

OpenSAFELY Oversight Board - 02/03/2023 minutes

Ratified at 06.07.23 Oversight Board

Attendees	<p>Chair:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prof. Nigel Shadbolt <p>Bennett Institute:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prof. Ben Goldacre - Director and OpenSAFELY PI ● Seb Bacon - Chief Technology Officer ● Amir Mehrkar - Head of IG and external relationships <p>Board Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rony Arafin - Chief Operating Officer- ApHA CIC- ● Chris Bates - Director of Research and Analytics, TPP ● Mark Coley - GP, BMA ● Alex Freeman - Executive Director, Winton Centre for Risk & Evidence Communication, University of Cambridge ● Sean Kirwan - Senior Data Sharing and Privacy Manager, NHSE ● Tariq Khokhar - Head of Data for Science & Health, Wellcome Trust ● Kevin Minier - Expert patient representative ● Alex Eavis - EMIS (attended in lieu of Shaun O'Hanlon) ● Jeni Tennison - Open Data Institute ● Laurie Tomlinson - Associate Professor, LSHTM ● Sam Smith - MedConfidential ● Wendy Harrison - Head of Data Governance, NHSE <p>Attendees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Eva Simmonds - Transformation Directorate, NHSE (replacing Nicky Brassington) ● Mark Roberts - Transformation Directorate, NHSE ● Ben Butler-Cole - Bennett Institute, Presenting Item 6 <p>Secretariat:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Liam Hart - Research Administrator; Bennett Institute <p>Apologies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jess Morley - Policy Lead ● Pete Stokes - Director of Platform Development ● Stephen Evans - Professor of Pharmacoepidemiology, LSHTM ● Shaun O'Hanlon - CMO, EMIS ● Johnny Stewart - GP, RCGP
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- Ian Douglas - Professor of Pharmacoepidemiology, LSHTM
- David Hoy - Head of Data Policy, DHSC
- Paul Atkinson - GP, RCGP

Item	15:00 - 17:00	Topic and Documents
1	15:00 - 15:05	<p>Introduction from the chair (Nigel Shadbolt)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request for AOB - none requested • Ratify meeting notes from 06-10-2022 - All agreed that the previous minutes can now be ratified • Review of previous actions (below) <p>Actions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider when and how to review ToR - on today's agenda. 2. Circulate PPIE slides - These slides were circulated 3. Discuss Industry Projects with DCF Group - This will be discussed with DCF group later in the year, once legal basis for OpenSAFELY is settled 4. Update on long-term legal basis for OpenSAFELY - To be presented by Eva Simmonds
2	15:05 - 15:20	<p>Full review of ToR (Amir Mehrkar)</p> <p>No new updates concerning the Terms of Reference, apart from changes to board members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natalie Banner at Wellcome Trust has left their role • Nicky Brassington has moved from her role as Senior Sponsor within DHSC. Her long-term replacement is still to be confirmed. <p>A further review of TOR may be appropriate after the legal basis has been secured later in 2023; we note this board is advisory on the platform, methods and tools, rather than any specific dataset or project.</p>
3a	15:20 - 15:40	<p>New developments and progress against milestones (Ben Goldacre)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IG (on agenda) Main concern revolves around OpenSAFELY's (OS) legal basis beyond April 31st 2023. • Funding - A grant application to MRC has been submitted, to maintain and develop the OS infrastructure. We will be informed in June if successful. If eligible, the funding will start in October 2023. Discussions continue with NHSE around funding for the platform. Funding for single smaller projects, but <i>not</i>

the platform itself, has been secured from two smaller applications which are 1. University of West of England (UWE) to DARE UK, developing semi-automated checking on research outputs, having started on 1st February 2023 for nine months, and 2. A three month research grant focusing on "Winter Pressures", which is now close to completion. This grant is exploring how OS can access data identifying signals to understand if GPs are subjected to changes with appointments, and any knock on effects to patients.

- **Staff and Structures**- No structure changes and still operating under a design that's built from the Data Team and Pipeline team, Clinical Informatics, Service Analytics, Epidemiology, Policy team, and Information Governance. We have two staff members currently on maternity leave, who are due to return shortly. With funding security for less than 12 months, we now can't immediately replace any member of staff should they choose to leave, or take maternity leave. This creates a substantial risk; re-building a closely integrated team that has been created, trained and developed over time, if it is lost, would be extremely time-consuming.
- **Research outputs / External researchers** - A recent list of studies was shared highlighting the range of work undertaken. This information can be viewed in full on the approved projects page on the OS website. A presentation on research outputs was also shared by Laurie on '*Harnessing the strengths of OpenSAFELY: efficacy of COVID-19 therapeutics*', which demonstrated the benefits that come from access to data.
- **Tech** - The team have expanded their work on the "electronic health record Query Language" (ehrQL), which is now ready to be rolled out to external users. OS Interactive, which facilitates research without users needing to write code, is also progressing well. Work now focuses on adding details on how resources are being used by researchers, regarding where activity is coming from, which users have been accounting for what activity, on what day etc.
- **PPIE** - PPIE group continues to meet regularly providing feedback on our tools and developments.
- **Other** - Focus on accessing data beyond health. Discussions held with the Department of Education, about the prospect of installing OS over the National Pupil Database. Funding options for DfE data expansion are being considered. Other prospective new uses of OS measures being investigated include the potential to work with data from supermarkets, and from Local Government, with a detailed proposal developed with Oxfordshire County Council, to install OS over a range of their data including: social care, fire safety, and housing.

3b	15:40 - 15:55	<p>Question and Answer (All)</p> <p>Q1- “Can Digital Critical Friends be involved in the approval and assurance process for OS interactive” A: The tech team will present OS Interactive to a meeting of the DCFs later this year. Q2 “ Are other countries able to access this software too?” A: Various other deployments and discussions described.</p>
4	15:55 - 16:05	BREAK
5	16:05 - 16:30	<p>Post-COPI legal basis (Eva Simmonds - Programme Director, NHSE)</p> <p>This update will only cover OS post COPI access, moving the service from an emergency measure to a permanent footing. Use beyond Covid will be fully explored once this current work is complete.</p> <p>Key points NHSE’s intention is to apply the permanent COVID-19 public health direction before the COPI Notice expires, with no gap in service. Further work is still required concerning key elements such as project governance, application of opt outs, refreshing honorary contracts for OS staff, and transparency of the change for patients and general practices.</p> <p>Governance and legal basis: We are currently using the COVID-19 legal direction, which will end shortly (and has already ended for all uses, other than OS). We will replace this with a Ministerial Direction. GPs will be informed through an updated Data Provision Notice, which is currently being finalised.</p> <p>Contracts: We are working with commercial colleagues to update the Honorary NHSE Contracts which some Bennett Institute staff hold, to support OS.</p> <p>Opt Outs: Type-One Opt-Outs will need to apply under the new legal basis, as we no longer have an emergency footing to bypass them. A transition process is being developed, with the intention of allowing current projects to conclude, using the existing data.</p>
6	16:30 - 16:45	Promotion and Communication plans (Ben Butler-Cole)

		<p>Ben has been managing the recent effort to promote the Bennett Institute and expand our range of communications.</p> <p>All team members are contributing to an effort that goes beyond traditional research papers, and includes an extensive range of blogs, YouTube videos and podcasts too. We have a clear pipeline, with almost 100 proposed outputs. Discussion on audience, and agreement that this is diverse and broad. We also have an OpenSAFELY Animation, describing how the service works, due to be published once the audio has been finalised.</p>
7	17:00	Close

Actions

Item	Action	Owner	Status Notes
21	Laurie to share patient group feedback to NHSE on OpenSAFELY and advocating for open data	Laurie	
22	Arrange a emergency meeting date with Eva as an essential attendee	Liam	
23	Compile a list of names and contact information of those to contact during this transition (NHSE side)	Eva	