

OpenSAFELY Oversight Board meeting notes

27-01-22

Ratified at 13-05-22 Oversight Board

Date & Time	27/01/22 10:00-12:00
Attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Prof. Nigel Shadbolt (Chair) [NS]● Prof. Ben Goldacre (OpenSAFELY PI) [BG]● Seb Bacon (OpenSAFELY CTO) [SB]● Becky Lumbard (OpenSAFELY Senior Project Manager) [BL]● Jess Morley (OpenSAFELY; Policy Lead, DataLab) [JM]● Amir Mehrkar (OpenSAFELY Head of IG and external relationships) [AM]● Nicky Brassington (Deputy Director of Data & Analytics, NHSX)● Sean Kirwan (OpenSAFELY NHSX IG; Senior Data Sharing and Privacy Manager, NHSX) [SK]● Mark Coley (GP, BMA)● Kevin Minier (Expert patient representative)● Jeni Tennison (Open Data Institute)● Stephen Evans (OpenSAFELY researcher; Professor of Pharmacoepidemiology, LSHTM)● Sam Smith (MedConfidential)● Tariq Khockhar, Head of Data for Science and Health at Wellcome Trust● Laurie Tomlinson (OpenSAFELY researcher; Associate Professor, LSHTM)● Chris Bates (OpenSAFELY-TPP; Director of Research and Analytics, TPP)● Rony Arafin (Apha)
Apologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Johnny Stewart (GP, RCGP)● Alex Freeman (Executive Director, Winton Centre for Risk & Evidence Communication, University of Cambridge)

Agenda:

Documents circulated in advance:

- [Meeting notes 30-09-21 OpenSAFELY Oversight Board](#) (for approval)
- Pre-read update from OpenSAFELY

Item	10:00 - 12:00	Topic
1	10:00 - 10:10	Introduction from the Nigel Shadbolt (chair) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Request for AOB• Review TOR (inc. introduction of Nicky Brassington and Laurie Tomlinson and addition to core membership)• Review actions
2	10:10 - 10:30	New developments and progress against milestones (Ben Goldacre) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Resource• Staff• Structures (owners for copiloting, output checking, curation)• Datasets• Research outputs• Tech (Sebastian Bacon)• Onboarding of external researchers (Amir Mehrkar)
3	10:30 - 11:00	Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (Jessica Morley)
4	11:00 - 11:10	BREAK
5	11:10 - 11:50	Open Discussion (Nigel Shadbolt)
6	11:50 - 12:00	AOB (ALL)

Item 1: Introduction from the Chair, Nigel Shadbolt

Decisions:

- Meeting notes ratified

Discussion points:

- The Chair welcomed Nicky Brassington Deputy Director, NHSX, and Laurie Tomlinson, Clinical epidemiologist, LSHTM, to the core membership of the advisory board.
- It was agreed no further changes to the TORs were required.
- Actions from previous meeting were reviewed. It was agreed to keep item 10 open (letter of support for longer term, platform funding).
- There was a discussion about who else to include on the OpenSAFELY board in the future.

Actions

- *None*

Item 2: New developments and progress against milestones: Ben Goldacre

Decisions: None

Discussion points:

- *Resource:*

The board was updated with key funding streams including the philanthropic donation from The Peter Bennett Foundation, an NHS Service contract and an NIHR grant looking at Community deployment of monoclonal antibody treatment for treatment of COVID. In general it is difficult to identify funding for the platform and this is a priority for the team.

- *Staff:*

The board heard that the OpenSAFELY team continues to expand. Recent recruitment includes an Engineering Team Lead and a Product Manager in the technical team, as well as three Clinical Informaticians delivering the work for the NHS service contract. Future plans include building the research team with traditional epidemiologists, as well as policy and public engagement roles, a teaching lead and a lead for monitoring service disruption. The technical team are also creating an internship scheme.

- *Structures:*

Updates were provided on the internal structures that OpenSAFELY is implementing to enable team members to develop leadership skills, owning workstreams. This include: a Co-pilot lead to support the external onboarding offering to users of OpenSAFELY; Output checking lead to overseeing the delivery of disclosure control of research outputs, Data curation lead for best practice on automating validation strategies.

- *Datasets:*

An update on the demand for data sets to be ingested into OpenSALFEY was provided, with 13 data sets requested.

- *Research outputs overview:*

There has been a large amount of research activity with both internal and external projects, several outputs are expected this quarter.

- *Tech:*

The board was provided with an update on the main focus of work which is restructuring the component previously known as “cohort extractor”. It will now be called “data builder”. The restructure/rewrite is aimed at taking lessons learned from working with current users e.g. LSHTM and OpenSAFELY’s own analyst team, and making them generally applicable more widely. End users will benefit from a more expressive query language that allows complex logic to be expressed without the verbose workarounds that are sometimes currently necessary.

- *Onboarding of external researchers*

An update was provided to the board on external research projects. Projects have only been rejected where topics were unfeasible. Double review of outputs in place and training is being provided to expand output checkers at LSHTM. A new web based application process is now in place.

Actions:

None

Item 3: Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (Jessica Morley)

Decisions:

It was agreed that Kevin Minier would be involved in PPIE project delivery and involved in recruitment.

Discussion points:

- An overview of the plans for PPIE and OpenSAFELY for the next 6 months were shared by Jessica Morley.
- Plans include hiring a full time engagement lead to deliver the project.

- The board was very supportive of OpenSAFELY's PPIE plans.
- In response to a query from the board it was confirmed that the Digital Critical Friends network would be involved to ensure transparency and advise on linked data sets that are being brought into OpenSAFELY.
- Currently there is budget to deliver the project and will apply for future funding for specific projects.
- It was discussed that proactive work with charities was a good way of working with existing communities and will be explored further over the course of the year.
- It was discussed that there is a gap for deep PPIE and OpenSAFELY is looking for a good partner on this work.

Actions:

- PPIE presentation to be circulated
- Agreed to align with Nicky Brassington and NHSX to share plans and ensure not duplicating effort as NHSX are creating a large PPIE programme and data strategy to ensure deeper ongoing engagement.
- Kevin Minier to be involved in PPIE delivery

Item 5 Open Discussion (Nigel Shadbolt)

Decisions:

None

Discussion points:

KPIs

- The board discussed what KPIs OpenSAFELY should use to measure performance and the best way to create KPIs.
- The current KPIs are based on the grant form the Wellcome Trust.
- It was agreed to have a short list of meaningful KPIs, based on what success looks like and overarching objectives.

Strategic direction & Modularisation

- The Board was asked for initial input into the future strategic direction of OpenSAFELY, in particular the option to separate out modules of OpenSAFELY
- The initial objectives of OpenSAFELY were to create a full open platform with good working documents.
- There is potential to separate out modules and make all features available to users, as well as data curation.
- This would create healthy competition in the system and provide users with a range of options.
- The board discussed the benefits and drawbacks of this approach and how the services offered might be linked back to brand names e.g OpenSAFELY credited if using all modules
- The board acknowledged any potential risk of this approach needed to be reviewed.

Actions:

- Create a small set of goals that act as thoughtful measures as a trigger for further discussion and agreement
- A deep dive into OpenSAFELY's strategy and modularisation at new installations to be included at next board meeting including what OpenSAFELY is learning from external projects (provide notes in advance of meeting to support discussion)

Actions

Item	Action	Owner	Status Notes
9	Email board to arrange a sub-committee meeting of members interested in proposing KPIs.	AM	Closed
10	Draft a letter from Nigel and the Board to key stakeholders to gain support?	BG	Open
11	Approved project page to include dashboard of internal DataLab/LSHTM projects for January 2022 Board	AM	Closed
12	Work with researchers to prepare a lay summary of project outcomes/benefits.	AM	Closed
13	Provide the board with a PPIE deepdive at the next board meeting	JM	Closed
14	Provide the board with an update of the online onboarding process at the next board meeting	AM	Closed
15	PPIE presentation to be circulated	JM	Closed
16	Agreed to align with Nicky Brassington and NHSX to share plans and ensure not duplicating effort as NHSX are creating a large PPIE programme and data strategy	NB & JM	Closed

	to ensure deeper ongoing engagement.		
17	Kevin Minier to be involved in PPIE delivery	KM & JM	Closed
18	Create a small set of goals that act as thoughtful measures as a trigger for further discussion and agreement	BG	Open
19	A deep dive into OpenSAFELY's strategy and modularisation at new installations to be included at next board meeting including what OpenSAFELY is learning from external projects	SB	Open

END