

The INSIDER is the Newsletter of the UK Trial Managers' Network. The INSIDER polled highest in a recent survey of members to name the Newsletter. The Newsletter will be produced four times a year.

Welcome all INSIDERS !

Update from the Working Group

The Working Group was convened in December 2013 in response to the withdrawal of the Network's NIHR funding. The remit of the Working Group is to:

- guide and support the organisation and development of network activities during the transition phase (2014-2015)
- guide the future strategic development of the network

The group has been meeting monthly, has produced terms of reference and is now developing a working model for the continuation of the TMN for years to come. There are several options on the table, starting with defining membership and the aims and objectives of the Network. The Working Group wants to work with the membership to these ends and over the next 9 months will be asking you to comment on various elements of the work they are doing and involving trial managers in every aspect of UKTMN development.

The members of the Working Group are:

Newcastle CTU	Elaine McColl (Chair)
MRC@UCL, London	Sarah Meredith
CHaRT, Aberdeen	Alison McDonald
CTRU, Leeds	Jane Nixon
CTSU, Oxford	Chris Bray
NDPH, Oxford	Louise Bowman
NPEU, Oxford	Barbara Farrell
NPEU, Oxford	Ed Juszcak
Liverpool CTU	Helen Hickey
Nottingham University	Kath Foster

The Guide

The Guide to Efficient Trial Management was published and uploaded to the website in May this year, however there were a few errors in the document so a corrected version has now been posted on UKTMN. If you come across any mistakes when browsing through the Guide please do not hesitate to let us know, bearing in mind that some information goes out of date very quickly. We hope to update the guide bi-annually in the future.

Using the Forums

The website is your place to connect with other trial managers and likeminded people. It is the place to discuss common problems, post solutions and generally help each other with the ever more complex task of running trials. You can subscribe to getting an instant alert to a forum post or get a weekly digest. Go to the website Discussion forums to see the simple instructions. Forum posts are there for you to explore or ignore but remember you are an expert too and there is always something you can share with others.

The future of the Trial Managers' Network Survey

The survey circulated in December 2013 was completed by 269 members, 56% of the membership at that time. Membership has since risen to 530.

Four main themes emerged from the structured questions:

1. *Professional accreditation (65%)*
2. *More advice on career development for trial managers (62%)*
3. *Promoting methodological research about trial conduct (59%)*
4. *Mentoring scheme for novice trial managers (51%)*

There was significant mention of training for trial managers in the open text questions. Work is ongoing with these responses to establish more precisely the needs of trial managers and working with the information to develop an inclusive, responsive Network.

SWATs (Studies Within A Trial): what they are and how you can get involved

Trials provide evidence to help patients and practitioners make well-informed choices about health and social care. They help resolve uncertainties, and people involved in organising and running trials often have their own doubts and questions about whether the methods used in the trials are the most effective and efficient. What's the best way to choose what to test in the trial? How should patients and the public be involved in the research? What are the best ways to recruit participants, measure outcomes, analyse data and report findings? How should evidence from other studies be used?

SWATs (Studies Within A Trial) try to answer these, and many other questions. They are relatively simple pieces of research that would investigate different ways of doing trials. The All Ireland Hub for Trials Methodology Research is working with the MRC Network of Hubs as a whole and others to build a collection of designs that could be adopted, or adapted, for use in trials. They will help build the



evidence base making it easier to identify the most appropriate methods.

We'd be delighted to receive ideas and involvement from trial managers, who are often at the forefront of choosing between different ways of doing trials. Several SWATs are already planned, ongoing, or have already been done. For example, on rekindling enthusiasm across sites in a multicentre trial, different letters to invite people to join a study and alternative ways to give them a questionnaire to complete. New suggestions, comments and ideas can be sent to me, Professor Mike Clarke, at m.clarke@qub.ac.uk. Together, we can improve the quality of research.

Are you interested in improving recruitment into your mental health trial? Then we need you!

The MRC and NIHR have funded a series of studies to develop and test interventions to improve recruitment into trials. We have developed a simple intervention which the evidence suggests may improve the recruitment of patients. This intervention has been developed by working closely with patients, carers, trialists and members of research ethics committees.

We are now looking for **mental health trials** recruiting patients to test whether this simple intervention improves recruitment.

The numbers of trials that can participate are limited, so if you are interested **please do not delay and contact:**

Adwoa Hughes-Morley, *NIHR Doctoral Research Fellow*

Telephone: 07779570555, Email: adwoa.hughes-morley@manchester.ac.uk

Web: www.manchester.ac.uk/mrcstart, Twitter: @MRCSTART

Introducing the team

The administrative team during this transition phase work in the Nuffield Department of Population Health, Oxford, UKTMN's current home.

Chris Bray

I am a Senior Clinical Trial Manager at Oxford University's Clinical Trial Service Unit (CTSU). I have been involved in planning and running many of CTSU's large-scale clinical trials since the mid-1990s (HPS, SEARCH, SHARP, THRIVE & REVEAL), working closely with colleagues in the UK and internationally. I am also the lead for the MRC's HTMR Trial Conduct Working Group, whose members are engaged in research into making trials more efficient and cost-effective. As a member of both the UKTMN administrative team and the UKTMN Working Group, I am a key link between these two groups.

Angela Radley

I have worked in CTSU for twenty six years. My primary role has been to ensure the day-to-day smooth running of the randomisation service. However, I have been involved in many aspects of data



management on a variety of large randomised controlled trials. My role in the UKTMN team is to provide administrative support.

Ryonfa Lee

I have been a Trial Manager at CTSU since 2012. I have been working on large-scale randomised trials in cardiovascular disease and diabetes (REVEAL and ASCEND). I am involved in managing a wide range of study operations and liaising with Japanese colleagues. I am responsible for the management and maintenance of the UKTMN website.

Upcoming courses and events for trial managers

UKTMN Annual Meeting - November 2014

We are planning a meeting in November 2014 which primarily will be to share the options available for UKTMN and to seek your buy-in for these options.

We plan to cover the costs for members to attend this meeting which is likely to be in London. **Please watch the website for the actual date and venue.**

17th Edinburgh Clinical Trial Management Course

A two day course focusing on the practical management of randomised controlled trials.

25th and 26th November 2014 www.dcn.ed.ac.uk/ectmc

R&D Forum

30th September and 1st October 2014

Research in the NHS: the Basics. www.rdforum.nhs.uk/content/rd-forum-events

Oxford Clinical Trial Management Short Course

The University of Oxford Postgraduate Programme in Evidence-Based Health Care Studies launches two new modules in 2014; Clinical Trial Management and Mixed Methods in Health Research. <http://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/courses/details.php?id=B900-165>

SCT 36TH ANNUAL MEETING (2015)

ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA, USA - MAY 17-20, 2015.

<http://www.sctweb.org/public/meetings/2015/home.cfm>

Please let us know if you would like to write a piece for the next edition of **The INSIDER**.

Contact: Angela Radley at tmn@ndph.ox.ac.uk

