



# Nutrition and Physical Activity Collaborative 2012 - 2016

The Southampton Nutrition Biomedical Research Centre, Bristol Biomedical Research Unit in Nutrition, Diet and Lifestyle and the Leicester-Loughborough Diet, lifestyle and Physical Activity Biomedical research Unit have been meeting as a collaborative since the commencement of the grant award in 2012.



## NIHR Nutrition and Physical Activity Collaborative

The BRU/C collaborative has developed ToR (Terms of Reference). The strategic aims of the group are to:

1. Facilitate sharing of good practice
2. Increase engagement with industry
3. Support and enhance the NIHR trainee's experience
4. Set national standards for essential nutrition and lifestyle practice in the following areas:
  - Nutritional assessment
  - Measurement of body composition
  - Physical activity and sedentary behaviour measurement
  - Biomarkers
5. Inform and influence the national health research discussion on obesity, and align the experimental research outputs to meet the demand.

### 1. Facilitate sharing of good practice:

The collaborative have now met on 6 occasions, We have rotated the hosting arrangement so that each unit/centre can benefit from understanding the physical space and organisation of each unit/centre. This has informed discussions about work flow, patient recruitment practice and capabilities at each location.

The collaborative meetings have also benefitted from the attendance of each of the unit/centre directors, theme leads, managers and training leads, which has enabled discussions around strategic intent / planning. It has also facilitated networking and sharing of ideas / approaches

The collaborative have also worked closely with NOCRI and DH, with representatives present at each of the meetings; this has been another enabler in the strategic discussions of the collaborative.

The managers in the nutrition and physical activity collaborative are in regular contact around many of the operational issues for each of the centres/units and have shared best practice, SOPs and expertise around the following areas:

- SOP Risk Assessment for Exercise Testing Patient Groups
- SOP and quality framework around body composition and measurement
- PPI strategy
- Job descriptions for roles within the unit/centre
- This has reduced duplication of effort, optimised systems and processes and enhanced current practice.



## 2. Increase Industry income:

The collaborative has shared the output of these four national standards with NOCRI so they can be utilised as tool to showcase our capabilities to industry partners. The collaborative continues to work with NOCRI around industry engagement, specifically in the areas of nutri-ceuticals as this space lacks the same regulatory influence from bodies such as MHRA and there has therefore been considerable learning in this space, which has been shared within the collaborative and also with NOCRI to enhance industry engagement strategies.

The group has worked with NOCRI and WellPoint Health Kiosks to host 2 kiosks at Bristol and Leicester respectively and evaluate their efficacy, this work is currently being written up by Bristol colleagues (2015).

## 3. Support and enhance the NIHR trainees experience:

The collaborative is committed to developing its trainees. Training leads from each unit/centre communicate regularly and share best practice.

Recognising this, the Southampton Nutrition BRC has offered several places on its week long Intercollegiate Course on Human Nutrition to other trainees in the collaborative since 2012. This has further been enhanced by trainees working with the Southampton group to learn new techniques and explore potential areas for collaboration.

Bristol Nutrition BRU ran a Nutrition Epidemiology Course in February 2015 which was an introduction to issues in analysis and interpretation of dietary data. Free places were offered to colleagues from Southampton BRC and Leicester/Loughborough BRU. The course is planned to run again in May 2016.

The collaborative have also delivered a physical activity and sedentary behaviour measurement seminar (2013), hosted at Loughborough University. The seminar was well evaluated, and also oversubscribed, the seminar was attended by delegates from across the UK and Ireland, and supported by DH trainees centre.

Measure 2016 will take place in early January, building upon the success of the collaborative's initial seminar. We are delivering a 2 day intensive workshop dedicated to data analysis techniques and methodologies. This will include algorithms developed in collaboration with colleagues from Australia. The workshop is oversubscribed and includes colleagues from across NIHR infrastructure and also international groups in the physical activity measurement realm.

The collaborative is also planning to deliver a 2 day Clinical Exercise testing workshop for trainees within the NIHR and those research groups delivering physical activity interventions for patient groups, this is scheduled for late 2016 and we will be partnering with the National Centre for Sport and Exercise Medicine (NCSEM) at Loughborough.

## 4. Set national standards for essential nutrition and physical activity practice.

This is a medium term objective of the collaborative and is aimed at supporting colleagues within the collaborative, NIHR and wider research community nationally by providing consensus statements and standards around four key areas of nutrition and lifestyle research and practice, via the expertise within the collaborative:

- Nutritional Assessment
- Measurement of body composition
- Physical activity and sedentary behaviour measurement
- Biomarkers.

The outputs from these four working groups will be shared on the collaborative respective websites and we will also provide a toolkit for NIHR colleagues to ensure the information is in a user friendly format.

Bristol BRU and Southampton BRC are supporting an MRC programme led by Janet Cade that is building a web resource of diet measures.

