

Safe Data Access Professionals Member Meeting

Tuesday 7th December 2021, 11.00 – 12.30

Virtual meeting

Attendees

Christine Woods (UK Data Service) (Chair), **James Scott** (UK Data Service) (Deputy Chair), **Helen Cadwallader** (UK Data Service), **Olly Butters** (University of Liverpool), **Juliet Cavanagh-Anderson** (University of Edinburgh), **Liz Crellin** (The Health Foundation), **James Dainty** (HMRC), **Joe Freestone** (HMRC), **Emily Griffiths** (University of Manchester), **Beate Lichtwardt** (UK Data Service, Social Sciences and Humanities Open Cloud), **Anthony Macken** (Central Statistical Office), **Martin O'Reilly** (The Alan Turing Institute), **James Rayner** (UK Data Service), **James Robson** (The Evidence Quarter), **Bethany Routley** (ONS), **Aida Sanchez** (University College London), **John Sanderson** (UK Data Service), **Amy Tilbrook** (University of Edinburgh), **Anca Vlad** (Cancer Research UK), **Richard Welpton** (ESRC), **Richard Williams** (University of Manchester).

Apologies

Yannis Kotrotsios (The Health Foundation), **Elaine Mackey** (University of Manchester), **Mary McDerby** (University of Manchester), **Lydia Underdown** (University of Oxford)

Minutes

1. Welcome and Introductions

The chair welcomed all to the meeting, including new members (1). Everyone then introduced themselves.

2. Review of the SDAP Competency Framework

The chair conveyed apologies from Yannis Kotrotsios (The Health Foundation) who is unable to join the meeting today. Given this, item 4 will be brought forward and treated as item 3.

3. Exploration of University of Manchester's model of researcher support that includes contact with a Research Data Engineer and a new analyst listserv

Richard Williams from University of Manchester gave the presentation entitled, 'Research Data Engineer Model allowing researchers to get access to this data', supported by Emily Griffiths from University of Manchester in the question and answer session that followed.

The presentation included a review of the strength and weaknesses of the model being used by the University of Manchester to provide access to health data. The benefits of the Research Data Engineer model (RDE) were explored, such as a generally faster research process, whilst acknowledging that the RDE model requires a team of software engineers with an in-depth knowledge of the database.

Following the presentation there was a question and answer session, along with feedback from attendees on the model presented. Members explored this model of delivery in depth, acknowledging that the topic was timely in opening up discussion of a shift taking place in how health data can now be accessed through local and integrated settings and the benefits of this in comparison with national and large-scale settings. The RDE model is linked to GraphNet which provides integrated health records, bringing together GP data, acute hospitals, and other providers. GraphNet is for data extracts and collation and is not used for entering patient records. At the moment social care data is not available for research sharing through this type of integration.

The chair thanked Richard Williams for the presentation and Emily Griffiths for this suggestion for exploration by the SDAP network members.

Richard Williams: <https://github.com/rw251/gm-idcr>

4. Comfort Break

There was a brief comfort break.

5. Output release – knowledge exchange about practise of/pros and cons of releasing Excel output files, what is the practice of other RDCs?

UK Data Service

Beate Lichtwardt explained the current policy review within the UK Data Service in relation to the release of Excel output files to researchers. Given this, the UK Data Service is interested in hearing about the practise and pros/cons of releasing Excel output files to researchers. Members whose service carries out statistical disclosure control, were invited to give a short verbal summary on their service's practise (i.e. do they release Excel files to researchers?) and any pros and cons of this.

Other services

Members in attendance that carried out statistical disclosure control, shared their service's policy and discussed the pros and cons of releasing Excel output files. It was acknowledged that some journals are now requiring researchers to submit tables of results in an Excel file, so the release of Excel output files would make this easier for researchers. However, where services currently release Excel output files to researchers, these tend to be for intermediate outputs rather than final outputs.

6. AOB

The chair closed the meeting and thanked all who provided presentations and service updates. The next meeting will be on **Tuesday 8th March, 2022**.

James Scott (JS) thanked Chris Woods for her leadership in the role of chair, and hard work in bringing the network to a position that is both stable and more developed. Chris thanked him and all in attendance for giving her the opportunity to chair the SDAP Network, commending the SDAP network as a great forum for knowledge exchange, sharing and collaborative support. Chris wished the Network all the best for the future.