

Trial of Randomised Approaches for National Screening FOR Men



Independent Scientific Advisory Group (ISAG)

Terms of Reference

1 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the Independent Scientific Advisory Group (ISAG) is to review the progress of the TRANSFORM study, to provide expert advice to Prostate Cancer UK as primary funders, and to make recommendations regarding any future funding relating to TRANSFORM to the Prostate Cancer UK Board of Trustees.
- 1.2 The ISAG will consider reports and data from the TRANSFORM Trial Management Group at regular intervals during the programme, with an initial focus on Stage 1, the 'pilot phase' of the study. Recommendations should be in line with the goal of the charity's [research strategy](#), to advance to an effective and optimal national screening programme for prostate cancer that will save lives.

2 Scope

- 2.1 These Terms of Reference are applicable to all members of the ISAG and should be referred to before each meeting.
- 2.2 All ISAG members should be thorough and impartial in their assessment of TRANSFORM progress reports.
- 2.3 Members of the ISAG shall be invited to comment on TRANSFORM progress in its entirety, measuring delivery against the agreed programme plan (including timelines and budget), the trial protocol, the statistical analysis plan, the participant-facing information and in particular the Stage 1 milestones.
- 2.4 The deliberations and recommendations of the ISAG will also be informed by the other governance committees relating to TRANSFORM, including the Trial Steering Committee, Data Monitoring & Ethics Committee and the TRANSFORM Discovery (Biobank) oversight committee.
- 2.5 For all clinical trial oversight committees, upholding the rights, safety and well-being of the participants are the most important considerations and should prevail over the interests of the research. Serious concerns should be brought to the urgent attention of the Research Team at Prostate Cancer UK.

3 Membership and Terms of Office

- 3.1 The ISAG shall consist of a group of members selected for their specialist knowledge and experience across the range of research areas under investigation in TRANSFORM.

- 3.2 Members shall be appointed by the Assistant Director of Research with approval from the UK's National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR).
- 3.3 Members may be in receipt of an award from Prostate Cancer UK and are not prohibited from submitting applications to any of our grant rounds during their appointment. However, all members must abide by the Conflicts of Interest Code of Practice outlined in section 5 below.
- 3.4 Prostate Cancer UK Trustees shall not be members of the ISAG but shall be entitled to attend its meetings as observers, subject to our Conflicts of Interest Code of Practice.
- 3.5 The initial tenure for all ISAG members will be for a term equal to Stage 1 of TRANSFORM (expected to complete in 2028) up to the 'go/no go' decision point regarding progression to Stage 2. Members may be invited to continue their tenure on the ISAG beyond Stage 1 of TRANSFORM, dependent on its continuation. Total length of tenure for any member of the ISAG shall not exceed 6 years. The 6 year total does not have to be continuous; tenure may be paused, eg during periods of sick leave, parental leave, sabbaticals etc.
- 3.6 A list of active members of the ISAG will be posted on the Prostate Cancer UK website.
- 3.7 A minimum of eight members of the ISAG, inclusive of the Chair, must attend any given meeting, with written comments to be received in advance from absent members. The quorum for any formal voting carried out by the ISAG shall be half the voting members, plus the Chair.
- 3.8 A maximum of two members of the ISAG may be from the same institute.
- 3.9 The ISAG will be able to recommend additional expertise, to attend either for a complete meeting or for the discussion of particular elements of TRANSFORM. Additional experts may also be sought by the Research Team at Prostate Cancer UK where necessary. However, all co-opted members must be approved by the Chair of the ISAG and NIHR. Any additional experts co-opted onto the ISAG shall be granted temporary membership and can therefore participate in the review of TRANSFORM, offer advice and recommendations.
- 3.10 Members are required to read and adhere to our [Code of Conduct](#) when carrying out the duties of the ISAG.

4 Operating Procedures

- 4.1 The ISAG shall normally meet as a whole, online, biannually to consider TRANSFORM progress. Meetings will occur after the Research Team's receipt and forwarding of progress reports from the TRANSFORM Trial Management Group, which are expected every 6 months; at the end of April and the end of October. ISAG members may sometimes be asked to join additional meetings to review specific updates or data from the TRANSFORM researchers. On occasion (no more than once a year), Prostate Cancer UK may look to convene the ISAG in person, particularly when we reach key milestones in the delivery of TRANSFORM.
- 4.2 ISAG members agree to attend all meetings (unless otherwise agreed in advance of the meeting with the Research Team at Prostate Cancer UK). This is to ensure a fair and complete assessment of progress with the study, and that a quorum is always present during the meetings.
- 4.3 Feedback and comments from ISAG members will be captured in the minutes of ISAG meetings and circulated as appropriate. Written reports might be expected in certain circumstances, such as at key decision points regarding continuation of the trial, and to inform any future funding recommendations.

- 4.4 ISAG members will not be expected to comment in detail on elements of the trial that fall outside their areas of expertise and experience, but should be able to form a view based on the documentation provided, updates from the TRANSFORM Trial Management Team and from the discussions amongst other members of the ISAG.
- 4.5 ISAG members should access trial documentation and progress reports, and submit any written comments, via a secure environment provided on the online grants management system ([Symplectic Grant Tracker](#)).
- 4.6 ISAG members should not disclose any details about the progress of TRANSFORM to others outside of the meeting.
- 4.7 Open and robust discussions will be encouraged during ISAG meetings, with the expectation that members are courteous and respectful of others' views. Any feedback from the ISAG to the TRANSFORM Trial Management Group will be provided collectively and anonymised.

5 Conflicts of Interest Code of Practice

- 5.1 The Prostate Cancer UK Research Team, along with NIHR as major funders, will endeavour to identify potential conflicts of interest prior to finalising ISAG membership. Members must promptly disclose any potential conflicts of interest if/when they arise to the Research Team.

5.2 Definition of a Conflict of Interest:

Prostate Cancer UK considers a Conflict of Interest to arise if an ISAG member:

- is part of the same institution as any of the TRANSFORM Lead researchers.
- is part of the same institution that is acting as a TRANSFORM recruitment centre.
- is related to any of the TRANSFORM Leads, co-applicants or members of the project team.
- is a current or previous member of the TRANSFORM project team.
- is able to personally gain (financially or otherwise) in relation to the TRANSFORM study and/or any recommendations made by the ISAG.

If an ISAG member is at the same Research Institute as a co-applicant or collaborator on the grant it is not necessarily considered to be a significant conflict of interest, but will be considered on a case by case basis. We will also take into consideration any other individual cases if raised by an ISAG member.

Prostate Cancer UK may consider relaxing certain conflicts of interest if the fair assessment of TRANSFORM progress is jeopardised by a significantly reduced number of members involved in the discussion.

6 Secretariat to the ISAG

- 6.1 Members of the Prostate Cancer UK Research Team shall form the secretariat to the ISAG, and be non-contributing, non-voting members.
- 6.2 The secretariat will be responsible for arranging all ISAG meetings, making available the TRANSFORM progress reports and any other trial documentation required for the ISAG to fulfil its remit, and producing and circulating minutes and action points.

7 The Chair: Role and Responsibilities

- 7.1 The Independent Chair of the ISAG: The initial tenure for the ISAG Chair will be for a term equal to Stage 1 of TRANSFORM (expected to complete in 2028) up to the 'go/no go' decision point regarding progression to Stage 2. The Chair may be invited to continue their tenure on the ISAG beyond Stage 1 of TRANSFORM, dependent on its continuation. Total length of tenure shall not exceed 6 years.
- 7.2 The Chair of the ISAG shall not vote on recommendations to the Funder, Prostate Cancer UK.
- 7.3 If the Chair is to be absent for all or part of a meeting of the ISAG, and alternative dates cannot be arranged, the Secretariat to the ISAG shall appoint an acting Chair, in advance of the meeting.
- 7.4 The Secretariat has responsibility for the operation of the ISAG; the Chair is responsible for its output.
- 7.5 The duties of the Chair include, but are not limited to, the following (some of the duties below may become the responsibility of the acting Chair in the Chair's absence):
 - 7.5.1 To approve or reject any new appointments (permanent or temporary) onto the ISAG and to approve who is present for any given committee meeting.
 - 7.5.2 To assist the Research Team at Prostate Cancer UK during any decision stage and, with support from the rest of the ISAG, to decide upon appropriate recommendations to Prostate Cancer UK and other TRANSFORM funders regarding future funding decisions, or an appropriate set of criteria upon which to base future funding decisions.
 - 7.5.3 To support the Conflicts of Interest Code of Practice by asking the ISAG members if any new/perceived Conflicts of Interest have arisen since the previous meeting.
 - 7.5.4 To ensure that every member of the ISAG has the opportunity to be heard and that no opinion is ignored. To ensure that the views of the Patient and Public Involvement Representatives are appropriately considered, and that any of the queries or concerns they raise are suitably acknowledged and addressed.
 - 7.5.5 To ensure that the full range of scientific opinion is taken into account.
 - 7.5.6 To ensure any significant diversity of opinion is fully explored and discussed, and if it cannot be reconciled, is accurately reflected in the minutes.
 - 7.5.7 To ensure that sufficient explanation is provided from ISAG members on points of recommendation; to give adequate feedback to the TRANSFORM Trial Management Group, where appropriate, and to the funders, Prostate Cancer UK, and its Trustees.
 - 7.5.8 To ensure that the minutes produced by the Secretariat to the ISAG are an accurate reflection of the discussion at the meeting and provide a clear audit trail of any decision-making process.

8 Confidentiality

- 8.1 ISAG members agree to not disclose any confidential information with any third parties. Confidential information may include (but is not limited to) TRANSFORM progress reports, information provided by the TRANSFORM Trial Management Group, funding decisions by Prostate Cancer UK's Trustees etc.

- 8.2 Any materials provided by Prostate Cancer UK (including electronic and paper copies) are done so in the strictest of confidence and must not be shared with any third party. All documentation must be appropriately destroyed after the corresponding meeting or when the materials are no longer required.
- 8.3 Prostate Cancer UK should be notified of any possible breach of confidentiality as soon as possible.

9 Expenses

- 9.1 Whilst meetings will be predominantly virtual using video conferencing facilities, Prostate Cancer UK will reimburse ISAG members for any reasonable travel, accommodation and subsistence costs incurred from attending in-person committee meetings. Guidance around appropriate expenses and how they should be booked/re-imbursed will be provided by the Research Team at Prostate Cancer UK in advance of any in-person meetings.

10 Agreement

- 10.1 I understand and hereby agree to adhere to the above terms of reference as a member of the Prostate Cancer UK Independent Scientific Advisory Group for TRANSFORM. I shall raise any potential conflicts of interest with the Research Team at Prostate Cancer UK in advance of any meeting, and any information I am privy to through my involvement in the ISAG shall be treated confidentially and not discussed with anyone outside of the ISAG.

Full name:

Signed:

Dated: