

## Ongoing Actions

A.B. Date	Action	Progress
Nov 2024	N Booth to develop guidance for researchers around refreshing dormant projects.	
Nov 2024	N Booth and E Fletcher to coordinate and to ensure the next application windows are evenly set throughout the year.	Complete
Nov 2024	P Tiffin, C McManus, P Johnston, C Macdougall, K Mattick and Chair to meet to discuss the feasibility of putting together a bid for UKRI funding and to review if other funding streams are available.	Ongoing
Nov 2024	J Dacre and O Sierocinska to pick up work on unifying ethics reviews across universities.	
June 2024	C Macdougall and P Johnston to invite A Jackson and MPS colleagues to Research Subgroup for further discussion.	Complete

## Minutes

### 1. Welcome and introductions

Chair

- i. Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for attending.
- ii. Apologies were given for a recent quiet period due to health challenges affecting the team.
- iii. Reflected on progress made in UKMED governance, including milestones like the MOU between GMC and MSC, AKT DSA, and collaboration on data subjects' rights with BMA, MSC, and GMC.

### 2. Approval of minutes for 21 June 2024 and matters arising

Chair

- i. The minutes of the meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2024 were reviewed and approved by the Advisory Board as an accurate record.

### 3. Update on data load cycle and calendar inc. active projects

A Troughton

- i. A Troughton provided updates on various data loads, including UCAS, HESA, test provider data, recruitment, NTS, exam data, student FTP and ARCP.
- ii. Data specifications have been agreed for the 9 projects accepted in the summer application cycle.

### 4. Operational capacity

N Booth

- i. N Booth discussed the ongoing efforts at GMC to improve operational capacity.

- ii. There are currently 14 active projects and 3 dormant projects requiring refreshes. Expressed the need for clear guidance on refreshing dormant projects to help manage researchers' expectations.
- iii. The current challenges were discussed, such as balancing high-quality but sustainable service, misaligned application windows (every 4- and 8-months, rather than 6-monthly), and busy load periods clashing with application windows.
- iv. Several actions are underway at the GMC to help improve this, including improving documentation and processes, development of an activity tracker, and a new staff member joining the GMC, who will support UKMED.
- v. Further developments are expected in 2025, such as a full review of the website, addition of a coverage tool and a new pro forma to support research group review paper.

**Action 1: N Booth to develop guidance for researchers around refreshing dormant projects.**

**Action 2: N Booth and E Fletcher to coordinate and to ensure the next application windows are evenly set throughout the year.**

## **5. Clinical outcome data linkage projects & infrastructure funding possibilities**

P Tiffin

- i. P Tiffin presented on the LAMP (Linking Academic Attainment and Medical Performance) in doctors research project.
- ii. Clinical outcomes are not often linked the medical education data due to conflict from team level and hospital level effects. However, this can feasibly be done using multi-level modelling and evidenced by UKMEDP182, which links data from the National Ophthalmology Database with UKMED via a Trusted Research Environment (TRE). Other national clinical audit databases exist, which would allow this approach to be taken with other specialties.
- iii. P Johnston mentioned work being done to link nursing and midwifery data to the national survey, which is being used to analyse workforce, and suggested we invite Ian Atherton to share his thoughts on data linkage projects and develop relationships with others carrying out such work.
- iv. UKRI has made funds newly available for infrastructure and so far, have invested £22million in smart data services. P Tiffin reviewed the possibility of such a grant in helping enhance UKMED for researchers. Discussions around whether the GMC would be able to obtain such a grant due to its charity status.

**Action 3: P Tiffin, C McManus, P Johnston, C MacDougall, K Mattick and Chair to meet to discuss the feasibility of putting together a bid for UKRI funding and to review if other funding streams are available.**

## **6. Research applications and final reports submitted by 15 October 2024 deadline**

P Johnston

- i. P Johnston informed Members that five applications were submitted. 3 have been accepted.

## **7. Update on Ethics approvals**

T Heywood

- i. Since 2015, UKMED research using deidentified data, including both anonymous and pseudonymous data, was exempt from ethics committee approval. However, the

exemption now applies only to fully anonymous data, reflecting changes in ethical research standards.

- ii. GMC reviewed university websites to explore approaches to ethical approval, finding enough information to understand general practices. Key themes included demonstrating clear research benefits, ensuring transparency and honesty, and limiting blanket exemptions to fully anonymised data.
- iii. Next steps include drafting standard guidance on pseudonymisation and anonymisation to help researchers understand the differences and their relevance to ethical approval. This guidance will focus on pseudonymised data, explaining its handling under UK GDPR, safeguards like DSAs, and the legal basis for processing under Article 6(1)(e) of UK GDPR.
- iv. Currently, UKMED lacks an ethics review process, raising questions about implementing reviews, maintaining the current approach, or outsourcing approval to a university REC for greater transparency and safety.
- v. C McManus suggested UKMED to outsource ethics to a university ethics committee but further information is needed to get this process going.

**Action 4: J Dacre and O Sierocinska to pick up work on unifying ethics reviews across universities.**

**8. Update on publications from HEE funded projects**

Chair

- i. Chair updated that one of the three HEE-funded projects has been published in the BMJ (DOI: 10.1136/bmjopen-2024-086211) and another one is underway.
- ii. Discussions about whether UKMED should do more commissioned research. C Macdougall agreed but posed the question of who would be best suited to do it?

**9. Close and AOBs**

Chair

- i. Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.

Next meeting 6<sup>th</sup> June 2025 1-3pm