

## Assisted Dying Public Engagement Project

### 19<sup>th</sup> January 2024 – Advisory Board Meeting minutes

2 - 4:15pm, online via Microsoft Teams

#### **Attendance – Advisory Board members:**

Anne Kerr (Chair), Professor of Science and Technology Studies and Head of School of Social and Political Sciences, University of Glasgow; NCOB Council member

Sarah Cunningham-Burley, Professor of Medical and Family Sociology / Dean of Molecular, Genetic and Population Health Sciences, The University of Edinburgh; NCOB Chair of Council

Suzanne Hall, Director of Engagement, The Policy Institute, King's College London  
Rachel Lopata, Freelance Researcher

Malcolm Oswald, Director, Citizen' Juries c.i.c; Honorary Research Fellow in Law, University of Manchester

Michael Reiss, Professor of Science Education, Institute of Education, University College London; NCOB Council member

Holly Rogers, Head of Engagement, Academy of Medical Sciences

Selena Stellman, General Practitioner; NCOB Council member

#### **Nuffield Council on Bioethics:**

Cris Cloyd, External Affairs Manager

Molly Gray, Project Manager

Rebecca Mussell, Associate Director, Research and Policy

#### **Hopkins Van Mil/M.E.L Research/ Independent evaluation:**

Henrietta Hopkins, Director

Kate Furber, Researcher

Hally Ingram, Senior Associate

Steve Handley, Quantitative Research Director

Kirsty Marshall, Associate Director, Research and Policy

Leah Holmes, Independent Evaluator

#### **Apologies:**

Clare Chambers, Professor of Political Philosophy, University of Cambridge; NCOB Council member

1. Welcome and introductions
  - Minutes approved.
2. Advisory Board draft Terms of Reference and membership
  - The changes to the Terms of Reference were agreed.

### 3. Survey 1 design

- M.E.L Research shared the latest version of the structure and design of survey 1.
- The Board **advised**:
  - i. Including some attitudinal questions to determine respondents' mindsets e.g. individualist, structuralist.
  - ii. Reconsidering the use of the word 'terminal' in a number of questions.
  - iii. Reconsidering the phrasing of some of the classification questions.
  - iv. Including a question asking respondents whether their position on assisted dying has been affected by media influences (e.g. television programmes/documentaries, radio programmes), if so which ones.
  - v. Reconsidering the question on social class, accepting that postcodes and use of Acorn software can tell us enough about the social grade of respondents.
  - vi. Using the pilot to test a) whether including a question on social grade deters people from completing the rest of the survey b) whether having 'agree' as the option on the left of a horizontal scale makes respondents more likely to select agree.

### 4. Citizens' Jury design

- A paper looking at the Jury recruitment methodology was shared with Advisory Board members ahead of this meeting. Following this, it was **agreed** that:
  - i. Not including attitudinal questions on assisted dying in the recruitment screener runs the risk of the Jury members all having similar preconceived attitudes towards assisted dying.
  - ii. There should be a clear rationale for the approach that is taken in the recruitment of Jury members.
  - iii. Linking attitudinal questions in the recruitment sample to the national trends (as drawn out from Survey 1) across different attitudes is important for the credibility of the process.
  - iv. It is important that we do not underrepresent those with a minority view on assisted dying within the Jury.
- A paper containing the latest version of the draft Jury questions was shared with Advisory Board members ahead of the meeting. The Board **advised**:
  - i. Simplifying the language in the first sub-question such as the use of the word 'considerations'.
  - ii. Modifying question 2 to separate the question into two separate questions 'what should it include? What should it exclude?'

- iii. Reconsidering the wording used in question 3 in light of the fact that jurors are likely to have insufficient in-depth technical legal expertise on the current law on assisted dying in England.
- iv. Continuing to revisit the introductory box to ensure clarity and accuracy.

## 5. Desk research and stimulus materials

- HVM shared a summary of key points from the broad range of stakeholder interviews conducted to date.
- It was **agreed** that:
  - i. The Content Group is responsible for providing feedback on the details of overseeing stimulus materials. In contrast, the Advisory Board will be asked for feedback on the overall process and plans for the Jury sessions.
  - ii. It is important to include stimulus informing participants on the existing legal end-of-life options available in England – for example, a competent adult being able to refuse life-sustaining treatment.
  - iii. It will be important to consider the presenting delivery styles of speakers throughout the Citizens' Jury.
  - iv. The independent evaluation interim report will play an important role in sharing participant feedback on stimulus materials that can then be used to refine stimulus for the remaining workshops

## 6. Stakeholder management and communications

- NCOB communications team **confirmed** that:
  - i. All current MPs and peers had been emailed and offered the opportunity to meet with the NCOB team if they had any questions about the project.
  - ii. They continue to monitor media surrounding the topic and, where appropriate, reach out to media platforms to inform them of the project.
- The possibility of an October election altering the timelines for the publication of the project's report was **discussed**.
- NCOB confirmed the parameters of being an 'ambassador' for the project as stated in the Terms of Reference.

## 7. Evaluation

- The baseline evaluation report had been shared with Advisory Board members ahead of this meeting.
- It was confirmed that it was planned that the theory of change and evaluation framework of the evaluation process would be made public.

## 8. AOB and next steps

- Next meeting **confirmed** to take place on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March online using Teams.

- Advisory Board members were reminded of the importance and value of reviewing and providing feedback on documents circulated between meetings.
- The possibility of the public being able to observe the Jury was **raised**.
  - i. It was agreed that the role of observers at the Jury will be added to the next agenda for discussion.