

DR-NET Steering Group Meeting - Minutes

Tuesday 14th February 2023 at 1pm

Chair: Nick Astbury, LINKS team, ICEH, LSHTM ✓

Cova Bascaran, DR-NET Technical Lead, ICEH, LSHTM ✓

Chloe Cornes, DR Team Supervisor, Screener & Grader, Staffs NHS Trust

Rosamond Gilden, Regional coordinator, DR-NET South Pacific Region

Geeta Menon, Frimley Park (DR-NET Zambia, St Lucia, Chandigarh and China)

Nyawira Mwangi, Deputy Director Academics, KMTC

Tunde Peto, Queen's University Belfast (DR-NET Tanzania, eSwatini) ✓

Adel Pinnock, Ophth Grader/Int Quality Assurer - Gloucestershire Diabetic Eye Screening Programme

Caroline Styles, Queen Margaret Hospital, Dunfermline (DR-NET Malawi)

Claire Walker, LINKS team ICEH, LSHTM ✓

Charlotte Wallis, Quality Assurance Advisor, NHS England – South

Marcia Zondervan, VISION 2020 LINKS Programme Manager, LSHTM ✓

1. Welcome

NA welcomed everyone to the meeting. TP, CB, MZ, NA and CW were present in person.

2. Review notes and action points from meeting on 15th December 2022

The notes were agreed. All the APs appeared on the agenda at this meeting.

3. Data returns update

It was agreed that six-monthly returns would be ideal. If this proved not possible, then yearly. The current need was to chase for whole-year 2022 data. **Action: NA.** In future, if data is still not forthcoming, it may be easier just to ask for treatment data.

4. DR-NET website update

The website is now functional. 117 people are registered. There are 25 publications listed, as well as three Toolkits/Guidelines and two useful links. Links to upcoming meetings to be added to the website.

Action: NA.

5. DR-NET funding update

Roche had kindly made a grant for the second year of funding. The group expressed warm thanks to TP for all her help in obtaining the grant. DR-NET would apply again at the end of 2023 for two years' funding. The milestones for the current grant had been defined, with reporting in June and October 2023.

TP said that the IDF plans to focus its 2024 Congress on eyes. She would get in touch with the new President, Prof Akhtar Hussain. CB would write to Prof David Owens and cc TP. **Action: CB.**

TP said that Novartis are no longer in ophthalmology as their drug has come off patent; this was not good news for potential funding from Novartis or for future XOVA awards.

MZ expressed the need for substantial funding (like the QEDJT grant). In the meantime, the group was looking for country-level funding, eg from the WDF.

6. GGR feedback from 13 Jan 2023

There had been 46 participants. Phil Burgess had been very good at describing the key features of the images and his colleague Ticiana Criddle had done an excellent presentation. The next GGR would be on 19 May at 11am BST. **Action: CB.**

7. Nigeria and DR guidelines update

AP sent her apologies; an update on the DR LINKS would follow from Bessie. CB reported on the Workshop in Lagos in January. There had already been a draft Guidelines document; this was a wider group of stakeholders brought together to critique and finalise it. CB commented that places where they don't have a working laser are giving anti-VEGF.

Oteri Okolo, head of the NEHP at the FMOH, was keen that screening guidelines are not pushed forward in places where there is no laser. The shortage of information about existing DR treatment services in Nigeria had become apparent. A US student, Priyanka Bhatnagar, had approached ICEH seeking a project; she would be doing a survey of the treatment available. TP suggested that taking photos of the laser equipment and the label stating its wavelength and its housing would reveal details of the type of laser and the level of safety around it.

The group would review the Toolkit and see whether it had a section on laser safety. Action: NA Priyanka would be given a copy of the Toolkit. **Action: CB.**

8. Workshop and GGR dates for 2023

GGR – Friday 19 May 11am – 12 noon BST.

GGR – Friday 15 September 11am – 12 noon BST.

DR-NET Workshop – Thursday 8 June 9-11am BST; and 2-4pm for the Caribbean.

DR-NET Workshop – Thursday 9 November 12-2pm GMT.

9. Caribbean DR Region update

The annual OSJ meeting (online in 2023) would include a training day on Saturday 18 March for all the graders in Jamaica. Louis Bolter would be running the training.

10. Pacific DR Region update

Report from RG (by email)

- RG received email correspondence from both Samoa and Solomon Islands in early February after following up again in January. Both were keen for training sessions to be delivered in March. A Zoom call was organised with Carole Poloso (ophthalmologist from Solomon Islands). The Zoom call did not go ahead due to poor weather conditions and a weak internet connection in the Solomon Islands.
- RG will provide a face-to-face training session with the Samoa team on 24 March (Friday) from 2-4pm.
- RG will provide a face-to-face training session with Solomon Islands on 31st March (Friday) from 3pm to 5pm.
- RG will work on putting together the training sessions for the regions using what has been delivered in previous GGR sessions.

11. AOB

TP mentioned the Eye Art section in alternate issues of Eye News. She is using it as a way of promoting DR; people read the section even if they are not specifically interested in DR. NA agreed to do a piece for it. **Action: NA.** CB suggested an Kenyan artist who does eye related sculptures as a possible feature: (<https://zeitzmocaa.museum/artists/cyrus-kabiru/>)

TP mentioned the CME and education available on Medscape. TP to send a link to CB so that it could be circulated to the students and through the IAPB DR-WG. Traffic was needed. **Action: CB.**

12. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 28 March at 11am (hybrid).