



BOARD & RESEARCH COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the teleconference held on Monday 8 February 2021

NIAA Board:

Prof Mike Grocott	Chair, NIAA Board
Dr Aamer Ahmed	Specialist Society Representative (2020 – 2021)
Ms Jenny Dorey	Royal College of Anaesthetists' Lay Committee rep
Ms Sharon Drake	RCoA Director of Clinical Quality & Research
Prof Helen Galley	<i>British Journal of Anaesthesia</i>
Prof Judith Hall	Royal College of Anaesthetists' Council
Prof Andy Klein	<i>Anaesthesia</i>
Dr Dan Martin	Academic Training Coordinator
Prof Ramani Moonesinghe	Director, Health Services Research Centre
Dr Mike Nathanson	Association of Anaesthetists
Prof Matt Wilson	NIAA Grants Officer

NIAA Research Council:

Prof Judith Hall	Chair, NIAA Research Council (to September 2022)
Dr Jonathan Coles	Neuro Anaesthesia & Critical Care Society
Dr Kariem El-Boghdadly	Difficult Airway Society
Prof Fang Gao	NIHR Senior Investigator
Prof David Menon	NIHR Senior Investigator
Dr Ronelle Mouton	Vascular Anaesthesia Society of Great Britain & Ireland
Dr Richard Ramsaran	Society for Education in Anaesthesia UK
Dr Bernadette Ratnayake	British Society of Orthopaedic Anaesthetists
Dr Katie Samuel	Research & Audit Federation of Trainees, Chair

In attendance:

Ms Pamela Hines	Committee Secretary (NIAA Coordinator)
Mr Jose Lourtie	RCoA Head of Research

Apologies:

Dr Gareth Ackland	Experimental Medicine Lead
Dr Simon Courtman	Association of Paediatric Anaesthetists of Great Britain & Ireland
Dr Gudrun Kunst	Association for Cardiothoracic Anaesthesia and Critical Care
Prof David Lambert	<i>British Journal of Anaesthesia</i>
Dr Alan Macfarlane	Regional Anaesthesia UK
Dr Andrew Owen	NIAA Trainee Representative
Prof Rupert Pearse	Director, UK Perioperative Medicine Clinical Trials Network
Dr Felicity Platt	Obstetric Anaesthetists' Association
Dr John Ward	Association of Anaesthetists
Lt Col Tom Woolley	Royal Centre for Defence Medicine

NIAAB+RC/02.2021/01

WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Chair welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies noted as above.

NIAAB+RC/02.2021/02

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Minutes of the joint Board & Research Council teleconference held on 21 July 2020 and Board teleconference held on 10 November 2020 were reviewed and both agreed as an accurate record.

ACTION: Ms Hines to upload the confirmed non-confidential minutes of the Board & Research Council meeting held on 21 July 2020, and the Board meeting on 10 November 2020 to the NIAA website.

NIAAB+RC/02.2021/03 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising to discuss as previous actions had been completed or were to be discussed as agenda items in this meeting.

NIAAB+RC/02.2021/04 ACADEMIC TRAINING

4a) Dr Martin noted that he has continued to attend the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges' Academic Leads meetings, where the main activity currently has been around protecting academic trainees' research time during the pandemic through producing a series of documents to help advise on ways to do this. The Academic Leads group with the NIHR and the RCP has also been working on a credentials framework for Consultants who do not have any existing research experience, which is a workplace training scheme to encourage NHS clinicians to become research active and will enable them to gain recognised Research qualifications through a UK University. There were comments of support for this initiative. Members were encouraged to feed in any specific comments via the RCP on the proposal and the supporting paper which had been circulated. Dr Martin also updated members on the Introduction to Academic Anaesthesia 1-day course which he had run when first coming into the post and had been well received. Dr Martin suggested resuming this course with some changes, including moving it from London so it becomes a rotating regional meeting hosted and led by the trainee research networks in that region and coordinated by the NIAA Trainee Representatives. It was also suggested that the meetings could be held virtually to reduce costs and given the current distancing restrictions, and include poster/abstract competitions for trainees. Members agreed with the suggestion and a number of similar courses that it may be possible to coordinate with were mentioned, including in Cambridge and Cardiff and a BJA research methodology course previously run at the College. It was also noted that there were some e-learning modules available on research and audits which may be useful. Dr Samuel advised that RAFT would be supportive of such a course, noting there may be some crossover of topics covered at the RAFT WSM. Dr Martin agreed to take this work forward accordingly. Dr Martin also mentioned the process of reappointing Trainee Representatives as it was acknowledged that these were now overdue, and that there is a need to establish a clear role for these posts within the NIAA including their involvement in delivering the course which had just been discussed. Dr Nathanson raised the topic of representation and transparency of these roles, seeking reassurance that the recruitment would be fair and the posts would remain independent. Ms Drake assured that there would be an open process for recruitment and that these posts represent trainee interests within the NIAA, and agreed that recruitment would be actioned by the NIAA staff team as a priority and will take the comments made during the discussion into account.

ACTION: Dr Martin to coordinate resuming the Introduction to Academic Anaesthesia course, liaising with relevant resources and other similar training courses

ACTION: NIAA Secretariat to coordinate recruitment of NIAA Trainee Representatives

4b) Dr Samuel updated members on RAFT's recent activity including the collaborative AIRWAYS-3 project which is a UK wide study on airway management for inpatient cardiac arrests, in collaboration with the AIRWAYS-2 team. The team have submitted an application for NIHR HTA funding which has been invited to stage 2 and currently awaiting a decision. The CERA (COVID Emergency Response Assessment) joint study looking at the psychological impact of providing frontline care during COVID has published the study protocol in the *BMJ* online and the first full paper is in pre-print with the *Lancet* which has generated some media interest. RAFT also launched a 2-part national survey at the end of December to look at equality, diversity and bias in anaesthesia training. A lot of data has been collected which is currently in the review/write up stage and is expected to be published as two separate papers. RAFT have also been involved in the National Research Collaborative which is a newly set up umbrella group of cross-specialty trainee research networks to facilitate communication and support for trainee research output. A representative will be co-opted onto the RAFT committee and will provide access to other specialty trainee research network leads. A decision on RAFT's national project has been postponed due to COVID and will likely remain on hold for now. Dr Samuel expressed thanks to Ms Drake for facilitating the RCoA's financial support of RAFT costs.

NIAAB+RC/02.2021/05 NIAA EXTERNAL REVIEW

Prof Grocott advised there had been no progress on this due to COVID and limited availability of some originally agreed panel members noting the challenging timing and the limitations of conducting such a process entirely virtually. However as the current peak shows signs of subsiding

Prof Grocott feels it may soon be possible to resume but perhaps with new panel members as although there are advantages to an international panel it does come with some challenges. There was discussion on when the review is expected to resume and what would be a realistic timeframe. This led on to exploring whether there could be an interim solution such as conducting an internal strategic review involving Board and Research Council members to determine the NIAA's priorities and direction, which could be carried out in parallel and feed in to the external review. Members were supportive of a strategic roundtable discussion between NIAA partners and constituents as a positive way forward on this; Prof Grocott suggested that the scheduled joint Board and Research Council meeting in July would provide a good opportunity for this to take place with an agenda agreed and signed off at the next Board meeting in May, and agreed to take this forward accordingly.

ACTION: Prof Grocott to lead on holding an internal NIAA strategy meeting in July, with admin support from RCoA staff team

NIAAB+RC/02.2021/06 ANAESTHESIA RESEARCH 2021

Mr Lourtie gave a brief update on the 2020 event which was held virtually and was well attended and has led to internal discussions on a proposal for the 2021 event, which is also being suggested to be run virtually at a similar time of year as 2020. Prof Grocott made a suggestion for a hybrid event which could be run as a national meeting virtually with elements of face-to-face regionalised content as long as it is considered safe to do so. There was discussion on how this could work in practice and issues that need consideration including identifying local organisers and locations, what content should be included, accessibility of speakers to delegates, fairly costed registration fees to ensure that the event remains cost neutral, and scheduling the event so as to avoid any major diary clashes with other events. It was noted that the event will need to attract a wide audience and members were keen to ensure there is sufficient interactivity and engagement, and workshop/breakout sessions were suggested as well as posters and award competitions. Prof Gao specifically queried whether the NIAA Research Award would be included, which Prof Grocott confirmed. Members agreed that Prof Grocott should develop a hybrid model proposal for further consideration.

ACTION: Prof Grocott to develop a hybrid model for Anaesthesia Research 2021 to include regional content, with support from RCoA staff team

NIAAB+RC/02.2021/07 NIAA GRANTS

Prof Wilson provided an update to accompany his written paper, the headline of which was the decision taken to suspend this year's Round 1 in consultation with NIAA founding partners, due to the increased pandemic surge at the start of the year. At this stage it is expected that 2021 Round 2 will continue as planned later in the year, all being well. Last year, Round 2 went ahead and was opened for applications in the autumn and was unusually oversubscribed, however peer review had been undertaken extremely efficiently and thanks were given to all reviewers who had contributed during what was an exceptional round. Members also discussed the financial impact of COVID on funding partners' ability to continue participating in future grant rounds; most of the larger funders did not foresee any major issues however it was acknowledged that some smaller societies may struggle due to decreased revenue. Prof Wilson also advised that he will be presenting to the Board the results of the grants review that had taken place prior to the pandemic, which will have evidence based recommendations and reflections in light of COVID-19 and its effects on the grants process, and will feed in to the wider NIAA review. Prof Wilson also advised members of the recent Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC) peer review audit he had undertaken largely with support from Ms Hines who was thanked for all of her work on this. He also updated members on the Researchfish reporting platform which is now in its second year of use and is obligatory for studies funded through the NIAA. The 2021 submission window for reporting outputs is currently open, however given that Researchfish is still in the relatively early stages of use for the NIAA and the impact of COVID it is not expected there will be many outputs and results to report at this stage, however once available the intention is to share these reports with funders.

NIAAB+RC/02.2021/08 BOC CHAIR OF ANAESTHESIA AWARD

Prof Hall provided a verbal update on the process undertaken to make the decision on this award, which she had chaired and confirmed Dr Ben Shelley of Glasgow was the successful applicant on this occasion, from what was an extremely competitive cohort of candidates. The decision has been ratified by RCoA Council and there is a plan underway to promote the new appointment through

the College's communications channels once the official paperwork has been signed off. Prof Hall thanked Ms Hines and Ms Drake for their roles in the process.

NIAAB+RC/02.2021/09 NIHR NATIONAL SPECIALTY GROUP

Prof Grocott informed members that Prof Wilson had been confirmed as his successor in the role of NIHR National Speciality Lead effective from last month. Prof Pearce was appointed as a Senior Investigator in July 2020. Congratulations were offered to both individuals. Prof Grocott has taken on a new role within the NIHR as BRC Director in Southampton. There has been a big push from the NIHR to promote the Associate PI scheme which provides official recognition of trainee contribution to portfolio studies, and members were asked to promote the scheme within their own networks.

NIAAB+RC/02.2021/10 CLINICAL TRIALS NETWORK

In Prof Pearce's absence there was no discussion on this item, however a written paper had been circulated in advance of the meeting and there were no further questions or comments.

NIAAB+RC/02.2021/11 HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH CENTRE

Prof Moonesinghe provided a brief verbal update to accompany the written report circulated, advising that the various HSRC projects had been continuing recruitment albeit at a slower rate than before the pandemic, leading to a reset of the overall aims and recruitment targets. Three new HSRC Fellows have been recruiting and will start in August, two of which are located outside of London. There are plans to hold a HSRC conference later in the year, currently under discussion with the RCoA Events team. Prof Moonesinghe's tenure as HSRC Director will end in 2022 and there is an active open process underway to recruit a successor to this post.

NIAAB+RC/02.2021/12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business discussed.

NIAAB+RC/02.2021/13 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- NIAA Board, Monday 10 May 2021, 10:00 – 12:00
- NIAA Board & Research Council, Monday 19 July 2021, 10:00 – 12:30 (followed by Exec Board meeting)

ACTION POINTS

Item		Responsible	Action	Due
02	Minutes of previous meeting	Ms Hines	Upload the confirmed non-confidential minutes of Board & Research Council meeting held on 21 July 2020, and the Board meeting on 10 November 2020 to the NIAA website	Next meeting
04	Academic Training	Dr Martin	Coordinate resuming the Introduction to Academic Anaesthesia course, liaising with relevant resources and other similar training courses	Next meeting
		NIAA Secretariat	Coordinate recruitment of NIAA Trainee Representatives	Next meeting
05	External Review	Prof Grocott NIAA Secretariat	Lead on holding an internal NIAA strategy meeting in July, with admin support from RCoA staff team	Next meeting
06	Anaesthesia Research 2021	Prof Grocott	Develop a hybrid model for Anaesthesia Research 2021 to include regional content, with support from RCoA staff team	ASAP
		NIAA Secretariat		