board received the report.

**21/013 Review of the health technology evaluation processes**

1. Meindert Boysen and Jenniffer Prescott presented the proposals for change to the processes used for health technology evaluation at NICE. The proposals fall under 4 themes: aligning the current guidance development processes; opportunities for new process improvements and ways of working; commercial and Managed Access processes; and the vision and principles for the Highly Specialised Technologies programme.
2. The Board welcomed the extensive work outlined in the report and welcomed the overarching vision to ensure that the processes are faster, flexible, and responsive. The Board welcomed the intention to seek legal advice on the proposed harmonisation of terminology around stakeholders to ensure the implications for the appeal process are understood. The Board also asked that further consideration is given to defining a “significant” breach of the budget impact test, and the risk share arrangements and data collection responsibilities around managed access are clarified. It was agreed that that the consultation document should explain that the proposals do not relate to the Interventional Procedures programme, which would retain a separate process manual given its patient safety remit. The need for a clear link to, and alignment with, the guidelines programme was also highlighted.
3. Subject to the above amendments, the Board approved the proposals for consultation. It was agreed that Meindert Boysen, Gill Leng and Sharmila Nebhrajani would discuss the timing for the consultation outside of the meeting to take account of the pressures within NICE and the wider health and care system, and to ensure alignment with the methods review.

ACTION: Meindert Boysen, Gill Leng and Sharmila Nebhrajani

# 21/014 Data and Analytics Methods and Standards Programme and Implementation plan update

1. Felix Greaves and Adrian Jonas presented the delivery plan for the data analytics Methods and Standards Programme which aims to provide a clear framework for the use of data and analytics in the development of NICE guidance. While the programme is comprehensive and holistic, there will be an agile approach using the interim methods and standards to enable rapid delivery. Partnership working will be central to the programme.
2. The Board strongly endorsed the proposals, which were noted to be a core element of NICE’s strategy. Board members highlighted the need to move forward with pace and deliver tangible benefits as quickly as possible. The proposed modular approach that would support “learning by doing” was therefore welcomed. Mindful of the length of time proposed for this work, the Board recommended drawing upon the expertise of international organisations and industry to reduce the time spent developing NICE’s own arrangements.
3. Subject to these comments, the Board approved the Methods and Standards delivery plan and requested regular updates on progress.

ACTION: Felix Greaves

# 21/015 NICE Impact report: Cardiovascular disease management

1. Judith Richardson presented the latest impact report, which this month focused on how NICE’s guidance is being used to help improve outcomes for Cardiovascular Disease management. NICE has worked with national stakeholders to identify implementation challenges and the report outlines how NICE will work with partners to address gaps in uptake around cardiac rehabilitation and care plans for people with heart failure in a new “what’s next” section.
2. The Board received the report.

# 21/016 Remuneration committee terms of reference

1. Sharmila Nebhrajani presented the proposed updated terms of reference and standing orders for the Remuneration Committee following the scheduled 2-yearly review. The main change is to formally broaden the Committee’s remit to include succession planning and talent management for the Executive Team roles.
2. The Board approved the updated terms of reference and standing orders.

# 21/017 Audit and Risk Committee minutes

1. Rima Makarem, Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, presented the unconfirmed minutes of the Committee’s meeting on 25 November 2020. The meeting discussed a range of issues including equality, diversity and inclusion; IT resilience and cyber security; and the process for declaring and managing interests for advisory committee members and expert witnesses. On this latter issue, the Committee noted the introduction of spot checks to ensure assurance that processes are being followed, and for teams to proactively check the completeness of declarations prior to appointments to committees.
2. The Board received the unconfirmed minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 25 November 2020. An update to the Board was requested on the arrangements for managing the risk around cyber security, in the context of the merger of the IT and Digital Services teams under the Digital, Information and Technology Directorate, and the environment of rapid change.

ACTION: Alexia Tonnel

# 21/018 Any other business

1. None.

# Next meeting

1. The next public meeting of the Board (meeting as the Board Committee) will be held on 24 March 2021 at 1:30pm via Zoom.