

Terms of Reference - Scientific & Technical Advisory Cell to COVID-19 SILVER

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Public Health Agency will convene a Scientific & Technical Advisory Cell (STAC) to support HSC Silver through the Information and Capacity Management function.

The STAC will provide the following functions to inform HSC Silver, Gold and the global effort against COVID-19:

- Develop an awareness of and seek access to resources where evidence relevant to the COVID-19 pandemic is available
- Share relevant resources and sources of information with the Knowledge Management Cell to assist with query handling
- Develop links with and participate in the relevant evidence synthesis and evidence generation groups both nationally and globally
- Work with other Cells to respond to queries by identifying, reviewing and summarising evidence
- Identify queries generated from across the system where evidence gaps might exist and feed this into the evidence generation community
- Through discussion with the relevant groups, identify areas where the Northern Ireland science and research community can contribute to the global effort of evidence synthesis and generation relevant to COVID-19
- Where appropriate provide rapid access to funding for research to generate evidence relevant to the COVID-19 pandemic taking place in Northern Ireland
- Ensure there is awareness across the Northern Ireland research community of research studies in which Northern Irish COVID-19 patients or Northern Ireland researchers could participate
- Where possible identify relevant evidence gaps that could be addressed through research led from Northern Ireland
- Participate directly in the generation of evidence relevant to the COVID-19 pandemic where possible
- Ensure that any newly available evidence is made accessible to HSC Silver, HSC Gold and National equivalents through the appropriate channels
- To assist with review of funding applications to HSC R&D Division, including the HSC R&D Funding Call

The group may meet virtually and will comprise core and advisory membership.

It will provide a SITREP each day to SILVER.

Role of Advisory Panel

- To support the work of the STAC core team in addressing Evidence Gaps identified through queries submitted to STAC cell
- To source reliable evidence from own field of expertise or knowledge when requested through self or wider team members (e.g. students)
- To respond to request for information within agreed timeline
- To provide a summary response or fuller review which is accessible and understandable to colleagues and potentially public elsewhere in the organisation who will not have expert knowledge in this field.
- To provide an appropriate reference list
- To keep confidential any queries and responses
- To provide written reviews of applications to the HSC R&D Funding Call
- To keep confidential information about applications received to HSC R&D Funding Call