NATIONAL OFFICE FOR RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEES

National Research Ethics Committee

NREC-MD Meeting Minutes

20th April 2023

Attendance

Name	Role
Prof. Barry O'Sullivan	Chairperson, NREC-MD
Prof. Declan Patton	Deputy Chairperson, NREC-MD
Dr Caitríona Cahir	Member, NREC-MD
Dr Ruth Davis	Member, NREC-MD
Dr Frank Houghton	Member, NREC-MD
Dr Gloria Kirwan	Member, NREC-MD
Ms Orla Lane	Member, NREC-MD
Mr Billy McCann	Member, NREC-MD
Dr Sarah McLoughlin	Member, NREC-MD
Prof. Tom Melvin	Member, NREC-MD
Prof. Therese Murphy	Member, NREC-MD
Dr Declan O'Callaghan	Member, NREC-MD
Dr Susan O'Connell	Member, NREC-MD
Ms Ríona Tumelty	Member, NREC-MD
Prof. Anne Parle-McDermott	Member, NREC-MD

Name	Role
Chita Murray*	Programme Manager, National Office for Research Ethics Committees
Megan O'Neill	Project Officer, National Office for Research Ethics Committees

*Drafted minutes

Apologies: Prof. Mary Sharp, Dr Mireille Crampe, Dr Owen Doody, Dr Clare O'Connor, Dr Paul O'Connor, Mr. Damien Owens, Prof. Mahendra Varma, Dr Emily Vereker (National Office for Research Ethics Committees)

Quorum for decisions: Yes

Agenda

- Welcome (Chairperson)
- Report on Committee business
- Minutes of previous meeting
- Declarations of interest
- 23-NREC-MD-010-R1
- 23-NREC-MD-011
- 23-NREC-MD-012
- 23-NREC-MD-013
- 22-NREC-MD-027-SM2
- 21-NREC-MD-012-SM2
- 22-NREC-MD-036-SM2
- 21-NREC-MD-015-SM1
- AOB

- The Chairperson welcomed the Committee, acknowledged apologies sent by applicable members and opened the meeting.
- NREC Committee Business Report: The Committee noted the report.
- Minutes of the previous meeting (16 March 2023) were approved.
- Matters arising from the previous meeting: none.
- Declarations of interest:

- Prof. Tom Melvin (21-NREC-MD-015-SM1). Prof. Melvin left the meeting for the review of 21-NREC-MD-015-SM1.

Applications

23-NREC-MD-010-R1

- Principal Investigator: Dr. Darren Mylotte
- Study title: Evolut™ EXPAND TAVR II Pivotal Trial
- Lead institution: University Hospital Galway, Newcastle Road, Galway, H91 YR71
- NREC-MD decision:
  - *Favourable with conditions*
- Associated conditions:
  - The Committee acknowledges that the requirement for translations of the PIL/ICF is not anticipated at this time. However, should the need for additional languages arise during the investigation, the Committee requests that accommodations be made, wherever possible, to allow for the use of interpreter roles and/or translation of PIL/ICF. Certified translators should be used and the PIL/ICF together with the translation certificate submitted to the Committee.
  - The Committee requests that, should the details for a nominated contact be collected, the contact person must provide explicit (documented) consent for this role and for their contact details to be held on file, and that the explicit consent must be retained for the applicable period.
  - An overall figure for the study budget/cost is provided to the National Office.

23-NREC-MD-011

- Principal Investigator: Prof. Gabor Szeplaki
- Study title: BoStOn SCientific Rhythm MAnagemenT REgiStry (SOCRATES)
- Lead institution: Mater Private Dublin, Eccles St., Dublin 7, D07 WKW8
- NREC-MD decision:
  - *Request for further information*
- Further information requested:
  - NREC-MD Application Form:

    The NREC-MD noted that the NREC-MD application form requires additional information/amendments. The Committee requests that a revised copy of the document be submitted, with changes at applicable sections, including the following:

    - Please confirm the source/type of data which will be used in marketing/promotional material, noting applicable alignment with the Medical Device Regulations (EU) 2017/745.

- It has been noted that the inclusion criteria differ between prospective recruits and those within ten (10) days after the index event. Please clarify why prospective patients only require use of at least one (1) Boston Scientific electrophysiology (EP) or Boston Scientific Capital Equipment product whereas patients recruited after the index event require use of three (3) separate products. Please provide a rationale, and comment on the potential for the introduction of bias between prospective and post-procedure recruits.
- Inclusion in other research projects has not been listed as an exclusion criterion. Please comment on the likelihood that participants who may also be enrolled in double-blind studies would have implications for data collection.
- It is noted that an interpreter will be provided for participants who do not speak English. Please confirm that translations of the participant information leaflet/data confidentiality agreement (PIL-DCA) will be completed by a certified translation provider and made available to participants. Certificates for such translations must be submitted to the NREC in advance of distribution of translated documents.
- Please provide additional clarity as to how the processing of data for the following cohort will be facilitated: individuals who lack decision-making capacity to give informed consent for data processing. Please confirm whether a consent declaration from the Health Research Consent Declaration Committee (HRCDC) [1] is applicable and has been obtained for submission to the NREC-MD, where data processing is as per the definition of health research in the Health Research Regulations (HRR) 2018 [2]
- With regard to the inclusion in the registry of data from minors, please comment on the suitability/applicability of the PIL-DCA for this cohort, for whom age appropriate PILs and assent forms are typically created.
- It has been noted with regard to minors that consent will not be required from the minors when they become of legal age to consent. Please clarify the rationale for this decision.
- With regard to the below query, please clarify why this item will be dependent on the investigator's discretion.
  - *Will the explicit wish of the child who is capable of forming an opinion and assessing information to refuse to participate or to be withdrawn from the study be considered by the investigators?*

- Patient Information Leaflet (PIL):

The NREC-MD noted that the patient information leaflet (PIL) requires additional information/amendments. The Committee requests that a revised copy of the document be submitted, with changes at applicable sections, including the following:

- With regards the use of patient data which has already been collected prior to voluntary withdrawal, the PIL states the below. The NREC-MD requests that the wording of the statement be edited/removed as it suggests a safety implication for the participant in the event that they withdraw consent for data processing.
  - *The data already collected about you up to that date will be used. This will happen in accordance with your previous consent for the data collection.*

[1] https://hrcdc.ie/about-us/

[2] Data Protection Act 2018 (Section 36(2)) (Health Research) Regulations 2018

The purpose for this is related to the safety of the devices to ensure your own safety and the safety of other patients.

- The data retention period which has been documented in the data protection impact assessment (DPIA) is 75 years for anonymised data (not pseudonymised). Please amend the PIL to reflect same.
- The NREC-MD noted the below statements and requests that applicable sub-sections of Article(s) 6 and 9 of GDPR be referenced such that the data controller is confident that data will be processed under the appropriate legal bases, bearing in mind any legal obligations to process data for safety and performance monitoring.
  - *Page 6: The data already collected about you up to that date will be used. This will happen in accordance with your previous consent for the data collection.*
  - *Page 11:in some cases, your identifiable data may be stored for longer. This is true if a special need exists, for instance, for archiving in the public interest, for scientific or historical research or for statistical purposes.*

23-NREC-MD-012

- Principal Investigator: Dr Maeve Lowery
- Study title: Diagnostic Protocol for VENTANA FGFR2b (FPR2-D) Assay for Amgen Study 20210096
- Lead institution: St. James's Hospital, James Street, Dublin 8, D08 NHY1
- NREC-MD decision:
  - *Favourable with conditions*
- Associated conditions
  - NREC-MD Application Form:
    - The NREC-MD noted the number of patients who will be pre-screened for inclusion in the study. The Committee requests clarification of the number of study participants who will be pre-screened in Ireland in order to obtain the required number of participants for the primary clinical trial.
    - The NREC-MD noted that a letter will be sent to the participants' general practitioner (GP) and/or consultant. The Committee requests that a copy of the GP letter be submitted, as applicable.
  - Pre-screening Patient Information Leaflet (PIL):
    - The NREC-MD noted that data will be transferred to third parties. The Committee requests that additional information be included in the PIL with regard to the identity of the third parties, including those outside of the EU, and the purposes of the data transfer. In addition please include confirmation that agreements will be in place with third parties which are as per GDPR standards.
    - The NREC-MD noted the advanced stage of the health condition of the proposed participant cohort. The Committee suggests, given the complexity of the material in the pre-screening PIL, and the use of technical language, that consideration be given to supporting participants via simplification of the

language in order to assist prospective participants in their understanding of the implications of participation.

23-NREC-MD-013

- Principal Investigator: Prof. James Loughman
- Study title: Children Myopia control Evaluation of Novel Soft Contact Lens Designs
- Lead institution: Centre for Eye Research Ireland, Greenway Hub, TU Dublin City Campus, Grangegorman Lower, Dublin 7, Ireland, D07 H6K8
- NREC-MD Decision
  - Request for further information
- Further information requested
  - NREC-MD Application Form:

The NREC-MD noted that the NREC-MD application form requires additional information/amendments. The Committee requests that a revised copy of the document be submitted, with the following changes at applicable sections:

- Please confirm whether future publication of results (e.g. in peer reviewed journals) will be considered in the future.
- Please include additional information with regard to participant identification and recruitment.
- The NREC-MD advises that schools should not be requested to display the advertisement poster, and instead suggests outlets such as optometrists etc.
- The NREC-MD requests additional information with regard to the management of responses to advertisement material. Please outline alternative recruitment methods which may be utilised in the event that response to advertising material is low.
- While the testing procedures may be considered non-invasive, please note that 'short term corrective contact lenses' are considered to be invasive - see page 35 of the following EU guidance): https://health.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-10/mdcg_2021-24_en_0.pdf
- Please add clarity with regard to the frequency of visits in the visits schedule.
- With regard to the following statement, please confirm whether this information (or similar) is available for this participant cohort (age 7-11 years).
  - *This risk is assumed by 140-million individuals who currently wear contact lenses.*
- Please include additional detail with regard to procedures for monitoring the health of the participants during the study.
- Please include names and job titles for the following study team roles: Principal Investigator, Sub Investigator, Clinical Research Coordinator. If these roles align with the individuals named in the site suitability form (SSF), please confirm.
- Please include additional information with regard to how long participants and/or parents/legal guardians will be given to decide to take part in the study.

- Please include additional information with regard to how withdrawal from the study will be facilitated.
- Please include confirmation at the applicable section that the study will seek to recruit participants who are minors (as per Article 65 of the Medical Devices Regulation (EU) 2017/745).
- The NREC-MD application form states that all children can expect to receive a benefit from wearing the study contact lenses i.e. “correcting their refractive error”, however in other submitted documents it is outlined that there will be no benefit to participants, apart from the eye assessments which will be performed during study visits. Please clarify.
- Please confirm the location for secure storage of the paper record, and amend details to note that photographic images will be generated.
- Please clarify the exact location of the study site, what types of data will be stored there, in what form data will leave that site (as applicable) and the destination(s) of data transfers.

– Documents for use by Child Participants:

- The NREC-MD acknowledged that the documents which are intended for use by children seem appropriate. The Committee requests confirmation, however, that the documents have been assessed for verification of suitability for the target age group (age 7-11 years). The Committee suggests the use of a standardised tool.
- The NREC-MD requests that consideration be given to including an additional and separate section in the assent form entitled ‘What do I do if I want to stop being in the study?’ or similar.
- The NREC-MD requests that applicable terms in the Child Subject Instructions be replaced with colloquial language more familiar to children in Ireland.

– Parent Participant Information Sheet (PIS):

The NREC-MD noted that the ‘parent PIS’ requires additional information and/or amendments. The Committee requests that a revised copy of this document be submitted with the following changes at applicable sections:

- The NREC-MD noted that the wording in the parent PIS could be simplified overall, with less technical language used.
- In addition to stating that the study will be 12 months in duration, please also outline the time commitment required of the participant i.e. that contact lenses will be worn for 12 months.
- Please add clarity for the reader that all visits will take place at the study site, giving the exact location and confirmation of the anticipated length of each study visit.
- Please align the below statements and amend in the application and/or PIS as applicable. In addition, please comment on the impact to schooling, the potential increase in adverse events, and the likelihood of delaying the progression of myopia, if the participant is wearing contact lenses which do not match their prescription.

  - PIS: "*in general, all these tests are checking that your child sees well with the contact lenses or spectacles/glasses, that their prescription is correct, and that the lenses fit their eyes well"*
  - NREC-MD application form: "*the lenses being used in this study may not have the exact prescription power needed by the subject. This may require that subjects wear their spectacle correction over the study lenses in order to see well at distance or the study lenses may be stronger than required".*
- Please outline that participants (and parents/guardians) will be given a minimum of 24 hours to decide whether to participate in the study.
- Please include additional detail as applicable with regard to data transfers, including data transfers outside of the EU.
- Please include reference to the potential for headaches and eye strain.
- The NREC-MD noted the below statements in the parent PIS. The Committee requests that statements regarding lack of compliance with instructions be rephrased to avoid apportioning and/or tonality of blame, bearing in mind the commitment expected of both the young participant cohort and their parents/guardians. Please also clarify the medical treatment which will be made available.
  - *All side effects and risks of contact lens wear can be reduced by making sure your child does not sleep while wearing the contact lenses, does not swim or shower when wearing the contact lenses and by ensuring all the instructions given by the investigator for lens wear are followed by your child.*
  - *If your child gets hurt or sick while participating in this study, and the study investigator and the study sponsor reasonably determine your child's illness or injury to be a direct result of the study, medical treatment will be provided by the sponsor. If your child has not followed the study investigator's instructions about the study, the sponsor may not pay these expenses.*
- The PIS states that "*sensitive data such as race/ethnic origin and gender may also be collected, as it is necessary for the evaluation of the study results*". Please include in your response letter a justification for the Committee as to the applicability of race as a necessary data point for evaluation of the study results.
- Please include the name and address of the company which will manage the database.
- Please note, if the identification number which labels the data can be used to link the data back to the participant (e.g. if a key exists), the data is considered to be/have been pseudonymised.
- Please clarify the data retention period.
- Please replace reference to the Office of the Information Commissioner with reference to the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner and include contact details for same.

- Informed Consent Form:

The NREC-MD noted that the informed consent form (ICF) requires additional information and/or amendments. The Committee requests that a revised copy of this document be submitted with the following changes at applicable sections:

- Please clarify which study notes will be made available to named entities, and the purpose (if in addition to required study data which is being collected via scheduled test procedures).
- Please note that the Health Research Regulations 2018 (Regulation 3(1)(e)) provide for broad informed consent to be obtained for 'specified health research, either in relation to a particular area or more generally in that area or a related area of health research, or part thereof'. Therefore, if 'related areas' for future health research can be defined, consent may be considered valid. If this is not possible, consent can be requested instead to recontact the participants for consent for specific use of personal data. Any future use would also require ethics approval, through the submission of a substantial amendment application.
- Please unbundle (make optional) consent items as applicable once the above amendment has been made.
- Please clarify whether the permission which '*expires in 50 years'* is for the use of anonymised data, taking into account data retention periods for pseudonymised data.

- Protocol:
  - The NREC-MD requests clarification of the term 'study materials'.
  - The NREC-MD requests justification as to the categorisation of the study as a feasibility study.

- Subjective Questionnaire:
  - The NREC-MD noted that the language in the subjective questionnaire may not be suitable for the reading age of the participant cohort (7-11 years). The Committee requests that amendments be made in this regard.

- Site Suitability Form:
  - The NREC-MD noted that the site is well equipped and staffed. The Committee requests confirmation, however, of the suitability of the site for child participants, and suggests that an applicable co-investigator conducts the baseline visit, with a view to mitigating the risks of contact lens use (including anxiety) associated with the young participant cohort.

- Insurance:
  - The NREC-MD requests that the period of insurance cover be extended to include the duration of the study.

22-NREC-MD-027-SM2

- Principal Investigator: Prof. Richard Costello
- Study title: CONNected Electronic Inhalers Asthma Control Trial 3 ("CONNECT 3"), a 24-Week Treatment, Multicenter, Open-Label, Randomized, Parallel Group Comparison

Study of Standard of Care Treatment Versus the Budesonide/Formoterol Digihaler Digital System, to Optimize Outcomes in Adult Patients with Asthma

- Lead institution: Beaumont Hospital, Beaumont Rd, Dublin 9, D09V 2N0
- NREC-MD decision
  - *Favourable with conditions*
- Associated conditions:
  - The NREC-MD noted that additional sites are included in the study as part of this substantial modification. The Committee requests that the applicant ensures that the applicable insurance policies are updated to cover patients recruited to the new sites for the duration of the study.

21-NREC-MD-012-SM2

- Principal Investigator: Dr. Stephen O'Connor
- Study title: RHEIA (Randomized researcH in womEn all comers wIth Aortic stenosis): A Prospective, Randomized, Controlled, MultiCenter Study to Evaluate the Safety and Efficacy of Transcatheter Aortic Valve Implantation in Female Patients who have Severe Symptomatic Aortic Stenosis Requiring Aortic Valve Replacement
- Lead institution: St. James´s Hospital, James Street, Dublin 8, D08 NHY1
- NREC-MD Decision
  - *Favourable*

22-NREC-MD-036-SM2

- Principal Investigator: Prof. Faisal Sharif
- Study title: A Prospective, Multi-Center, Open Label, Single Arm Clinical Trial Evaluating the Safety and Efficacy of the Cordella™ Pulmonary Artery Sensor System in New York Heart Association (NYHA) Class III Heart Failure Patients (PROACTIVE- HF Trial)
- Lead institution: University Hospital Galway, Newcastle Rd, Galway, H91 YR71
- NREC-MD Decision
  - Request for further information
- Further information requested
  - The NREC-MD noted that the clinical investigation involves implantation of a cardiac device. The Committee requests additional and more detailed confirmation that a clinical protocol is in place to facilitate removal of the device in a timely manner, in the event that a participant withdraws from the study or for any other reason seeks removal of the device.

21-NREC-MD-015-SM1

- Principal Investigator: Prof. Robert A Byrne
- Study title: Fractional Flow Reserve or 3D-Quantitative Coronary-Angiography Based Vessel-FFR guided revascularization (FAST III)
- Lead institution: Mater Private Dublin, Eccles St., Dublin 7, D07 WKW8
- NREC-MD decision
  - *Favourable with conditions*
- Associated conditions:
  - The NREC-MD noted that, in specific cases, a verbal explanation of the consent form will be given by the medical professional in the presence of an impartial witness, in advance of explicit consent being obtained in due course. The Committee requests that the participants must have the capacity to understand the verbal explanation of the consent form given by the medical professional.

- AOB:
  - Discussion with regard to inclusivity as it pertains to non-English speakers, and the broader context.
- The Chairperson thanked the Committee and closed the meeting.