



Terms of Reference

National Adult Cardiac Surgery Research Group

1. Version Control

Date	Version	Status	Author	Comments
29/11/12	1.0	Draft	Rebecca Cosgriff	New Document

2. Background

The National Adult Cardiac Surgery Audit (NACSA) collects data on all major heart operations carried out on NHS patients in the UK. The audit is managed by NICOR, with clinical direction and strategy provided by the Society for Cardiothoracic Surgeons (SCTS) and the Project Board.

3. Purpose

To promote the use of audit data in high quality research projects.

4. Function

- Accountable to the NIOR Research Group
- Steer the NACSA research strategy
- Sets priorities and allocates and commits resources
- Collaborate with universities, other national audits and research institutions to stimulate research
- Assess applications for access to data
- Providing constructive advice and feedback to applicants where necessary
- Allocate surgical collaborators where one is not already a member of the research team
- Agree fees for access to data on a case by case basis, so as not to hinder research whilst covering costs
- Oversee research projects as they progress to ensure the timeliness and accuracy of outputs
- Assess final drafts of research papers prior to their submission to a journal, providing feedback or approval as required
- Ensure that data are only released in accordance with the NICOR data sharing policy
- Approves the project documentation set
- Provides the forum to negotiate solutions to any problems or conflicts
- To arbitrate on any conflicts within the project
- Work with other NICOR audits to streamline and standardise processes where possible and desirable

5. Membership

Name	Job Title	Organisation
Ben Bridgewater (Chair)	Consultant Cardiac Surgeon & NACSA Clinical Lead	UHSM
Rebecca Cosgriff	NACSA Project Manager	NICOR
Joel Dunning	Consultant Cardiothoracic Surgeon	JCUH
Mike Fisher	Patient representative	N/A
Stuart Grant	Honorary Clinical Research Fellow - Cardiovascular surgery	UHSM
Graeme Hickey	Biostatistician	NIBHI
Simon Kendall	Cardiothoracic Surgeon	JCUH
Lynne Walker	NICOR programme Manager	NICOR

6. Expectations of Chair and Board members

- It is important that all parties of the relevant business areas are represented with a commitment to the role you have agreed to do both in terms of your time (attendance at board meetings and responsiveness to out of meeting activity) and also giving the project the priority it requires to be successful.
- The Chair must ensure members have had the opportunity to voice their opinion, to be able to challenge and to have their questions answered
- Minutes will be taken by the Project Manager, with the final draft agreed remotely by the board and published on the NICOR website.

7. Quorum and Meeting Frequency

Board meetings should include the Chair (or a nominated delegate), the Project Manager and at least two other members.

Members are expected to attend at least 50% of meetings per annum, either in person or remotely via Skype.

Meetings will be held at University College London (UCL) on a quarterly basis, with dates arranged by the Project Manager to allow for maximum possible attendance. The frequency of the Project Board meetings may be subject to change by board members as the project plan progresses

8. Decision Making

A consensus should be reached wherever possible in the event of any disagreements occurring. The Project chair will sum up and explain why a decision has been reached. The Research Group will be accountable to the NICOR Research Group. If the Group are unable to reach an agreement they will refer the issue to the NICOR Research Group.

Decision-making will be inclusive as far as possible and timescales will be considered/ taken into account. Where necessary there will be an out-of-committee process for urgent decisions.

9. Review

The draft Terms of Reference will be reviewed and finalised at the next Project Board meeting. Any further amendments must be reviewed and, if acceptable, approved by the project board as required.

10. Management and Administration

- Group paper documentation will be distributed electronically by the Project Manager five working days prior to the Group meetings taking place
- Group minutes will be sent electronically to all members for approval within ten working days of the meeting taking place, with a deadline of five working for the provision comments and amendments to the Project Manager
- Provided any necessary amendments have been made, minutes will be published on the NICOR website after the deadline for feedback from the Research Group has passed
- An up to date version of this document, once approved by the Research Group, will be published on the NICOR website
- Research documentation with information, communications, monitoring and reporting will be held securely on the NICOR servers to ensure a clear audit trail is maintained