

UKCRF NETWORK

Laboratory Managers Work Group Terms of Reference

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Introduction

A work group is a specialist group that have come together at the request of the UK Clinical Research Facility (UKCRF) Network (with the agreement of the Senior Management Team), with a specific area or piece of work in mind, which can be finite or ongoing. The main purpose of a work group is to develop and share best practice.

Objectives and Purpose

The Laboratory Managers Work Group was established and continues to support the UKCRF Network in achieving its objectives related to providing standard laboratory practice for commercial and non-commercial trials across the UKCRF Network.

The primary purpose of the group is to standardise best practice throughout UK and Ireland CRF laboratories via training and educating staff, management of quality issues, set-up and costing of trials, and equipment management and usage. Each work group sets annual objectives, which are accessible to members via the Group's MS Team channel.

The Laboratory Managers Work Group is part of the UKCRF Network's Work Package for Operational Excellence (WP1). More information about the broader objectives of this Work Package can be found on the [Network's website](#).

Scope of Work

- **Sharing Best Practice:** Facilitating the exchange of best practices among CRFs to ensure standard practice across CRFs.
- **Guidance Document Development:** Creating comprehensive guidance documents and tools to ensure accurate trial/site costing, PBMC processing and equipment requirements.
- **Staff Networking and Development Forum:** Providing a platform for staff to discuss relevant topics through group meetings, online forums, and workshops.
- **Monitoring CRF Activity:** Showing workload/time spent on laboratory tasks.
- **Remaining Relevant and Responsive:** Liaising with relevant organisations to ensure that the work of the group is up to date, responsive and complementary to that of other key research organisations and structures.
- **Supporting the UKCRF Network Conference:** using the expertise and connections of work group members to design and deliver engaging workshops.

Responsibilities

Group Chairs and Deputy Chair:

- Regularly update and refine guidance documents and tools to reflect evolving standards and regulations.
- Ensure members meet the membership criteria (by working with the Project Officer), and encouraging diversity where appropriate (e.g., geographically, professionally).
- Agree and deliver annual objectives for the group.
- Establish and oversee task-and-finish groups to deliver specific objectives, when required.
- Promote a culture of knowledge sharing and standardisation in CRFs across the Network.

- Regularly update and refine guidance documents and tools to reflect evolving standards and regulations.
- Contribute to or support training sessions for staff at the Network's Annual Conference.

Group Members:

- Actively contribute to the group's objectives and attend scheduled meetings and events.
 - Members are encouraged to attend all meetings to ensure group cohesion and support group objectives.
 - While occasional absence is understood, members should, where possible, arrange for a suitable deputy or send their apologies.
 - Membership will be reviewed annually, considering attendance and contribution, and may be revised if necessary.
- Share expertise, local practices, and peer support with the group to promote laboratory best practices.
- Promote group resources and key messages with colleagues at their respective CRF.
- Join task and finish groups to support the maintenance and development of tools, training resources, and guidelines.
- Obtain approval from their Line Manager or CRF Manager before joining.

Membership Criteria

The Laboratory Managers Work Group consists of representatives from various CRFs across the UK and Ireland who have expertise and experience in laboratory practices, training, quality assurance and regulations.

Members must either be the designated Lab Manager or the individual responsible for laboratory operations within their CRF. In cases where a CRF does not have dedicated laboratory staff, another member of staff, such as a Clinical Research Nurse who oversees laboratory-related activities may join to represent their CRF. This group is open to one representative per CRF Laboratory.

The Chair may invite members from outside the CRFs if their expertise aligns with the group's purpose and areas of work, such as representatives from partner networks or research infrastructure.

The Operations Team manages the storage and sharing of group member details in line with the [UKCRF Network Staff Data Management Policy](#). Members' contact details will be shared with other members of the group via a private Google Sheet. Members can only access these details if they have a Google-linked account.

Meeting Management

The Group will meet two-monthly via MS Teams in addition to a 2-hour face-to-face meeting unless agreed otherwise with the WP Lead.

- The meeting must have a Chair or nominated deputy present.
- Agenda must be set no less than three working days prior to the meeting.
- Representatives from other parts of the infrastructure may be invited as appropriate.
- Administrative support (agenda, notes/minutes) should be identified from an appropriate source.
- The virtual recording of the meeting should be shared with members within 1 week of the meeting date.
- A summary of the key messages and actions should be shared with members within 2 weeks of the meeting date.

Dissemination and Outputs

The Chair will upload the following documents to the Group's MS Team:

- Meeting agendas
- Meeting summary and action list
- Annual objectives
- Terms of reference

All new projects and pieces of work should be submitted to the WP Lead, Deputy Leads and Operations Team for review using the UKCRF Network's New Project Request Form.

The Group's MS Team can be used to share CRF documents with the members, and for task and finish groups to collaborate on project outputs. The Chair will work with the Operations Team to provide all the required information for the promotion and dissemination of project outputs and updates through emails, social media, website, workshops, conferences.

Leadership and Accountability

The Group Chair is appointed by the WP Lead and Deputies in line with the UKCRF Network Role Selection Process (2023-2028).

Reporting

The Group Chair will provide updates on group achievements, challenges, and upcoming initiatives to the WP Leads, who will then present these updates at SMT meetings.

Group activity will also be summarised in the UKCRF Network annual report and submitted to the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR), the UKCRF Network's funder.

Review

This document will be reviewed every three years by the Chair to ensure that it's still fit for purpose. Any amendments should be submitted to the WP Lead, WP Deputy Lead and Operations Team.

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