

Steering Group Terms of Reference

DASH Steering Committee – Terms of Reference version 1 November 2011

Overall purpose: To monitor progress of the DASH Study and advise on any relevant scientific, practical, staffing, financial and ethical issues.

Specific purposes:

- To advise on the design, methods, measurements, and administration (including quality assurance) of the study.
- To advise on ethical issues relating to the design, data collection and management, incentives to respondents, data linkage, analysis and reporting of the study; to ensure that appropriate ethics committee approval has been obtained for each stage of the fieldwork; and to ensure that appropriate mechanisms for safeguarding the confidentiality of the data are in place.
- To advise on costings and to monitor project expenditure and value for money.
- To advise on data sharing arrangements and to oversee processes for reviewing and approving applications from external users to use DASH data. To consider appeals when applications are rejected by the internal decision-making group, and to review applications that may be problematic or controversial.
- To advise on priorities for data analysis and reporting, publication strategy, website, feedback to respondents, and communications to policy makers and practitioners, the media and the public.
- To monitor progress against agreed objectives in relation to research priorities.
- To advise on any other relevant issues raised from time to time by the project team or committee members (e.g. authorship, publicity).

Organisation:

The membership of the Committee will consist of: Internal SPHSU members - the Unit Director, the Study PI and CI, representatives of the DASH team, and a Programme Leader; External members: clinical advisor, national and international experts in relevant areas, community representative and the Chair.

The committee will meet in person annually, or as agreed appropriate by members.

There will be a standing agenda for each committee meeting (though the agenda is likely to differ at different stages of a project).

Minutes will be taken of all meetings and maintained securely for audit purposes.

Travel and subsistence costs for the attendance of external members will come out of the study budget.

The steering committee should normally operate via consensus. However if the steering committee identifies any major problems (e.g. projected unacceptably low response rates, over or underspends, under or overstaffing, misconduct by project staff or collaborators) which cannot be resolved by the project team, these problems should be brought to the attention of the Unit Director.

All discussions at, and papers for, the committee meetings will be confidential unless otherwise specified.