

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL CANCER RESEARCH NETWORK**

### **Overview**

Cancer research at the University of Bristol is a vibrant cross-disciplinary community which focuses on core strengths in cancer cell biology, genetic and life-course epidemiology, and health services research and trials. In partnership with the Bristol NHS Trusts, the University of West of England (UWE) and Cardiff University, we aim to accelerate the identification of novel insights and translation of research into clinical practice.

Our expertise is drawn from multiple schools and faculties, with strong interlinking between Bristol Medical School (BMS), the School of Cellular and Molecular Medicine (CMM), the School of Physiology, Pharmacology and Neuroscience (PPN) and the School of Biochemistry, but also extending to Biological Sciences, Physics, Mathematics and Engineering. The Network is supported by and works closely with the Elizabeth Blackwell Institute for Health Research (EBI) to foster research across these multi-disciplinary groupings.

### **Objectives and Aims**

The Cancer Network exists to enhance and facilitate research activity and strategic planning. This includes identifying and resourcing key equipment, the improvement of internal communication and collaboration, the identification of key funding priorities and opportunities, and developing better external communication of our research to scientific and healthcare professionals, schools and the general public.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**

The Elizabeth Blackwell Institute is committed to championing and challenging equity, diversity and inclusion within health and biomedical research communities at the University of Bristol. In order to ensure that research can benefit all, equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) should be considered across three dimensions:

- research teams and careers
- diversity in research content
- inclusive public engagement

Health research that includes and represents everyone provides more equitable outcomes.

The Elizabeth Blackwell Institute is a member of [EDIS](#), a coalition of organisations working to improve equality, diversity and inclusion within the science and health research sector. Read more on EDI on the Institute's [SharePoint site](#) (UoB only)

### **Public Engagement**

The Elizabeth Blackwell Institute sees Public Engagement and Patient & Public Involvement (PPI) as opportunities to strengthen research by bringing new viewpoints, backgrounds, and ideas to a

project. The Institute does not have the capacity to support you directly with your public engagement/PPI plans, however there are a number of resources you can access via the [SharePoint site](#) (UoB only).

## Management

A Steering Group and website for Cancer was set up in 2013 with the combined aim of building a cross-faculty community and showcasing research. The committee is co-led by a University of Bristol cancer biologist, clinical representative and a population health expert. The leads are supported by representatives of key research areas at different levels of academic progression and pathway drawn from different faculties.

The Network maintains a community-wide mailing list and a website that incorporates news, upcoming seminars and events. There are weekly bulletins and quarterly newsletters with news, events, activities (including highlights of recent research) and funding opportunities relevant to the Cancer community. The Network is supported by a facilitator based in Research Development UK and an administrator based in both Research Development UK and the Elizabeth Blackwell Institute.

## The Cancer Steering Group (SG): composition and rotation

1. *The Cancer SG* will be led by the Network's co-Leads, of which there are three, representing population health, cancer biology and clinical work. These are supported by 8-12 members and representatives from different areas of the community. The *Cancer SG* may be led temporarily by a single clinical, cancer biology or population health individual when circumstances demand. Appointments will be made by the Steering Group.
2. A facilitator and an administrator will service the *Cancer SG* for as long as funding and capacity allow.
3. The *Cancer SG* will meet approximately every two months.
4. The co-Leads will be selected from the membership of the Cancer Network. Any incoming Lead should possess the requisite skills and experience to fulfil the expectations of the role.
5. The term of office of *Cancer SG* Members will be three years, with the potential to extend for an additional three years by mutual consent.
6. The term of office for a Lead is three years; if chosen from within the *Cancer SG* itself their maximum term of office will be 9 years.
7. Former Members of the *Cancer SG* will be ineligible for re-appointment to the committee for a period of one year from the expiry of their membership.
8. When a Steering Group Member steps down, new Members will be recruited through a process of open application from the wider Cancer community. If more people wish to join the Steering Group than there are places available, then admission will be via a vote by current Steering Group Members. Issues of equity and diversity, and diversity of expertise will be taken into consideration.
9. A Member's term of office could be renegotiated if they bring key perspectives to the table and/or expertise that might be difficult to otherwise recruit to.
10. Members of the *Cancer SG* who are unable to attend a minimum of two meetings per year will

be asked to step down. The naming of an appropriate substitute will be considered as attendance.

11. Where it is not possible to meet in person and there are matters of interest or decisions required for specific action, such as expenditure, convening virtually or through specific email correspondence as a group will be permitted.
12. The *Cancer SG* reports to the Director of the EBI, who will act as conduit to senior management.
13. Changes to these terms require the agreement of at least two thirds of the Steering Group.

### The Cancer Steering Group (SG): Key activities

- 1) *We provide a regular forum for discussions about Cancer research strategy including horizon-scanning, and a mechanism to feed these outcomes to senior management*
- 2) *We contribute to business cases for key academic appointments, capital investments and wider funding bids, to maximise, maintain and create research capacity*
- 3) *We support our Early Career Researcher and Postgraduate student communities*
- 4) *We continue to forge an interface and raise the profile of Cancer Research work with both internal and external stakeholders, including funders and industrial partners*

Any individual involved in Cancer-related research at the University of Bristol may consider themselves a member of the Cancer Network. Any member of the Cancer Network may ask to attend a Steering Group meeting to discuss an issue or ask for an item to be raised in their absence. Minutes of meetings can be found on the Network's [intranet site](#) (accessible via its [internet site](#)).

In addition to Steering Group meetings, the Network organises a series of events and structures which aim to unify and co-ordinate research activity across large numbers of researchers.

### Review of Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference will be updated periodically as required by day-to-day changes, e.g. changes in the membership of the SG, and every 3 years.

### APPENDIX 1: Current Steering Group composition (in alphabetical order)

- Mr [Jonathan Aning](#)  
Consultant Urological Surgeon, Bristol Urological Institute, North Bristol NHS Trust and Honorary Senior Lecturer, Bristol Medical School: Population Health Sciences
- Ms [Laura Ballisat](#)  
PhD student, School of Physics
- Dr [Johanna Blee](#)  
Research Associate, Department of Engineering Mathematics
- Dr [Anya Burton](#)  
Senior Research Associate, Bristol Medical School: Translational Health Sciences
- Dr [Adam Chambers](#)  
Clinical Lecturer in Colorectal Surgery, School of Cellular and Molecular Medicine

- Dr [Grace Edmunds](#)  
Clinical Research Fellow, Bristol Veterinary School
- Helen Harper  
Research Development Associate for Health & Life Sciences
- Dr [Nobue Itasake](#)  
Senior Lecturer, Bristol Veterinary School
- Prof [Kathreena Kurian](#)  
Professor of Neuropathology, Brian Tumour Research Centre, Bristol Medical School:  
Translational Health Sciences
- Prof [Athene Lane](#)  
Professor of Trials Research, Bristol Medical School: Population Health Sciences & Chair of the  
University Cancer Research Fund
- Dr [Lucia Marucci](#)  
Associate Professor in Systems and Synthetic Biology, Engineering Mathematics
- Dr [Claire Perks](#)  
Associate Professor, Bristol Medical School: Translational Health Sciences
- Dr [Rebecca Richmond](#) (co-Lead, population health)  
Senior Research Fellow, Bristol Medical School: Population Health Sciences
- Miss [Matimba Swana](#)  
PhD student, Department of Engineering Mathematics
- Professor [Jaap Velthuis](#)  
Professor of Physics, School of Physics
- Dr [Emma Vincent](#) (co-Lead, cancer biology)  
Senior Lecturer in Molecular Metabolism, Bristol Medical School: Translational Health  
Sciences
- Dr [Helen Winter](#) (co-Lead, clinical)  
Medical Oncologist, Bristol Cancer Institute and Clinical Director, Somerset, Wiltshire, Avon  
and Gloucestershire Cancer Alliance
- Dr [Paul Yousefi](#)  
Research Fellow in Molecular and Epigenetic Epidemiology, Bristol Medical School:  
Population Health Sciences
- [Catherine Brown](#)  
Cancer Research Network Administrator