

MINUTES OF THE IRG BUSINESS MEETING
SINGAPORE, MONDAY 22 JUNE 2009 at 1.30pm

Present:

Malene Fabricius Jensen, National Board of Health Denmark (Chair)
Sari Ormstad, Norwegian Knowledge Centre (Chair-elect)
Carol LeFebvre, UK Cochrane Centre
Chin Mien Chew, Singapore Ministry of Health
Diane Lorenzetti, University of Calgary
Robert Aubin, AETMIS Montreal
Susan Bidwell, Canterbury District Health Board New Zealand
Catherine Voutier, Centre for Clinical Effectiveness, Australia
Elisabeth Giesenhagen, DIMDI, Germany
Hans-Peter Dauben, DIMDI, Germany
Nina Hakak, Israeli Centre for Technology Assessment in Health Care
Uliana Pontes Vieira, Ministry of Health Brasil
Anke Holtorf, Biobridge Strategies Switzerland
Too Sze Moh, Singapore General Hospital
Libo Tao, Beijing Novartis Pharma China.

Malene welcomed everyone to the meeting, introduced the agenda, and briefly outlined the purpose of the Information Resources Group for the benefit of those who had not attended the IRG meetings previously.

Chair's Report

A report¹ from the Chair has been submitted to the HTAi Board of Directors. It covered the following:

- Annual meeting activities organised by the IRG:
 - Basic skills workshop
 - IRG workshop
 - Annual business meeting
 - initial contact has been made to the Scientific Programme Committee of next year's HTAi Annual Meeting in Dublin for IRG activities to be included in the planning as early as possible
- Vortal update: the year-long scholarship provided by HTAi for a student to work on updating and expanding the Vortal has been overseen by Elaine Alligood. The work has seen existing resources on HTA, methods, organisations, projects and reports updated and the Vortal expanded with new resources. Collaboration has been undertaken with Andrew Booth to incorporate *Netting the Evidence*. Search facilities have been upgraded and customised. Elaine Alligood has been involved in ongoing discussion around the future structure of the Vortal. In the future, a section of the

¹ The IRG Working Plan 2008-9, status per 12. June 2009

Vortal could be devoted to other activities including other HTAi ISGs. At present a section dedicated to activities of the Policy Forum has been set up. Further developments are likely to take place when the HTAi website is updated. Elaine is contributing to the design and search functionalities.

- Internal organization: Discussions have been held with HTAi regarding the internal structure of the IRG. A draft proposal has been drawn up for discussion by members.
- Collaboration has taken place with the INAHTA Education and Training Working Group. There is ongoing work on the INAHTA glossary in compiling the French and Spanish versions, developing a technical platform for the glossary to exchange relevant documents and updated terms, and setting up an editorial committee. These issues will be further discussed during the INAHTA meeting by the Education and Training Working Group. Furthermore possible IRG involvement in capacity building activities in developing countries of the INAHTA has been discussed initially. Preliminary contact regarding collaboration has been made with the Belgian group KCE who are leading the work on the information management system for planned EUnetHTA Joint Action. Information on planned, ongoing and future activities is exchanged between the Cochrane Information Retrieval Methods Group and IRG.

IRG organisational structure and processes

A draft proposal was introduced by Malene. The draft has been circulated to the IRG mailing list at the beginning of June 2009. Copies were distributed to those present. An Executive Group of 6 members (Chair and Chair elect, two Past Chairs, and 2 IRG members) is proposed, supplemented by Working/Project groups for specific activities as needed. Processes for forming the Executive Group need to be developed. A more formalised structure will bring about increased transparency and ability to undertake and complete activities throughout the year, coordinate with the HTAi Secretariat, and report back on IRG activities.

- Catherine asked whether there would be a formal nomination process or whether people should put themselves forward as being interested in a position.
- Carol agreed that people should be able to put themselves forward. If there were to be only one person interested in a position they would be “elected unopposed”.
- Diane asked about financial implications. In reply, Malene said this would be discussed by the HTAi Board who have expressed support for interest group activities but would like to ensure better consistency of how the groups operate while allowing them to encompass a broad variety of activities.
- Mien Chew suggested that any election or appointment process should take place prior to the HTAi Annual Meeting so that new positions could be announced in the context of the IRG Annual Business Meeting.
- A discussion took place about the desirability of having the two past Chairs of the IRG on the Executive Group:
 - Hans Peter noted that the proposed composition of the group potentially allowed each individual to remain on the group for up to 10 years (if they served terms as a member, Chair elect, Chair, then two terms as Past Chair). He recommended considering the implications for slowing the flow of fresh and innovative ideas.

- Nina suggested that the past Chairs carry an advisory role only. This was supported by Carol who recommended that Past Chairs should not have voting rights. This would allow their expertise to be contributed but with reduced power and also reduced expectations of the time they would be asked to commit.
- Robert proposed that any four IRG members should be on the Executive Group instead of the two Past Chairs and two members.
- It was decided to adjust the proposed structure in relation to these comments and to circulate the revised proposal via the email list with a deadline for commenting before forwarding to the Board.

Introduction of the new Chair and Chair-elect

Malene presented Sari Ormstad as the new Chair of the IRG and thanked her for their good working relationship during the past two years.

Catherine Voutier from the Centre for Clinical Effectiveness in Melbourne was presented as the next Chair Elect. She expressed her pleasure at being nominated for this role and noted that she had a particular interest in the better dissemination of evidence from HTA.

Sari then took over chairing the remainder of the meeting, first thanking Malene for her contribution over the past two years. Sari highlighted the current progress on networking with other groups, especially INAHTA and establishing the structure and processes for the IRG to be continued as priorities for the next two years. She asked those present to start thinking about how to develop the election process. This will also be circulated to the mailing list for comments and suggestions.

Sari also asked for ideas about next year's IRG activities at HTAi.

Update from the Cochrane Information Retrieval Methods Group (Carol Lefebvre)

- An audit of the quality of search strategies in Cochrane Reviews is being undertaken. The project is named PRESS – peer review of electronic search strategies.
- New developments in the Cochrane Library are
 - Diagnostic test accuracy reviews are now available
 - Risk of bias tables (See Cochrane Reviewers' Handbook Chapter 8.6)
 - Summary of findings tables (See Cochrane Reviewers' Handbook Chapter 11.5)
 - An Editor-in-Chief has been recently appointed
 - Podcasts are now available
 - RSS feeds from the Cochrane Collaboration
 - Facebook and Twitter are being considered
- The Cochrane Library's new impact factor is 5.182, and is ranked 12/107 titles in Medicine- General and Internal. This improvement in impact factor contributes to the standing of academics within their local and national setting and will be a further incentive for them to undertake or contribute to reviews.

The meeting closed at 2.20pm