

Wessex Data Access Committee: Minutes

Date: Friday 27th March 2026
Time: 13:00-15:00
Location: Virtual via TEAMS (meeting recorded for training and reflection)

Chair: Dr Rachel Chappell
Secretariat: Rebecca Wood

Present:

Rachel Chappell (Chair) RC; Keith Gomes Pinto (NHS Dorset) KGP; Heather Case (Deputy Director of Data and Analytics, NHS Dorset) HC; Sam Fortune (Digital Critical Friend) SF; Sandra Hall (Digital Critical Friend) SH; Lindsay Anderson (Digital Critical Friend) LA; Michael George (Clinical Digital Research Fellow) MG; Rebecca Wood (Minutes) RW.

Apologies: Nicholas Fuggle, Andy Taylor, John McBeth, Patricia Fuller, Will Jennings

	Item
1.	<p>Welcome and Administrative Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chair welcomed attendees to the Wessex SDE Data Access Committee meeting.• Apologies noted.• No declarations of interest were raised.• Previous minutes (Paper A) were approved.• SDE Celebratory Event <p>The Chair updated the committee on a recent SDE celebratory event held in Milton Keynes, which brought together Secure Data Environments from across the country. The update highlighted the government's £600m investment in data for research and the ambition to build on both local and national SDE achievements. Discussion covered the national positioning of SDEs alongside OpenSAFELY, the absence of equivalent legislation mandating GP participation for SDEs, and ongoing engagement with national stakeholders.</p>
2.	<p>Proposed decision-making approach when the committee is not quorate</p> <p>The Chair noted that the meeting was not quorate. The committee agreed that, where the meeting is not quorate, committee business should continue in a pragmatic and proportionate manner to avoid unnecessary delays to research. It was proposed that studies would continue to be discussed at the meeting as usual noting key discussion points and any identified risks. If no issues were identified a formal vote could then be proposed by the Chair and a decision sought outside the meeting via email with all DAC</p>

	<p>members (within a defined timeframe). Any objections raised through this process would result in the decision being deferred to the next quorate meeting. This approach was agreed as a pragmatic pilot, with the intention to formalise it within the Terms of Reference if it proves effective.</p> <p>Action 1: The Chair and RW will circulate two emails:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One outlining the virtual voting process for committee members. • One summarising the study and discussion points to enable virtual voting by the committee.
<p>3.</p>	<p>Data Access Committee IG and Data Access Principles</p> <p>National team have requested feedback from committee's regarding the Data Access Committee IG and Data Access Principles (Papers B & C) in the pre-read pack. No comments raised today, group agreed to provide comments by email.</p> <p>Action 2: RW to send an email requesting feedback/comments on the Data Access Committee IG and Data Access Principles by 8th April.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Study 1: PRANA PPP</p> <p>The PRANA PPP study proposes reuse of existing PRANA and ambulance datasets already held within the Wessex SDE to support an externally led research project. The study requires delegated CAG and REC approval. The study involves an external (Leicester based) researcher, demonstrating wider national value of the Wessex SDE.</p> <p>Discussion points in meeting and shared:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reuse of existing PRANA and ambulance datasets was welcomed as an efficient use of established SDE assets. • Ambulance data were acknowledged to be complex and "realworld" in nature; minimal cleansing will be applied, with researchers responsible for managing data limitations. • Wider discussion covered data quality, coding variability, and frontline data entry pressures, all considered well understood and appropriately managed within current governance. <p>Risks / Issues - No significant risks or issues were identified</p> <p>Decision - Approved with recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Confirm which user(s) require access to the SDE environment ○ Confirmation of specific required variables from linked data sets

<p>5.</p>	<p>Study 2: CARDS Heatwave</p> <p>The CARDS Heatwave study seeks to analyse the impact of heatwaves and environmental factors on hospital admissions and outcomes using the existing CARDS dataset hosted within the Wessex SDE. The study has existing independent ethics approval (under a CARDS study amendment), and the committee considered whether hosting within the SDE was appropriate.</p> <p>Discussion points in meeting and shared:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The study builds on the established CARDS dataset, which contains highly granular UHS clinical data. • Members highlighted the public health relevance of understanding heatwave impacts, particularly in the context of climate change and vulnerable populations. • Discussion acknowledged that broader datasets (e.g. primary care or community data) could add value in future but were outside the current scope. • Consideration was given to the importance of contextual interpretation of environmental and clinical data. <p>Risks / Issues - No significant risks or issues were identified</p> <p>Decision - Approved with recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Confirm which user(s) require access to the SDE environment. ○ Confirmation of data required (three 2022 data sets or wider 9 year extract).
<p>6.</p>	<p>Final Plenary Discussion: Conclusions and Next Steps</p> <p>MH provided an overview of the Wessex SDE data pipeline, outlining studies at various stages. MH noted that some previously approved studies remain on hold due to external dependencies, such as approvals from other DACs or access to primary care data. The committee was also briefed on a range of forthcoming and potential studies demonstrating a strong and diverse future pipeline for the SDE.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the committee for their attendance and contribution to the discussion and reminded the committee that various emails will be circulated regarding the agreed virtual voting process.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Close of meeting</p>