

Message

From: [NR] [NR]@cabinetoffice.gov.uk
Sent: 10/05/2020 15:05:59
To: Brooke Rogers [I&S]; James Rubin [I&S]
CC: Behavioural science [behavioural-science@cabinetoffice.gov.uk]
Subject: Re: A proposal - RE: SPI-B tentative agenda and papers

Hi James, Brooke,

I am happy to bring in some thoughts on Monday as well. I tried to understand how the next phase of this kind of messaging can be more supported by SPI-B (or at least make sure the decisions are made having seen advice). The messages in this instance are kept so elusive by a small group of mainly No10 advisers - these are agencies that have won their political campaigns and are now supporting this one too. My team was never consulted either and as soon as I heard the message I flagged our concerns which mirror those of the group - only to be told it was too late now (and "it tested well" which often means a shut down of discussion of any risks!)

I think bottom line isn't they won't change the message now. Flagging concern is probably not wrong but I think it would be better to explore how to work more with them next time. And I am so sorry that despite being the behavioural scientists inside the government communications service we don't have a handle on this either. It's so often partially political and in this case I was also told they wanted to keep it deliberately small so that there's not too many cooks which is also a cultural issue.

I hope that made some sense! I will of course keep trying.

[NR]

On Sun, 10 May 2020 at 13:56, Stephen Reicher <[I&S]> wrote:

Thanks James (and, incidentally, congratulations on your excellent distancing paper - very timely!).

On the discussion, I wish this was purely about the comms. I am not convinced it is.

Steve

On 10/05/2020, 13:20, "Rubin, James" [I&S] wrote:

At the risk of sounding like a broken record, yes, let's discuss in our meeting - we will make time for it.

We aren't going to be put in charge of the comms machine. All we can do is work on making our advice as clear and compelling as possible, to draw govt colleagues to us.

-----Original Message-----

From: Lucy Yardley [I&S]
Sent: 10 May 2020 13:10
To: Stephen Reicher [I&S]; Michie, Susan [I&S]; Rubin, James [I&S]; Theresa Marteau [I&S]; SAGE Mailbox (Go-Science) <[SAGE@I&S]>; Chris Bonell [I&S]; Clifford Stott [I&S]; Leightley, Daniel [I&S]; Ellen Brooks Pollock [I&S];

Morgan, Gavin [I&S] Melendez-Torres, G.J. <[Irrelevant & Sensitive]
 Potts, Henry [I&S]; Hugo Harper <hugo.harper@bi.team>; Imran Awan
 [I&S]; Iyiola Solanke [I&S]; Waller, Jo [I&S] John
 Drury [I&S] Kathryn Scott <kathryn.scott@bps.org.uk>; Laura Bear [I&S]
 Smith, Louise [I&S]; Mark Harrison [I&S]; Fear, Nicola
 [I&S]; Richard Pemberton [PD]; West, Robert
 [I&S] [PD] Rogers, Brooke [I&S] Viner,
 Russell [I&S] Val Curtis <[I&S]>; michael.parker [I&S]
 Cc: [NR] @beis.gov.uk; [NR] [NR]
 [NR] @gov.scot; Charlotte Watts <c-watts@dfid.gov.uk>; Cheryl Cavanagh
 <cheryl.cavanagh@dhsc.gov.uk>; David Hughes <David.Hughes@communities.gov.uk> [NR]
 [NR] @cabinetoffice.gov.uk; [NR] [NR]
 [NR] [NR] [I&S] [NR] (GO-Science)
 [NR] [NR] (BEIS) [NR] Payne,
 Heather (HSS-DPH-Population Healthcare) <heather.payne@gov.wales>; Hugh Stickland
 <Hugh.Stickland@ons.gov.uk>; Janice Bailie <janice.bailie@hscni.net>; [NR] @health-
 ni.gov.uk; [NR]; Lesley Armour
 <Lesley.Armour@hscni.net>; [NR] [NR] @cabinetoffice.gov.uk; [NR]
 [NR] @dhsc.gov.uk; [NR] @cabinetoffice.gov.uk; [NR]
 (Go Science) [NR] @go-science.gov.uk; Matthew Costley <Matthew.Costley@hscni.net>;
 Nicola Armstrong <Nicola.Armstrong@hscni.net>; [NR] (Go Science) [NR] @go-
 science.gov.uk; PHE <COVID19.Cabinet@phe.gov.uk> [NR]
 [NR] @cabinetoffice.gov.uk; 'PSChiefScientificAdviser'
 <PSChiefScientificAdviser@communities.gov.uk>; Richard Amlot <Richard.Amlot@phe.gov.uk>; [NR]
 [NR] [NR] Newton S (Sarah) <sarah.newton@gov.scot>; Scottish Gov
 modelling team <modellingcoronavirus@gov.scot>; Siobhan Campbell <siobhan.campbell@dfi.gov.uk>;
 [NR] @Go-Science.gov.uk; Wainwright, Stuart (Go Science)
 <Stuart.Wainwright@Go-Science.gov.uk>; [NR] [NR] [NR]
 (Clean Heat Directorate) [NR] Nick Gent <Nick.Gent@phe.gov.uk>; [NR]
 [NR] [NR] @dhsc.gov.uk; [NR] @DHSC.gov.uk;
 [NR] @cabinetoffice.gov.uk; [NR] (Communications & Partnerships)
 [NR] @beis.gov.uk; [NR] @environment-agency.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: A proposal - RE: SPI-B tentative agenda and papers

I don't think Stay Alert is a particularly good slogan but I don't think you can have a behaviourally specific
 slogan given how many behaviours there are - the tweet does specify several of them. There is lots of advice
 we have given that hasn't/probably won't be followed, not sure I would pick a fight on the messaging myself.

Best wishes,
 Lucy

-----Original Message-----

From: Stephen Reicher [mailto:[I&S]]
 Sent: 10 May 2020 13:04

[See recipients listed above]

[See recipients listed above]

Subject: Re: A proposal - RE: SPI-B tentative agenda and papers

We have learnt so much from Donald Trump... But seriously, I think it would still be helpful for James to write such a message now and I think it is all the more important we discuss the issue tomorrow - if nothing else to help us all learn from our mistakes. But also for the sake of posterity.

Steve

On 10/05/2020, 12:57, "Michie, Susan"

**Irrelevant &
Sensitive**

wrote:

Oh gosh, PM communication to the nation by Twitter now in the UK ...

Professor Susan Michie, FAcSS, FMedSci
Director of UCL Centre for Behaviour Change
Department of Clinical, Educational and Health Psychology
University College London
1-19 Torrington Place
London WC1E 7HB

Website: <https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ftinyurl.com%2Fsusan-michie&data=01%7C01%7Cgideon.rubin%40kcl.ac.uk%7C6704bf0fd2f94ac94d6508d7f4db1b3a%7C8370cf1416f34c16b83c724071654356%7C0&data=fbQ8KXXhtVR%2FT0x4G9YJMjNRkCox7U3ZSkOSVXqnHII%3D&reserved=0>

Email:
Twitter:

**Irrelevant &
Sensitive**

Centre for Behaviour Change

Email: **I&S**

Website: <https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.ucl.ac.uk%2Fbehaviour-change&data=01%7C01%7Cgideon.rubin%40kcl.ac.uk%7C6704bf0fd2f94ac94d6508d7f4db1b3a%7C8370cf1416f34c16b83c724071654356%7C0&sdata=KNAZrzpG2p7w03oJdf4eOzyaQgT%2BPiWQlbkIdWmX5R8%3D&reserved=0>

Twitter: **I&S**

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-----Original Message-----

From: Rubin, James **NR**

Sent: 10 May 2020 12:54

[See recipients listed above]

[See recipients listed above]

Subject: RE: A proposal - RE: SPI-B tentative agenda and papers

That ship has sailed Theresa:

<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Ftwitter.com%2FBorisJohnson&data=01%7C01%7Cgideon.rubin%40kcl.ac.uk%7C6704bf0fd2f94ac94d6508d7f4db1b3a%7C8370cf1416f34c16b83c724071654356%7C0&data=xgbkbeS11Tw0Vb%2B7sAR0CA8zzB66qUP6hWODd7gHIYA%3D&reserved=0>

J

-----Original Message-----

From: Theresa Marteau

I&S

Sent: 10 May 2020 12:48

[See recipients listed above]

[See recipients listed above]

Subject: A proposal - RE: SPI-B tentative agenda and papers

To add to the points already made:

1. We advise, ministers decide
2. Our advice has not been sought on what we believe is a new message that will go live at 7pm ie before SPI-B meeting tomorrow.
3. We have good reason to believe that this new message not only misses an opportunity to provide behaviourally specific and precise advice but also has the potential to do much damage thereby increasing R0 with all the expected negative health and economic consequences.

My proposal: James - as Chair of SPI-B - writes now to the Chair of SAGE documenting our concerns in the hope that he may be able to intervene before 7pm.

Theresa

Professor Theresa M Marteau DBE FMedSci
Director
Behaviour and Health Research Unit
University of Cambridge
Institute of Public Health
Cambridge CB2 0SR

I&S

<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.bhru.iph.cam.ac.uk%2F&data=01%7C01%7Cgideon.rubin%40kcl.ac.uk%7C6704bf0fd2f94ac94d6508d7f4db1b3a%7C8370cf1416f34c16b83c724071654356%7C0&sdata=1cD57weHyajLJShmgEAKhQYdblftHqXhJXP6TKxehVo%3D&reserved=0>

Fellow & Director of Studies in Psychological and Behavioural Sciences Christ's College Cambridge

<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.christs.cam.ac.uk%2F&data=01%7C01%7Cgideon.rubin%40kcl.ac.uk%7C6704bf0fd2f94ac94d6508d7f4db1b3a%7C8370cf1416f34c16b83c724071654356%7C0&sdata=OX1KGWxdIQ09uhkeiU%2BKx7WW4p7rzfAkF6K1LrqvL%2BE%3D&reserved=0>

From: Stephen Reicher

I&S

Sent: 10 May 2020 12:26

[See recipients listed above]

[See recipients listed above]

Subject: Re: {Disarmed} RE: SPI-B tentative agenda and papers

You certainly are not a lone worrier, Susan.
I worry

1. that (if reports are accurate) this new advice is disastrous and will do damage in many ways - not least leading to different approaches in different parts of the UK and so creating a sense of inequity as well as confusion
2. that there is a danger that (as well as 'behavioural fatigue') this will be perceived as having a 'behavioural science' imprint and so undermine us both individually and at a disciplinary level.

Insofar as it raises issues about our general role and remit, and hence frames everything else, I also agree that it should be at the top of the agenda.

Steve

From: "Michie, Susan" **I&S**
Date: Sunday, 10 May 2020 at 12:19

[See recipients listed above]

[See recipients listed above]

Subject: {Disarmed} RE: SPI-B tentative agenda and papers

Dear **NR**, James and colleague,

Given recent developments, I would like to suggest that item 6. be brought higher up the agenda and that we consider adding an item about our role and impact. The reason for suggesting this is that I was sent a message yesterday informing me that new messaging had been centrally trailed and would be "stay alert, control the virus and save lives". I sincerely hope that this is incorrect as it goes against several principles we have rehearsed many times in our advice to SAGE/Government - e.g. being behaviourally specific and being precise about what we are asking people to do. If it turns out to be true, it would be helpful to understand why we were not consulted given we have a bespoke Communications group and have been raising the problem of Government communications for several weeks, and offering to help and give advice directly.

I would be interested in others' views about this as I am worried about how things appear to be developing - and am not sure if I am a lone worrier - obviously we will have more information this evening.

With best wishes

Susan

From: SAGE Mailbox (Go-Science) <[SAGE@](#)**I&S**>

Sent: 09 May 2020 11:38

[See recipients listed above]

[See recipients listed above]

Subject: SPI-B tentative agenda and papers

Dear all

An updated tentative agenda for Monday is below. Please find a link for papers on SharePoint here<<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fbeisgov.sharepoint.com%2F%3A%2F%3A%2Fr%2Fsites%2Fbeis%2F357%2FGOScienceResilienceSecurityandInfrastructure%2F%255bEXTERNAL%255d%2520SPI-B%2520Collaboration%2FSPI-B%2520Meetings%2FSPI-B%2520%252310%3Fcsf%3D1%26web%3D1%26e%3DW7cDlA&data=01%7C01%7Cgideon.rubin%40kcl.ac.uk%7C6704bf0fd2f94ac94d6508d7f4db1b3a%7C8370cf1416f34c16b83c724071654356%7C0&sdata=nLwXIZNSJN76MyJzJ2B2CQAoipHvUzdMFq9vnBiSXck%3D&reserved=0>> - a paper on bubbles is expected later today/early tomorrow, but for now the following papers are circulated for information (and not to be shared further please):

- * International Round-Up of Education Provision from DfE
- * Weekly polling timeseries from Government Communication Service
- * A weekly report from Covid-19 Communications Hub

Many thanks

Name Redacted

1. Introduction
2. Situation update
3. 'Bubbling'
4. Adherence amongst healthcare workers
5. Behavioural aspects within work environments (if time allows)
6. Release of documents and SPI-B support

7. AOB and next steps

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Dr **NR**
SAGE Secretariat
Behavioural Science and X-Whitehall Engagement

NR | sage@ **I&S**
I&S <<mailto:sage@>> **I&S**
I&S

-----Original Appointment-----

From: **NR** (Go Science) On Behalf Of SAGE Mailbox (Go-Science)
Sent: 06 May 2020 15:51

[See recipients listed above]

Subject: CALLING NOTICE: Behavioural Science Subgroup - SPI-B
When: 11 May 2020 13:00-14:30 (UTC+00:00) Dublin, Edinburgh, Lisbon, London.
Where: Zoom teleconference; **Irrelevant & Sensitive**

[OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE: PLEASE CONSULT ORIGINATOR BEFORE SHARING FURTHER]
Behavioural Science Subgroup - SPI-B PLEASE ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT

Dear all,

This is an invite for the Behavioural Science sub-group, SPI-B reporting to SAGE.

Timings:

The meeting will be held on Monday 11 May between 13:00 and 14:30. We are looking to establish a standing time for SPI-B meetings, so going forward, SPI-B will meet at this time every Monday until further notice.

Please do not forward this invitation without prior agreement from the SAGE Secretariat.

PLEASE NOTE: This meeting will take place over zoom

Join Zoom Meeting

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Instructions:

1. 1 In order to join the call, you have two options:

* Download the Zoom app and log in or join the meeting as a guest (joining via the app does not require a Zoom account).

* Launch Zoom from your browser using the link above. You must click on the option 'launch from browser' or the call will fail. Zoom now requires all users joining via a browser to have a registered account. Please ensure you set this up prior to the meeting.

2. Enter the Meeting ID, password and name when prompted.

4. Please keep all microphones on mute unless you would like to come in and speak.

5. This is a video conference - SPI-B members expecting to speak should have their cameras on throughout.

6. If you are dialling-in, please email the SAGE secretariat with the last 3 digits of your phone number, so that we are aware of who is present on the call. For security reasons, unidentified and uninvited participants and observers will be removed from the meeting.

Upon logging in please use your full name.

Tentative Agenda:

1. Introduction

2. Situation update

3. 'Bubbling'

4. Adherence amongst healthcare workers

A more detailed agenda and papers will follow.

All participants must be agreed with the Secretariat in advance and if you wish to nominate other attendees,

you must inform the SAGE secretariat in advance of the meeting.

If you have further questions or would like to circulate a comment to attendees, please do not reply on this chain, but contact the SAGE Secretariat directly.

Whilst open invitations are issued to all ongoing participants of SPI-B, participants are only expected to attend a given meeting if discussions on the agenda are in an area of their expertise.

Please note that through attending this meeting, you agree to treat the discussion as confidential and do not discuss the contents outside of that setting. You may continue to speak to the media as an independent expert but not as a SPI-B participant.

The Enhanced SAGE

Guidance<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fuploads%2Fsystem%2Fuploads%2Fattachment_data%2Ffile%2F80087%2Fsage-guidance.pdf&data=01%7C01%7Cgideon.rubin%40kcl.ac.uk%7C6704bf0fd2f94ac94d6508d7f4db1b3a%7C8370cf1416f34c16b83c724071654356%7C0&sd=stRxniRUnKRc7xbKKwaLGnFVKJ%2FQRXvMqmfcTeXz40%3D&reserved=0> might also be of interest to you. For further information about Scientific Advisory Groups in general, please see the Code of Practice for Scientific Advisory Committees<https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fuploads%2Fsystem%2Fuploads%2Fattachment_data%2Ffile%2F278498%2F11-1382-code-of-practice-scientific-advisory-committees.pdf&data=01%7C01%7Cgideon.rubin%40kcl.ac.uk%7C6704bf0fd2f94ac94d6508d7f4db1b3a%7C8370cf1416f34c16b83c724071654356%7C0&sd=SXTO%2Fnr1PKQ%2BiQXuonyOrJar0vq6%2B9DiFu4yrIMvGwA%3D&reserved=0>. We would like to draw your attention to the list of members' rights and responsibilities (on pages 10 and 11), and the remarks about the responsibility of members to declare any conflicts of interest relevant to the remit of the group. If you have a conflict of interest relevant to the remit of the group, then you should declare it to the SAGE Secretariat before the meeting begins.

SAGE relies largely upon the good-will of many experts. However, some provision will be made to cover SPI-B participants' appropriate personal expenses. Please contact the SAGE secretariat for further information.

Best wishes,
SAGE secretariat

[cid:image001.png@01D5D072.3E6456B0]

SAGE Secretariat

[sage@](mailto:sage@10.Victoria.Street.London.SW1H.0NN) **I&S** <[mailto:sage@](mailto:sage@10.Victoria.Street.London.SW1H.0NN) **I&S**>
[10 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0NN](mailto:sage@10.Victoria.Street.London.SW1H.0NN)

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PLEASE ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT

[OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE: PLEASE CONSULT ORIGINATOR BEFORE SHARING FURTHER]

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Dr **NR** Head of Behavioural Science
Prime Minister's Office and Cabinet Office

INQ000197075_0012

Government Communication Service^[1]

E: **NR** [@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:NR@cabinetoffice.gov.uk)

M: **Irrelevant & Sensitive**