

NHSBT Research & Development CommitteeJune 2nd, 2020**Annual Report 2019/20****1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

The R&D Committee has prepared this report to the NHSBT Board to demonstrate how it satisfied its terms of reference during 2019/20.

2. OVERVIEW

The Board has delegated authority to the Committee to provide strategic oversight of an innovative, cohesive, high quality programme of research and development (R&D) which includes a balance of short and long-term research and meets organisational requirements. The Committee aims for timely translation of research findings into new products and services, to deliver improvements to the efficiency, efficacy and safety of blood, tissues, cellular and organ products and services for donors and patients.

The Terms of Reference of the R&D Committee were reviewed by the Committee at their meeting on 4th June 2019.

3. MEMBERSHIP

The Membership at the end of the reporting period was:

Committee Members

Paresh Vyas (Chair of RDC, Non-Executive Director)
Rob Bradburn (Finance Director)
Anthony Clarkson (Director of Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation)
Greg Methven (Director of Blood Supply)
Gail Miflin (Chief Medical Officer)
Jeremy Monroe (Non-Executive Director)
Ellen van der Schoot (Sanquin, The Netherlands: External Expert)
Jonas Wadstrom (University of Stockholm, Sweden: External Expert)
Piers White (Non-Executive Director)

Members that are no longer part of the committee at the end of the reporting period are:

Harvey Klein (NIH, USA: External expert)
Mike Stredder (Director of Blood Donation)
Huw Williams (Director of Diagnostic and Therapeutic Services)

Observers

Rachel Johnson (Associate Director, Statistics & Clinical Studies)
Yomi Adegbaaju (National Research Manager, Minutes)
Chris Sims (Planning and Management Accountant, Group Services)
Nick Watkins (Assistant Director, Research & Development)

4. COMPLIANCE WITH TERMS OF REFERENCE

Formal meetings of the R&D Committee were held on 4th June and 2nd December 2019. The June 2019 meeting was held at the end of the 2-day Quinquennial Review and decisions being made offline to allow room to discuss the output of the review.

5. DUTIES AND FINDINGS

1. The Committee reviewed and accepted progress against the objectives of the 2015 – 2020 R&D Strategy. They also reviewed initial priorities for the future R&D Strategy;
2. During the Quinquennial Review the Committee, joined by additional external experts assessed the quality, impact and relevance of the R&D Programme and made recommendations for the future strategy;
3. The Committee reviewed and accepted progress reports from the National Institute for Health Research Blood and Transplant Research Units;
4. The Committee reviewed and approved NIHR BTRU funding applications for 18-month extensions for submission to NIHR;
5. The Committee reviewed and accepted progress of the STRIDES cluster randomised trial to evaluate interventions to prevent vasovagal reactions among whole blood donors;
6. The Committee reviewed and accepted progress on the clinical trial of manufactured red cells, confirming their continued support for this important trial;
7. The Committee reviewed and approved an application for a 5-year extension to the QUOD BioResource, noting that requests for access to samples should undergo a scientific review and there should be a transition to focusing on scientific quality of studies now that the biobank is firmly established;
8. The Committee reviewed the proposed workplan for Transfusion and Transplantation Data Science and accepted it but noted that it requires further refinement with colleagues in ODT and experts in frailty;
9. The Committee accepted the final reports on big data pilot studies, noting that these had led to a successful application to Innovate UK for a project to develop an AI/Machine Learning approach to managing the platelet supply chain;
10. The Committee reviewed progress on all active work packages and projects within the reporting period;
11. The Committee reviewed the Intellectual Property Report and noted that reassurance regarding our ability to protect IP is needed;
12. The Committee accepted a report on the activity of our Principal Investigators (PI) and recognised their ability to attract external funding and publish their results in Internationally leading journals;
13. The Committee reviewed applications from senior scientists to become NHSBT Principal Investigators, which resulted in 2 successful applications;

14. The Committee accepted annual reports on Trust Fund awards, Clinical Fellows, the Clinical Trials Unit and the Component Development Laboratory;
15. The Committee agreed a workplan for future meetings.

6. CONCLUSION

The R&D Committee has complied with its terms of reference from 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020 except for assuring contracts are in place for all projects.

Contracts are in place and an assurance report will be provided for the November 2020.

Nick Watkins, Assistant Director – Research and Development