

## **Nutrition North – Regional Nutrition Research Collaborative**

**Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2024**

**1.00pm - 2.30pm**

*Via zoom*

***Chair: Prof Bernard Corfe***

### **Meeting Notes and Actions**

#### **In Attendance:**

***Chair:*** Bernard Corfe (BC), Newcastle University  
Nadia Ranceva (NR), Alder Hey Children's NHS FT  
Yvonne Armitage (YA), Centre for Process Innovation (CPI)  
Tom Butler (TB), Edge Hill University  
Ian Davies (ID), Liverpool John Moores University  
Iain Brownlee (IB), Northumbria University  
Jordan Beaumont (JB), Sheffield Hallam University  
Jibin He (JH), Teesside University  
Nicola Lowe (NL), University of Central Lancashire (UCLan)  
John McLaughlin (JM), University of Manchester  
Farzad Amirabdollahian (FA), University of Wolverhampton  
Ben Martyn (BMa), The NHSA  
Sarah Hill (SH), The NHSA

#### **Apologies:**

Senthil Senniappan (SS), Alder Hey Children's NHS FT  
Charmele Ayadurai (CA), Durham University  
Carolyn Summerbell (CS), Durham University  
Julie Abayomi (JA), Edge Hill University  
Nicola Calder (NC), Food Active  
Heather Brown (HB), Lancaster University  
Bruce Hollingsworth (BH), Lancaster University  
Leo Stevenson (LS), Liverpool Hope University  
Richard Webb (RW), Liverpool Hope University  
Frances Hillier-Brown (FHB), Newcastle University  
Fiona Malcolmson (FM), Newcastle University  
Aliya Porter (AP), Porter Nutrition  
Charlotte Evans (CE), Purple Nutrition  
Georgia Payne (GP), South Tees Hospitals NHS FT  
Amelia Lake (AL), Teesside University  
Helen Moore (HM), Teesside University  
Jo Smith (JS), Teesside University  
Swarnim Gupta (SG), University of Central Lancashire (UCLan)  
Basma Ellahi (BE), University of Chester  
Sohail Mushtaq (SM), University of Chester

Kieran Tuohy (KT), University of Leeds  
Charlotte Hardman (CH), University of Liverpool  
Bernadette Moore (BM), University of Liverpool  
Robert Akparibo (RA), University of Sheffield  
Samantha Caton (SC), University of Sheffield  
Lucie Nield (LN), University of Sheffield  
Liz Williams (LW), University of Sheffield  
Maria Bryant (MB), University of York

### Meeting Notes

#### **1. Welcome & Introductions**

BC opened the meeting and thanked everyone for coming. The notes of the previous meeting (paper 1) were reviewed and accepted as an accurate representation of proceedings.

BC commented on the actions from the previous meeting and informed the group that:

- Nutrition North had not attended the Labour Party Conference this year but were hoping to be involved in future NHSA events at party conferences.
- The Nutrition APPG could unfortunately not be reformed with the new government because it was missing a conservative MP.
- BM has moved from Leeds to Liverpool University and therefore a second Nutrition North member from Leeds is needed for the group.

*Action: KT to nominate a new Nutrition North representative from Leeds University*

#### **2. Updates from Workstreams**

##### **2.1. Nutrition in the North Report**

IB updated the group on the progress of the Nutrition North Report. A draft manuscript is almost completed and is being finalised by the NHSA team ready for design and publication. IB and BC thanked everyone who had submitted case studies for the report.

##### **2.2. School Nutrition**

Apologies for absence from Charlotte Evans

##### **2.3. Nutrition and Breast Cancer**

Apologies for absence from Kieran Tuohy

##### **2.4. Nutrition Webinars**

Apologies for absence from Sohail Mushtaq

#### **3. Welcome to new members**

##### **3.1. Nadia Ranceva & Senthil Senniappan from Alder Hey Children's NHS FT**

NR introduced herself (consultant psychiatrist in eating disorders) and spoke about her work. NR thanked the group for inviting her and SS to join.

NR spoke about the eating disorder service and Obesity service at Alder Hey. There is a large dietetic department for U18s and training on nutritional support for schools. Work

with charities and foodbanks. NR commented that it is really expensive to feed a child with an eating disorder. It is the only illness not paid for by NHS because you don't get food on prescription.

BC thanked NR and responded that it is good to have members from a clinical organisation involved

**3.2. Georgia Payne**, a new member from **South Tees Hospitals NHS FT**, sent apologies.

**3.3. Yvonne Armitage from CPI (Centre for Process Innovation)**

CPI is an independent innovation centre with the aim of bridging the gap between academic research and commercialisation. Work with companies of all sizes but mostly small companies and spin outs and with an academic base. YA commented that her personal area of expertise is in Agrifood, and she is based in Middlesbrough.

**4. New Workstreams**

**4.1. Food Innovation North**

YA introduced the new workstream, working with the food industry to understand what is needed from a nutrition point of view, in new products.

Opportunities for functional food – containing nutrients that are needed or augmenting nutrients.

Build a cluster around bioeconomy - How do we manufacture and make sure we have nutritionally relevant foods? People have to both want to eat them and be able to afford them. Need to develop novel and sustainable solutions.

CPI is involved with:

- Agriculture - developing alternatives to pesticides and stimulants.
- Soil microbiome.
- Molecular farming - Producing pharmaceuticals in agricultural facilities.

YA continued: How can we take a novel food and get it to the same stage as normal food? Need to overcome blockers. The approval process takes a couple of years even when people have a product, so we need to streamline this. Companies are often heavy on ideas but poor in resource.

NR commented that she was very interested in novel food technology. She works with children who cannot tolerate food, or taste, and cannot take supplements. Tasteless food supplements would therefore be very important in the field of eating disorders.

NR added that she treats some children who have gone blind through malnutrition or have lower IQs because of malnutrition. We desperately need other ways of getting food into their bodies.

YA replied that NR's point was interesting because most people are trying to mimic taste and get a good flavour.

BM queried the difference between "Food", "nutritional supplement" and "nutritional supplement with health benefits". At which point do the products require health approval rather than food approval?

IB remarked on health claims and novel foods; in the food area, health claims are stringently regulated. Marketing claims are more nebulous and can be used to bypass regulations. In Europe changing your microbiome is not seen as a health benefit. Consumers respond to that as a concept though, so marketing reflects that. Novel production methods and novel food are different. Food for medical purposes would be even more regulated.

*Action: YA to provide half a page on what sort of work CPI are doing.*

Referring to the earlier comments from BC about the Nutrition APPG, YA suggested George Freeman as a potential Conservative MP candidate. George Freeman is already on the Health and Bioscience APPG and Agriculture APPG, which are related areas.

#### **4.2. Colon Cancer Survivorship in the North**

BC introduced and gave an overview of the new workstream. Colon cancer survivors are an under-served community. Patients need to know what is healthy for them after they have been treated. What is the best available diet advice to improve cancer survivorship outcomes and recovery? The North of England has a higher prevalence of colon cancer and poorer outcomes. There is an urgent need for a cohort in this space, but the MRC can't fund new cohorts. The new workstream aims to address this and apply to northern cancer charities for funding.

JM commented that there are different kinds of outcomes for colon cancer depending on whether patients received radiotherapy or chemo. Different groups would have different dietary needs and interventions so the data would need breaking down.

JM added that he had recently published a paper on this.

#### **5. Terms of Reference**

BC referred to paper 2, the draft Terms of Reference for Nutrition North, and went through it with the group.

The group commented that meeting in person (suggested in the ToR as an annual event) might be difficult under current University funding constraints but in general the document reflected how the group had already been operating and has worked well so far.

The group were happy with the document and approved the Terms of Reference.

#### **6. Visibility of Nutrition North**

##### **6.1. Nutrition North Logo**

SH shared paper 3 and displayed 4 potential versions of an NHSA logo for Nutrition North, as designed by the NHSA Senior Designer, Sean Collins.

The group approved the version depicting a plate with a knife and fork as the official Nutrition North logo.

## **7. Actions of Nutrition North supporting other NHSA Workstreams**

SH updated the group on areas where Nutrition North work has contributed to other NHSA workstreams. Nutrition North members are involved with Health inequalities work such as the Child of the North and Health Equity North (HEN). Nutrition North has also contributed expertise to a large report in development from the Healthy Ageing group – the “unequal ageing” report.

SH further informed the group that HEN would like to sponsor the upcoming Nutrition in the North Report and include their logo on the final publication so it can also be promoted through HEN channels.

## **8. Institute for Preventative Health Research (IPHR)**

BC introduced Ben Martyn (BM) from the NHSA to speak about the proposed NHSA Institute for Preventative Health Research (IPHR).

BM outlined that the initial idea had emerged from the convention of the north in Feb 2024 where BM had presented an NHSA paper on the inequity of research funding across England. The Northern Mayors were present at the convention of the North and were keen to address this collaboratively.

NHSA therefore developed a proposal in response based around current government health missions and the need to switch from an interventionist to prevention focussed system.

BM continued that there is space for a virtual institution to lead on this at national level but to be based in north. We have expertise in these areas because of the natural inequalities that we have here. We can be a leading voice in this space.

Consultation workshops were held with NHSA members on proposed themes: Child health, Mental health, Womens Health, Productivity, and Innovation. There is obviously significant overlap with all those and nutrition has relevance to all of them.

BM is in the process of writing up the outputs of the workshops. This will be taken to the northern mayors and then to ministers next year.

BC commented that many Nutrition North workstreams already map onto the theme areas of the institute and mentioned existing infrastructure such as FUSE and strong collaborations within the Northwest Universities. All evidence of the capacity of the Northern region to deliver projects.

BM replied that he is currently doing some mapping of infrastructure, communities and projects to work out where the dots are so we can connect them. He also thought BC had made a valuable point earlier in the meeting about the MRC not funding new cohorts. BM concluded that he was really keen to keep in touch with NN and work together on developing the IPHR

***Action: BM/SH to circulate feedback from the IPHR consultation workshops and the draft institute proposal to Nutrition North.***

## 9. Any Other Business

BC gave a vote of thanks to Jen Paxman and Kevin Williamson who have recently left the group

BC also thanked everyone for their valuable contributions to the meeting.

With no other business the meeting was closed.

### List of Actions

1. **Action (KT):** To nominate a new Nutrition North representative from Leeds University
2. **Action (YA):** To provide half a page on what sort of work CPI are doing.
3. **Action (BM/SH):** To circulate feedback from the IPHR consultation workshops and the draft institute proposal to Nutrition North.