

## Independent Scientific Advisory Committee for MHRA database research (ISAC)

Summary minutes of first meeting of 2007 held on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> February, 2007

**Information regarding ongoing deliberations, or that could identify applicants and names of products is withheld under sections 35 (Formulation of policy), 40 (Personal Information), 41 (Information Provided In Confidence) and 43 (Commercial Interests) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). Further details on successful applications will be published in ISAC annual reports once research using ISAC-approved data has been published - this will also be subject to any relevant exemptions under the FOIA**

### Present:

#### ISAC Members:

Dr Brian Gennery (Chair)  
Dr Jacqueline Cassell  
Dr Martin Gulliford  
Dr David Lovell  
Dr Richard Martin  
Ms Marcia Saunders<sup>2</sup>  
Barbara Meredith  
Prof Paul Little<sup>3</sup>  
Dr Corinne de Vries

#### MHRA<sup>1</sup>:

Dr June Raine  
Mr Mick Foy  
Mrs Shelley Gandhi  
Mr Stephen Fawbert (Secretariat)  
Mrs Tarita Murray-Thomas (Secretariat)  
Ms Shahin Kauser  
Ms Catherine King

#### Apologies:

Prof Amrit Hungin  
Dr Sarah Meredith  
Prof Richard Donnelly  
Dr. John Parkinson  
Dr. Sarah Davis

#### Others:

Prof Nick Bateman<sup>4</sup>  
Prof Kevin Park<sup>5</sup>

## 1. Welcome and apologies

1.1. The Chairman welcomed Dr Corinne de Vries who was attending her first meeting since appointment. The Chairman welcomed Professor Nick Bateman, Head of Yellow Card Centre Scotland, who was attending as guest member for the day with expertise in the Yellow Card Scheme.

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<sup>1</sup> MHRA staff may be present for all or part of the meeting, or for specific items. GPRD staff are not present when Yellow Card applications are discussed and VRMM staff are not present for GPRD applications

<sup>2</sup> Left after item 8

<sup>3</sup> Left after item 8

<sup>4</sup> Left after item 12

<sup>5</sup> Present for item 12 only

- 1.2. Apologies had been received from Pali Hungin, Sarah Meredith, Richard Donnelly and John Parkinson.
- 1.3. The Chairman reminded Members that the papers and proceedings were confidential and should not be disclosed. Members were also reminded to declare their personal specific, personal non-specific, non-personal specific and non-personal non-specific interests in the agenda items.

## **2. Minutes of the fourth ISAC meeting held on 29 November 2006**

The minutes of the fourth meeting (Paper 1) were agreed without amendment.

## **3. Matters arising**

- 3.1. It was noted that the two-team system put in place following the November meeting was working well. Membership of the two teams should be published on the MHRA website
- 3.2. The MHRA's Information Management Governance Board had approved guidelines on storage and destruction of Yellow Card data by ISAC researchers. ISAC had reviewed an early draft of these guidelines in July 2006. These guidelines had been updated to take account of comments from members on how data should be transmitted between researchers. The finalised guidance would be sent to members and published on the MHRA website. The Agency was considering how it could ensure compliance with the guidelines through a right to audit.
- 3.3. The MHRA had been further pursuing the option of using the MHRA portal to send Committee papers to members. There would be a demonstration of this at the May meeting and a system would be in place from the July meeting.
- 3.4. At the July meeting ISAC suggested having a tick box on forms so that reporters could opt out of allowing their Yellow Card to be used for ISAC-approved research. The MHRA did not propose to amend the Yellow Card reporting form at the present time, as some other minor changes had already been made to the form design in 2006, such as a tick box to opt out of local follow-up of reports, and these forms had gone to print and would appear in the next BNF. Instead guidance available to reporters would make it clearer that Yellow Card data could be used for research, but that consent from reporters or patients would always be required.

The Committee urged the MHRA to consider again whether patients should always be informed by a health professional when a card was completed, even though they were anonymised. The Agency would bring ISAC's

comments to the attention of the Working Group of the Commission on Human Medicines' Pharmacovigilance Expert Advisory Group on strengthening the Yellow Card Scheme. There would be an information paper on the work of this working group and promotion plans for the Yellow Card scheme at the next meeting.

## **GENERAL ITEMS**

### **4. Review of Protocol Blinding**

- 4.1. At the meeting in May 2006 members had agreed to blind GPRD protocols on a trial basis for six months and review this at the end of December 2006.
- 4.2. Members considered that there were merits in blinding, but there were also occasions when it might be useful to know about the background of applicants. In addition, there were occasions when despite blinding, it was clear to certain Committee members who applicants were, and it might be considered more honest for them to know the identity of the applicant and thus declare an interest. It was noted in discussion that blinding had also been introduced to limit the amount of personal data about applicants being sent to Committee members by email.
- 4.3. It was also noted that blinding created additional work for the Secretariat. However, asking applicants to submit an anonymised protocol with all personal details on a detachable cover sheet could alleviate this burden.
- 4.4. The Chairman would discuss blinding further with John Parkinson and report back to the next meeting. There would be no change to the current system in the interim, and Yellow Card applications would continue not to be blinded until a decision was reached in relation to GPRD applications.

### **5. Data Mining**

At the last ISAC meeting it had been suggested that an expert on medical data mining be invited to attend a meeting to provide insights on the methodologies and the implications for use in GPRD. The Committee considered possible invitees and felt that a staged approach was desirable- an academic expert should first be invited to give an introduction / overview of data mining, followed by researchers with actual experience but without commercial interests in the field. The personal recommendations from Dr. David Lovell and the suggestion from Jackie Cassell would be taken forward. The data mining expert would be invited to the next ISAC meeting in May to present for 45 minutes.

### **6. Amendments to ISAC Application Forms**

Three amendments to the GPRD application form were proposed in tabled paper 1. This involved the inclusion of separate check -boxes for sample size/power calculations and user group involvement in the application checklist. Recommendations that applicants submit information to the

National Research Register (NRR) would also be included on the revised form. Members were asked to send further suggestions for amendments with qualification to the GPRD Secretariat by the end of week commencing 19 February. Agreed wording on the NRR would also be used in future Yellow Card guidance.

## **GPRD DATA**

7. The Committee considered 2 protocols. It recommended that one was revised and resubmitted and one was rejected.

## **YELLOW CARD DATA**

### **8. Induction to Yellow Card Scheme and Signal Detection**

Members were taken on a tour of the Vigilance and Risk Management of Medicines division of the MHRA and saw a demonstration of the pharmacovigilance database.

### **9. *Update on Application 007: European case-control collection of selected ADRs and processes for contacting reporters/patients***

Following the last meeting, members had provided comments on the draft documentation to be used when contacting reporters about research projects of this type. The documentation was now being revised in line with the feedback received, and in collaboration with VRMM division's medical writer. Wider consultation on this documentation would be sought as previously proposed, once the revision of the documentation had been completed.

### **10. *Application 009: European case-control collection of selected ADRs***

The application was approved.

### **11. *Application 006: Acute renal toxicity and its detection by the Yellow Card Scheme***

The application was approved.

### **12. Rejected applications**

The Committee rejected one application

## **Any other business**

### **13. *Discussion item: Impact Analysis of Signals detected from Spontaneous ADR reporting data***

At the last meeting further information on pharmacovigilance impact analysis was requested. Paper 4 was sent to members before the meeting for information.

**14. Discussion item: The Cooksey Report – A review of UK health research funding**

The Committee noted this report on publicly funded health research in the UK. Paper 5, a copy of the report, was provided to members.

**15. Summary minutes of the meeting of 17 July 2006 for publication on MHRA website**

15.1. Members would be sent summary minutes of the meeting of July 2006 meeting (Tabled Paper 2) and these would be agreed electronically.

15.2. Further to the formula agreed at the November 2006 meeting on publishing summary minutes, the Committee considered that information on titles of applications considered should only be included when the application was approved. If further information was required then no information on the study should be published in summary minutes, other than the number of applications considered. The Committee had already agreed in November 2006 not to publish any details on rejected applications, other than the number rejected at a meeting, and this practice would continue.

15.3. The Committee asked that a list of GPRD protocols approved electronically between meetings be appended to minutes of the subsequent meeting. Information on titles (but only drug or reaction, as agreed in November 2006) would be published on approved protocols. The list should also include how many protocols were rejected and for how many further information was requested.

**VRMM/GPRD  
February 2007**