Member of the New and Emerging Respiratory Virus Threats Advisory Group (NERVTAG)

Information pack for applicants

Closing date: Midday on 13 November 2017

Reference no: EC16-23
Contents

Section 1: The Role

1.1 The role of Member

1.2 The role and responsibilities of NEVTAG

Section 2: How to Apply

2.1 Making an application

2.2 The selection process

2.3 Eligibility criteria

2.4 How we will manage your personal information
SECTION 1 – The Role

1.1 Role and Responsibilities of a Member of NERVTAG

Introduction

The Department of Health is seeking to appointment one Member to the board of NERVTAG.

NERVTAG advises the Chief Medical Officer, Ministers, the Department of Health and other Government departments, with scientific risk assessment and mitigation advice on the threat posed by new and emerging respiratory viruses and on options for responding.

Role and Responsibilities of the Member

Members are appointed by the Department’s Senior Responsible Officer and are accountable to her and the Chair of NERVTAG, being mindful of the needs of the group. Specifically, they are accountable to the Chair of NERVTAG in the provision of the scientific risk assessment and mitigation advice on the threat posed by new and emerging respiratory virus threats and on options for their management. The main areas of responsibility are to:

- work as a NERVTAG committee member in a way that reflects the highest standards of public life
- contribute to collectively working to agree accurate, helpful and timely briefing and advice from NERVTAG to CMO and others on new and emerging virus threats in papers or in person to support CMO at the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE), drawing on the most recent clinical and scientific advice available
- take personal responsibility for their part in the effective functioning of NERVTAG
- take active part in subgroups, as appropriate
- understand and respect the need for confidentiality as many of the issues being discussed will directly or indirectly impact on policy issues which the Department is responsible for.

Qualities required for the role of Member

To be considered, you must be able to demonstrate that you have the qualities, skills and experience to meet all the essential criteria for appointment.

Essential Criteria

- Must be a recognised expert with a track record of national achievement as a Behavioural Scientist.

In addition, have:

- Strong skills in absorbing and analysing complex information and scientific / medical data, including:
applying relevant knowledge, perspective and skills

identifying key issues and actions needed

developing evidence-based, workable solutions to complex issues

• Excellent communication skills, including:
  
  ➢ engaging effectively with, and using knowledge and skills to make, impartial and persuasive arguments based on a sound understanding of the evidence available
  
  ➢ providing effective challenge in face-to-face discussions and telephone conferences

• Experience at a senior level, including:
  
  ➢ making significant personal contributions to organisations’ achievements or to a particular field of study and recognised as an authoritative voice
  
  ➢ commitment to the principles of giving independent advice to Government
  
  ➢ sound understanding of and commitment to the principles of public life and equality
  
  ➢ sound understanding of the need for confidentiality
  
  ➢ a contribution to national and international fora whose work lies within the remit of the NERVTAG

Desirable Criteria

You may also be able to demonstrate:

• experience of committee membership
  
• ability to offer additional specialist skills (e.g. risk communication).

Remuneration

• there is no remuneration for this post however expenses are paid in line with Department of Health policy
  
• you may claim travel and subsistence expenses, which are properly and necessarily incurred in carrying out your role and responsibilities as a Member of NERVTAG, in line with travel and subsistence policy and rates for NERVTAG.
**Time commitment**

Up to two meetings per year, however this may vary due to the responsive role of the group and the unpredictability of respiratory virus threats. Experts may also be invited to attend and/or chair relevant task and finish sub-groups on an ad-hoc basis.

**Location**

London

**Tenure of office**

The DH Senior Responsible Officer determines the length of the appointment, which can be for up to a maximum of 4 years.

**Accountability**

Members are appointed by the Departmental Senior Responsible Officer and are accountable to the Senior Responsible Officer via the Chair for carrying out their duties and for their performance.

**For further information regarding the role of NERVTAG and the role of Member please contact:**

**Fran Parry-Ford**
Tel: 0208 327 6703
Email: nervtag@phe.gov.uk
1.2 NERVTAG role and responsibilities

Role and establishment
The role of NERVTAG is to act as an Advisory Group to provide the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) and, through the CMO, ministers, the Department of Health (DH) and other Government departments, with scientific risk assessment and mitigation advice on the threat posed by new and emerging respiratory virus threats and on options for their management.

The committee draws on the expertise of scientists and health care professionals, including clinicians, microbiologists and public health practitioners, and colleagues in related disciplines. The group is supported by a scientific secretariat from Public Health England (PHE), and is scientifically independent. Members of the Group are expected to adhere to the NERVTAG Code of Practice.

The scope of the group includes new and emerging respiratory virus threats to human health including strains of influenza virus (regardless of origin), and other respiratory viruses with potential to cause epidemic or pandemic illness, or severe illness in a smaller number of cases.

Core membership
Chair: external independent health scientist, formally appointed through an independent process

- Surveillance and epidemiology national
- Public health microbiology national
- Academic infectious disease epidemiology
- Academic microbiology
- Virology
- Clinical respiratory medicine
- Emergency preparedness/response
- Modelling
- Behavioural Sciences (to be appointed)

Secretariat: The secretariat is provided by Public Health England.

Relationship with other committees and emergency arrangements
Outputs from NERVTAG feed into the Department of Health pandemic preparedness arrangements, particularly through the Pandemic Influenza Programme (PIP) Board.

In the event of a pandemic NERVTAG will be subsumed by the Health Strategic Advisory Group (HSAG) with individual members being drawn from NERVTAG as necessary, at the discretion of the CMO. HSAG would feed scientific advice into the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) which is co-chaired by the CMO and Chief Scientific Advisor.

NERVTAG may ask the Strategic Pandemic Influenza sub-committee on modelling (SPI-M) to undertake specific modelling work as necessary. In the event of a pandemic, SPI-M would report independently into SAGE.
Subgroups
Task and finish sub-groups of the main Group will be established as necessary with a view to ensuring adequate consideration of detailed technical aspects of the work of the Group. The Chair of each sub-group would sit on the main group, and other members of the sub-groups invited to attend the main Group on an ad hoc basis.

Meetings
NERVTAG is considered a reactive committee, and can be activated on an ad-hoc basis if necessary. 1-2 meetings are held per year in order to maintain continuity of the group and ensure that supporting activities are implemented and maintained. Minutes of meetings will be made publicly available and published in full unless they contain confidential or commercially sensitive information.

For further information, please see https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/new-and-emerging-respiratory-virus-threats-advisory-group
Section 2: How to Apply

2.1 Making an application

Thank you for your interest in the appointment of a Member to NERVTAG.

To make an application please email your CV, a supporting letter and completed monitoring forms to:

appointments.team@dh.gsi.gov.uk – please quote ref: EC16-23 in the subject field.

If you are unable to apply by email you may send your application by post to:

Daniel Clemence, Department of Health, Room 1N09, Quarry House, Quarry Hill, Leeds, LS2 7UE

Applications must be received by **midday on 13 November 2017**

In making an application please note the following:

**Supporting letter**

The supporting letter is your opportunity to demonstrate how you meet each of the criteria set out in the person specification. It will benefit the Advisory Assessment Panel if you can be clear which particular evidence you provide relates to which criteria. Providing separate paragraphs in relation to each criterion is common practice. Please write all acronyms in full first.

Please ensure your full name, the role to which you are applying and the corresponding reference number for the post are clearly noted at the top of your letter.

Please limit your letter to two pages, and type or write clearly in black ink.

**Declaration of interests and ensuring public confidence**

If you have any business or personal interests that might be relevant to the work of NERVTAG and which could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest were you to be appointed, please provide details in your supporting letter.

If appointed, you will also be required to declare these interests on appointment which will be entered into a register which is available to the public.

Given the nature of public appointments, it is important that those appointed as members of public bodies maintain the confidence of the public and Government. If there are any issues in your personal or professional history that could be misconstrued, cause embarrassment to Ministers or NERVTAG, or cause wider public confidence to be jeopardised, it is important that candidates bring them to the attention of the Assessment Panel. The panel may explore any such issues with you before they make a recommendation on the appointment.

Failure to disclose such information could result in an appointment being terminated.

Also, please refer to the Eligibility Criteria for appointment in **Section 2.3**.
CV

Please ensure your CV includes:

- your full name, title, home address, personal contact telephone numbers (land line and mobile) and personal email address

- similar contact details for two referees who will support your application. One referee should be the person to whom you are/were accountable in your current/most recent appointment or position of employment. Please indicate the relationship of each referee to you. References will be requested for short-listed candidates prior to interview

- brief details of your current or most recent post and the dates you occupied this role. Please identify any past or present Ministerial appointments.

Monitoring form

Please complete the monitoring form. Diversity monitoring information will not be seen by the Advisory Assessment Panel assessing your application.

Guaranteed Interview Scheme

The Department of Health operates a Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS) for disabled people. The Equality Act 2010 defines a person as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities. Under the GIS a disabled candidate will be selected for interview if they meet the essential criteria for the post.

If you wish to apply under the GIS please complete the GIS form and return it with your application.

All applications will be acknowledged by email after the closing date.

Contacts:

For further information regarding the selection process, please contact:

Daniel Clemence
Appointments Team
Tel: 0113 254 5335
Email: Daniel.Clemence@dh.gsi.gov.uk

For further information regarding the role of NERVTAG and the role of Member please contact:

Fran Parry-Ford
Tel: 0208 327 6703
Email: nervtag@phe.gov.uk

Please quote reference EC16-23 on all correspondence.

If you choose to apply, we would like to thank you in advance for your time and effort in making an application.
2.2 The Selection Process

The Appointments Team will deal with your application as quickly as possible and will advise you of the likely timetable at each stage.

Timetable:

- Closing date: Midday on 13 November 2017
- Shortlisting complete: Late November
- Interviews held: December

The selection panel will be:

- Professor Jonathan Van-Tam (Deputy Chief Medical Officer) as Panel Chair
- Professor Peter Openshaw – NERVTAG Panel Member
- Hilary Randall - Independent Panel Member

The Independent Panel Member is independent of both the Department of Health and NERVTAG.

After the closing date for applications:

- the Advisory Assessment Panel will assess candidates’ CVs and supporting letters to determine who it believes best meet the criteria for the role, and who will be invited to interview. The Advisory Assessment Panel will rely only on the information you provide in your CV and letter to assess whether you have the skills and experience required. Please ensure that you provide evidence to support how you meet all of the essential criteria

- your application may be “long-listed”, subject to the volume of applications received, before it is passed to the Advisory Assessment Panel for consideration. You should be aware that in this situation, your application might not be considered in full by all of the panel

- interviews will be held December 2017

- the Advisory Assessment Panel will select for interview only the strongest applicants who it feels have demonstrated that they best meet the criteria set out in the person specification. However, if you have applied under the GIS and you meet all of the essential criteria, then you will also be invited for interview

- if you are invited to interview and if you are unable to attend on the set date then an alternative date can only be offered at the discretion of the Advisory Assessment Panel

- the Appointments Team will email to let you know whether or not you have been invited to be interviewed. It is our intention that interviews will take place in a central London location

- if invited to interview, the Advisory Assessment Panel may invite you to make a brief presentation at the start of the interview and will go on to question you
about your skills and experience, including asking specific questions to assess whether you meet the criteria set out for the post

- The Advisory Assessment Panel will also explore with candidates any potential conflicts of interest or any other issues arising from candidate’s personal and professional history which may impact on an appointment decision (see section 2.1 for further details).

- candidates who the panel believe are ‘appointable’, will be recommended to the Senior Responsible Officer who will make the final decision. The Senior Responsible Officer may choose to meet with shortlisted candidates, before or after interview, before making a decision. Candidates should therefore be prepared for a short time gap between interview and a final appointment decision being made. Candidates who have been interviewed will be kept informed of progress.

- if you are successful, you will receive a letter from the Senior Responsible Officer appointing you as a Member of NERVTAG, which will confirm the terms on which the appointment is offered

- if you are unsuccessful at interview, you will be notified by the Appointments Team. We appreciate it takes a lot of time and effort to apply for roles and that feedback is a valuable part of the process. As a result, the letter will provide the details of who you may approach for feedback on your interview and application, if you so wish

- for further information on how we will manage the personal information that you have provided to us through your application, see Section 2.4

Queries

For queries about your application, please contact Daniel Clemence on 0113 254 5335.

Standards in public life

You will be expected to demonstrate a commitment to and an understanding of the value and importance of the key principles of public life. All successful candidates will be asked to subscribe to the Code of Practice for Scientific Advisory Committees (CoPSAC); you can access this document at:


The NERVTAG code of practice is also available online:


Diversity and equality of opportunity

The Department of Health values and promotes diversity and encourage applications from all sections of the community.
If you are not completely satisfied

DH will aim to process all applications as quickly as possible and to treat all applicants with courtesy. If you have any complaints about the way your application has been handled, please contact Alissa Wright in the Department of Health by emailing Alissa.Wright@dh.gsi.gov.uk
2.3 Eligibility Criteria

There are circumstances in which an individual may not be considered for appointment. They include:

a) persons who have received a prison sentence or suspended sentence of 3 months or more in the last 5 years

b) persons who are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order, or a debt relief order or interim debt relief order under Schedule 4ZB to the Insolvency Act 1986

c) persons who have had an earlier term of appointment with a health service body terminated on the grounds
   i. that it was not conducive to the interests or good management of the body that the person should continue to hold office
   ii. that the person failed to attend a meeting of the body on three consecutive occasions
   iii. that the person failed to declare a pecuniary interest or withdraw from consideration of a matter in respect of which the person had a pecuniary interest
   iv. of misconduct or failure to carry out the person’s duties

d) anyone who is under a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986; or

e) anyone who has been removed from trusteeship of a charity.

Further advice about disqualification from appointment/ the eligibility criteria can be provided by contacting Daniel Clemence on 0113 254 5335.
2.4 How we will manage your personal information

Your personal information will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. You will not receive unsolicited paper or electronic mail as a result of sending DH any personal information. No personal information will be passed on to third parties for commercial purposes.

When we ask you for personal information, we promise we will:

- only ask for what we need, and not collect too much or irrelevant information
- ensure you know why we need it
- protect it and insofar as is possible, make sure nobody has access to it who shouldn’t
- ensure you know what choice you have about giving us information
- make sure we don’t keep it longer than necessary
- only use your information for the purposes you have authorised

We ask that you:

- provide us with accurate information
- inform us as soon as possible of any changes or if you notice mistakes in the information we hold about you

If you apply for a post, we will share some of the information you provide with the members of the selection panel for the post to which you are applying, so that your CV and supporting letter can be assessed.

The diversity monitoring information you provide will not be used in the selection process and will therefore not be shared with the Advisory Assessment Panel assessing your application at any stage.