TERMS OF REFERENCE

The UK Collaborative for Cancer Clinical Research (UK3CR)

Overview

The UK Collaborative for Cancer Clinical Research (UK3CR) has been established by the Office for Life Sciences, as part of the UK Government's Cancer Healthcare Goals programme. The UK3CR is hosted by the Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC).

The UK3CR has a mission to ensure the UK is a world leader in development and conduct of cancer clinical and translational research.

The UK3CR supports and oversees a network of multidisciplinary research groups with a shared vision to facilitate and grow primarily academic-led cancer clinical trials. The UK3CR provides a single point of contact, representing the UK research community in order to promote cancer clinical research. It convenes expertise across the cancer research landscape to identify strategic priorities and cross-cutting areas of unmet need.

The Collaborative will provide coordination for UK-based Cancer Research Groups focussing on clinical and translational cancer research, so they can operate together effectively, feed in to and be informed by government policy and engage with the work of cancer research charities via AMRC.

Funding for UK3CR is provided by the Office for Life Sciences (OLS), via the Medical Research Council (MRC).

Definitions

For the purposes of these Terms of Reference, the following terms will be defined as:

UK3CR - a national collaborative to coordinate clinical cancer research, with membership made up of cancer research groups that meet the conditions set out in UK3CR's governance principles.

Cancer Research Group (CRG) – a nationally representative, multi-disciplinary research group focusing on a specific cancer or related cross-cutting theme

CRG Secretariat – CRGs will usually be hosted by an established organisation (Host Organisation) which provides a Secretariat, including administrative support, strategic oversight, and/or other input into the work of the group, as mutually agreed.

Section 1 – UK3CR

1.1 Remit

The UK3CR exists to support and coordinate a network of nationally representative, multidisciplinary CRGs. UK3CR provides central co-ordination of these groups to:

- Facilitate and grow the number of UK-led cancer clinical trials and research studies
- Ensure high quality and relevance of UK cancer clinical trials and research studies
- Promote research partnerships and opportunities for innovation across of cancer clinical and translational research
- Identify, understand and address shared challenges in research design, development and conduct collaboratively
- Exercise collective influence on behalf of UK3CR members
- Create a 'shop window' for the UK cancer research community to engage with government bodies, departments, funders and industry both nationally and internationally

1.2 Role of UK3CR Leadership and Secretariat

The UK3CR employs a Programme Manager and Clinical Lead, who are supported by the AMRC. The UK3CR Leadership team will:

- Provide central coordination of CRGs, to facilitate shared learning and collaboration
- Provide a channel of communications between UK3CR members and external stakeholders, including but not limited to OLS, MRC, NIHR Research Delivery Network, NIHR Industry Hub, DHSC, AMRC, Clinical Trials Units and industry partners
- Provide collective representation for members at the UK Cancer Research Strategy Forum (UKCRSF).
- Establish and maintain a clearly branded web presence, hosted within the AMRC website
- Maintain and provide UK3CR-branded resources for CRGs to use where they wish to
- Promote, publicise and facilitate academic-led research studies and clinical trials developed by UK3CR CRGs.
- Where CRGs do not have a Secretariat, UK3CR will provide advice and assistance to identify a suitable host organisation where requested.

- Through a light-touch governance system, define a national quality standard of clinical research endorsement

1.3 UK3CR Members Forum

The Forum is a platform for UK3CR members to share information, discuss cross-cutting areas of mutual interest and identify any key areas of work needed to fulfil the UK3CR role and remit, to be led by the UK3CR team.

UK3CR will:

- Arrange, co-ordinate and record minutes for the UK3CR Members Forum, held twice a year, in person. Attendance will be by invitation only and include all CRG Chairs and Host Organisation Secretariats, or their designated representatives.
- Co-ordinate follow-up activities, such as task and finish groups (limited to a maximum of two at any time), recommended by the Forum as needed
- Convene ad-hoc meetings related to specific research matters, as needed

Section 2 – UK3CR Cancer Research Groups (CRGs)

Membership of UK3CR is open to all CRGs who meet the conditions set out in UK3CR's governance principles described below

2.1 Governance

UK3CR members shall:

- Maintain their own support structure in terms of having an effective Secretariat for administrative purposes. In most cases it is expected that the CRG will have a Host Organisation providing the Secretariat. The Host Organisation may be a charity, professional body, or other independent organisation. In cases where no host is identified, the UK3CR will work with the CRG to identify an appropriate support structure.
- Own their own Terms of Reference which should be publicly accessible and shared with UK3CR. The terms of reference should address matters outlined in the subsections below, including multidisciplinary membership, inclusion of patient advocacy and early career researchers, as well as reporting arrangements to the CRG's Secretariat and UK3CR.
- Appoint a Chair, a Vice Chair and a named member of the Host organisation who will be responsible for providing leadership for the CRG. The Chair and Secretariat representative will be members of the UK3CR Members Forum. The

Chair and Secretariat representative can delegate meeting attendance to other group members/Secretariat staff as appropriate.

- The Chair and Vice Chair will have defined, time-limited terms of office to be agreed by the CRG. These appointments will be revised and refreshed in an appropriate process
- The CRG's Terms of Reference should outline the working relationship between the CRG and its Host Organisation/Secretariat, where applicable.
- The CRG's research focus, strategy, group structure, term limits for officers and programme of meetings should be recorded in its Terms of Reference, and these will be shared with the UK3CR.

2.2 Research Group Activity

The UK3CR recognises that each specific cancer site and its research community is different and therefore the activities undertaken by individual CRGs will be tailored to the needs of their role and remit.

However, mandatory requirements for membership of UK3CR are that they:

- Have a discernible process by which they will support, mentor and embed early career researchers in initiatives and studies developed by the CRG
- Integrate meaningful lived insight of patients and people affected by cancer into the work of the CRG and the development and delivery of cancer clinical trials
- Ensure the CRG is representative of the UK as a whole

UK3CR further encourages but does not limit individual CRGs to adopt the following activities:

- Ensure a multidisciplinary interface for research collaboration between clinicians, scientists, allied healthcare professionals, trainees, patients and advocates from across the United Kingdom
- Establish a national understanding of the clinical and pre-clinical research landscape
- Develop and own a portfolio of academic-led clinical and/or translational research studies and trials pertinent to the CRG
- Receive, review, share, initiate and develop research study concepts and protocols
- Provide a national and international interface with relevant stakeholders including academic groups and industry to coordinate and harness opportunities to partner in investigator-led studies as well as to support commercial-sponsored trials

- Provide expert insight and perspective to guide policy development and influencing activities that enable and catalyse the UK clinical research community
- Support delivery and coordination of clinical research across the UK
- Ensure development of new research studies are aligned with national policy and guidelines, taking into account patient and carer perspectives

UK3CR members thereby determine their own specific structures, focus and strategic research programmes in order to achieve their objectives and those of the UK3CR, while operating within a consistent and recognisable governance framework.

2.3 CRG Membership: Multidisciplinarity and diversity

Groups should include appropriate multidisciplinary expertise to bring a diverse professional perspective and insight into the support and delivery of the above-mentioned activities. Groups should consider including representatives from multiple specialties, as relevant to their site-specific cancers. Examples include:

- Oncology (Medical, Clinical, Haematology, Paediatric)
- Surgery
- Pathology
- Imaging
- Other clinical specialists relevant to the Group's Purpose
- Discovery and/or translational scientists
- Statistician/trial methodologists
- Non-medical Allied Health Professionals
- Qualitative Researchers
- Patient representatives and advocates
- Early career researchers

Representation should be geographically diverse, including members from all four devolved UK nations. The UK3CR also encourages diversity of the CRG members that includes but is not limited to gender, ethnicity, age, religion, sexual orientation and disability.

2.4 Administrative support for CRGs

Groups need to ensure administrative support is available to maintain their function. In most cases this is likely to be from a Host Organisation. This may be a charitable organisation, professional group, or other organisation as deemed appropriate by the group. UK3CR does not dictate how these relationships should function, but this should be agreed in the CRG's own Terms of Reference and shared with UK3CR. The CRG's Secretariat should identify a lead staff member who will work with the group Chair and

Vice Chair to ensure smooth conduct of the group's activities and be a point of contact with UK3CR.

The Chair, Vice Chair and CRG Secretariat will define the working relationship between both parties. If any conflicts or concerns arise, the UK3CR will provide advice and support as needed.

2.5 CRG Meetings

UK3CR expects its members to maintain regular CRG meetings during the year, but does not issue specific directions on how often or in what format these should take place.

This should, however, be outlined in the CRG's Terms of Reference and shared with the UK3CR, as per the governance principles.

CRG meetings will undertake a programme of activities, reflecting the Terms of Reference of the UK3CR governing CRGs.

2.6 Reporting Arrangements

UK3CR's remit is to provide coordination of groups, but not strategic control, or direction. Therefore, reporting requirements will be kept to a necessary minimum.

UK3CR Members will be expected to provide a brief annual report to the UK3CR, outlining main activities, achievements, challenges and priorities for the upcoming year.

UK3CR will usually expect this report to be provided by the CRG's Host Organisation, where applicable, with any additional reporting schedules agreed separately between CRG and secretariat. Any such requirements should be documented in the CRG's Terms of Reference, or in a Memorandum of Understanding between the group and Host Organisation.

The report will include an overview of studies developed/owned by the Group, outcomes of any funding applications, publications, presentations and any significant impact on patient outcomes.

The Group Chair (or Vice Chair/delegate) and Host representative will be members of the UK3CR Members Forum. The Forum provides a regular opportunity for the UK3CR to share relevant information with all its member CRGs, as well as to receive feedback and reports from the CRGs on their activity. Where invited, UK3CR's Programme Manager and Clinical Lead will also endeavour to attend CRG meetings and support group activity, providing input where requested.

If the CRG has a Host Organisation, they will mutually agree any additional requirement for the CRG to report to the Host. Any such requirements shall be documented in the CRG's Terms of Reference, or in a Memorandum of Understanding between the CRG and Host Organisation.

2.7 Members' use of the UK3CR logo

CRGs confirm membership of UK3CR by agreeing in writing to abide by the above governance principles.

Member groups of UK3CR are thus able to use the UK3CR logo to demonstrate their membership of the Collaborative as a nationally representative CRG. The logo does not act as an academic certification of quality, nor does it signify formal scientific endorsement of any particular clinical trial or activity.