Minutes Quality Assurance Committee, January 2021

Present: David Shaw, Mark Spigt, Bart Penders, Sandra Zwakalen, Gerard van Breukelen, Carmen Dirksen

1. The previous meeting’s minutes were accepted.

2. DS summarised the audit procedure so far. Researchers are invited via email to complete the first half of an initial audit form, which is followed by an online meeting with the quality officer in which the second half of the form is completed and data protection and other issues are discussed. The process is running smoothly; only issue is non-response from some people invited to audit. It was decided that rather than send multiple follow ups to non-responders, it would be better to further publicise audit and make it clear that all researchers are expected to participate in the process.

Another issue discussed was how to approach areas where the researcher disagrees with the draft audit report. The first step will be to engage and seek agreement, but if necessary research leaders may need to get involved. As a solution, the committee considered an escalation model, but decided that a lighter touch system would be better. Audit reports will be shared by default with research leaders, which will facilitate transparency and follow-up of any issues that require remedy.

*Action: DS will prepare summary of proposed procedure for approval by CAPHRI board. Once approved message about audit will be emailed to all CAPHRI researchers.*

3. DS reported that CTCM had provided a helpful review of the WMO section of the QA webpage. This has been shared with the chair of the FHML REC, who continues to liase with the Chair of the METC to ensure that applications are triaged to the correct committee. The current text on the QA webpage remains an accurate practical description.

4. DS shared the draft reporting guidance page. It was welcomed by the committee but MS suggested adding more of a rationale for why reporting is important.

*Action: DS will add a rationale to this page and add it to the website.*

5. BP reported that following consultation with several members of staff it appears that reporting guidance for qualitative studies is not needed at present due to wide variety in qualitative methods. However, this will be kept under review.

6. DS introduced the new data management plan requirements and UM Datahub portal for preparing these. All researchers are now supposed to complete a DMP using this system.

*Action:* *DS will add link to new DMP template resource and sentences saying it may not be suitable for all funders and that studies that reuse data may not need to submit new DMP data use as this is covered by old one. DS will ask datahub about non-funded research, as it is unclear whether such projects need a DMP and who would approve it in such cases.*

7. The committee thanked Gerard for his efforts in producing a useful statistics manual/checklist. This will be a valuable resource for researchers.

*Action: Gerard will send text for intro to manual. DS will add a statistics page to the website with link to Gerard’s file.*

8. Agreements/contracts: DS explained that the datahub portal includes questions about contracts, but CD and the committee agreed it was still worth mentioning to researchers that they should consider whether agreements are necessary (eg. (material transfer/data transfer/)

*Action: DS will contact CAPHRI contracts officer / grants office to identify contact person/useful links for website, before adding this to the website.*

9. The committee agreed that the Hong Kong principles concern research integrity more than research quality and thus that they do not need to be mentioned on the QA pages.

However, it was agreed that text on the pros and cons of sharing data should be added to the QA webpage, to reassure researchers that sharing is not always possible or desirable and a rationale can often be provided for not sharing data [proprietary or personal data, or dual use concerns).

*Action: DS will add this point to the website data protection pages.*

10. New chair: MS has to step down as he is now a research leader. Committee agreed that MS will email potential candidates for new chair and committee will discuss candidates. Expressions of interest to MS.

*Action: MS to contact potential new chairs of the committee, initially from departments Health Promotion and Epidemiology.*