

## Assisted Dying Public Engagement Project

### Meeting 5 – Advisory Board Meeting minutes

5<sup>th</sup> July 2024, 11 - 1:30pm, hybrid at the NCOB Offices and using 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

Clare Chambers, Professor of Political Philosophy, University of Cambridge; 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

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 (NCOB):**

Molly Gray, Project Manager

Jay Stone, Associate Director, External Relations and Foresight

Cris Cloyd, External Affairs Manager

#### **Hopkins Van Mil (HVM):**

Henrietta Hopkins, Director

Hally Ingram, Senior Associate

Kate Furber, Researcher

#### **M.E.L Research:**

Steve Handley, Quantitative Research Director

#### **Independent evaluation:**

Leah Holmes, Independent Evaluator

## Apologies:

Suzanne Hall, Director of Engagement, The Policy Institute, King's College London  
(Advisory Board member)

Kirsty Marshall, Associate Director, M.E.L Research

### 1. Welcome and introductions

- Minutes approved.
  - All other actions marked as completed.

### 2. Citizens' Jury

- It was noted that the Jury recommendations and findings are highly sensitive and will remain strictly confidential until the key findings are published in September.
- HVM gave an update on the Citizens' Jury process and shared the key recommendations and voting results.
  - i. Group discussion on the key Jury recommendations.
  - ii. It was noted that it would be important to provide further information and context on the Juror recommendation that focuses on having a 'national conversation' on the end of life and assisted dying.

### 3. Project outputs

- HVM and NCOB provided an update on the project's outputs, including revised timelines for their publication.
- It was noted that the first report will be published in the first week of September.
- It was highlighted that the main report and film will be circulated to the Advisory Board later in the year for review.
- Group discussion on the sequence of publications. It was noted that the first report is likely to generate a lot of questions on the key recommendations and consideration should be given to how these will be answered effectively before the publication of the main report with the full analysis.
  - **Action (NCOB):** NCOB communications team will draft a plan for the period between the first and main reports on how we will navigate media interest.
- The Board reviewed the draft structure for the first report.
  - i) Group discussion on the draft structure of the first report, including Board members suggesting that the first report could include commentary on how juror views had changed throughout the deliberative process.
- It was noted that the first report will likely receive a high level of interest from the media and key stakeholders, given that it contains the key recommendations from the Jury. It was noted that specific communications

and engagement methods would be needed to raise awareness of the main report publication and that the film would be crucial in giving an overview of the Citizens' Jury process.

- It was reaffirmed that the NCOB's role in relation to the Jury's recommendations was not to endorse or reject them but to present them as a key piece of evidence to inform the debate on assisted dying.

#### 4. Survey 2

- M.E.L Research presented a brief recap of the purpose and content of Survey 1, which was conducted in February 2024.
- M.E.L Research talked through the timelines and design process for Survey 2.
  - Discussed the timings of launching Survey 2 and how this relates to the publication of the first report.
  - Discussed the importance of not using Survey 2 to 'mark' the outcome of the Citizen's Jury, but to use the recommendations of the Jury to help inform the questions in Survey 2, therefore exploring the Jury's key principles and findings whilst building on the results of the first survey.
  - Group discussion on the relationship between the content of Survey 2 and the Jury recommendations. The Board recommended that the survey should not reference the Citizens' Jury to reduce the risk of bias in respondents' answers.
  - It was advised that some questions in Survey 2 could explore the Jury's recommendation to have a 'national conversation' on the topic.
  - Group discussion on how qualitative data produced from the Citizens' Jury might sit alongside the quantitative data generated by Survey 2.
  - Board members advised that Survey 2 could explore areas of consensus and disagreement that came to light throughout the deliberative process, building on Survey 1.
  - It was confirmed that the Advisory Board would continue to review the overall design and structure of Survey 2.
    - **Action (HVM):** circulate a revised design of Survey 2 to Advisory Board members for review and feedback.

## 5. Stakeholder management and communications

- NCOB shared an overview of the up-to-date stakeholder engagement and communications activities.
- It was confirmed that the main report and film will be launched in early 2025, including hosting a post-Jury workshop with key policymakers, stakeholders and Jury members.
- It was noted that following the results of the General Election, nearly all of the MPs who had shown an interest in the project were no longer in office.
- **Action (NCOB):** continue to raise awareness and generate interest in the project amongst the new and returning MPs.
- It was noted that Jury members will be invited to express interest in contributing to a blog to share their experiences of being part of the Jury.
- Group discussion on wider communications and stakeholder engagement plans.
- It was advised that it might be a good opportunity for NCOB to engage with the devolved nations and the UK professional medical bodies on the project findings.
- NCOB confirmed that they are running media training for the project's key spokespersons and a few Jury members.
- NCOB highlighted the importance of the ambassador role for the Advisory Board in the follow-up and impact phase of the project.

## 6. Evaluation

- Dr Leah Holmes (independent evaluator) provided an update on the progress of the evaluation, including providing insights into feedback from Jury members, experts, and Jury Friends on the Citizens' Jury.
- It was agreed that Advisory Board members should send Leah any specific feedback on the overall structure of the evaluation report.

## 7. AOB and next steps

- It was confirmed that Advisory Board members would be named in the main report with affiliations.
- The Chair thanked Advisory Board members for their work and participation and highlighted that it had been a very positive and informative process.