

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES GENOMICS NETWORK TERMS OF REFERENCE

Version 15 – Revised March 2024

VISION

To advance public health in Australia and New Zealand through the implementation of microbial genomics to support communicable disease control activities.

AIMS

- To support implementation of genomics into clinical and public health microbiology.
- To develop a framework to facilitate consistency in the use of microbial genomics for public health purposes in Australia and New Zealand.
- To facilitate sharing of microbial genomics data and knowledge, including for antimicrobial resistant pathogens and other pathogens of significance, in a collaborative and responsible manner, in order to improve public health activities nationally.
- To facilitate the development of proposals for Network projects, including exploring possibilities for grants and other forms of funding to enhance national microbial genomics capability and capacity.

OBJECTIVES

1. Provide expert advice to the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC), through the Public Health Laboratory Network (PHLN) on how genomics can be used to enhance public health microbial surveillance and communicable disease control.
2. Maintain a unified and coordinated public health microbial genomics network to advise and interact with laboratory and public health networks, government, policy makers, and other relevant stakeholders.
3. Promote best practice sequencing methodologies, determined in consultation with internationally established best practices that are both cost and time effective, to garner the most value from microbial genomics sequencing to inform public health action.
4. Maintain validated national microbial bioinformatics pipelines.
5. Agree and develop procedures and policies that allow for rapid national genomic data sharing and analysis through AusTrakka to enhance disease outbreak detection and response.
6. Enhance, coordinate, and support jurisdictional capability and capacity in the implementation of whole genome sequencing and metagenomics approaches.
7. Develop procedures and policies allowing rapid national genomic data sharing and analysis, to enhance public health outbreak detection and response.
8. Develop and support teaching and training activities to enhance public health microbial genomics.
9. Fulfil these Terms of Reference to the best of collective members' abilities, within resources available, to support these activities and while ensuring alignment with Australia's National Microbial Genomics Framework 2019-22 and associated implementation plan, and the subsequent revision, once finalised.

MEMBERSHIP

Chair Arrangements

CDGN will be chaired by a full member of CDGN.

There will be a deputy chair arrangement to support the chair. The deputy chair will become CDGN chair at the end of the current chair tenure.

Secretariat support will be provided through the University of Melbourne, supported by the Office of Health Protection Division (OHP), Department of Health and Aged Care.

CDGN Executive Group

The CDGN Executive Group (CEG) will comprise of key jurisdictions with genomics capabilities, current chair and deputy chair, immediate past chairs and OHP representatives.

The current CEG members are:

- Amy Jennison (Chair, Forensic and Scientific Services, Queensland Health (QH FSS))
- Norelle Sherry (Deputy Chair, Microbiological Diagnostic Unit Public Health Laboratory (MDU PHL))
- Ben Howden (immediate past Co-Chair, MDU PHL))
- Vitali Sintchenko (Institute for Clinical Pathology and Medical Research (ICPMR))
- Lex Leong (SA Pathology)
- Avram Levy (PathWest)
- Australian Government OHP

Conflict of Interest and Deed of Confidentiality Declaration

A Conflict of Interest and Deed of Confidentiality form must be signed and provided to the CDGN Secretariat prior to attendance at a members first meeting. The Conflict of Interest and Deed of Confidentiality forms are valid for one year and members will be requested to sign and provide these forms to the CDGN Secretariat annually.

CDGN MEMBERS

CDGN CORE		Attendee	Apology
Victoria			
Benjamin Howden	MDU PHL		
Leon Caly	VIDRL		
Alicia Arnott	VIDRL		
Torsten Seemann	MDU PHL		
Susan Ballard	MDU PHL		
Patiyan Andersson	MDU PHL		
Courtney Lane	MDU PHL		
Norelle Sherry	MDU PHL (Deputy Chair)		
New South Wales			
Vitali Sintchenko	Institute for Clinical Pathology and Medical Research (ICPMR)		
Qinning Wang	ICPMR		
William Rawlinson	NSW Health Pathology		
Rebecca Rockett	ICPMR		
Jen Kok	ICPMR, PHLN Chair		
Queensland			
Amy Jennison	QH FSS (Chair)		
Sanmarie Schlebusch	QH FSS		
Michael Thomas	Pathology Queensland (PQ)		
Rikki Graham	QH FSS		
Patrick Harris	PQ and University of Queensland		
Jenny Robson	Sullivan Nicolaides Pathology (Private pathology representative)		

Arnold Bainomugisa	Queensland Mycobacterium Reference Laboratory, Qld Health		
Alyssa Pyke	QH FSS		
Son Nguyen	QH FSS		
South Australia			
Lito Papanicolas	SA Pathology		
Lex Leong	SA Pathology		
Mark Turra	SA Pathology		
Western Australia			
David Speers	PathWest		
Avram Levy	PathWest		
Geoffrey Coombs	PathWest, Australian Group on Antimicrobial Resistance		
David Smith	PathWest		
Tasmania			
Louise Cooley	Royal Hobart Hospital		
Rob Vanhaefen	Royal Hobart Hospital		
Australian Capital Territory			
Karina Kennedy	ACT Pathology		
Ahmed Hassan	ACT Pathology		
Northern Territory			
Rob Baird	Royal Darwin Hospital		
New Zealand			
Una Ren	Institute of Environmental Science and Research (ESR)		
David Winter	ESR		
Interim Australian Centre for Disease Control, Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care (Observers)			
Amy Black	OHP		
Michel Watson	OHP		
Tatiana Gonzales	OHP		
Gary Lum	OHP		
Rose Wright	OHP, OzFoodNet Representative		
Expert Members			
Martyn Kirk	Australian National University, OHP, Communicable Diseases Network Australia		
Sebastian Van Hal	Royal Prince Alfred Hospital		
Edward Holmes	University of Sydney		
Rowena Bull	University of New South Wales		
CDGN			
Angela Donald	CDGN Secretariat		
Tuyet Hoang	AusTrakka Strategy and Governance Manager		
Ceyhun Guengoer	AusTrakka Project Manager		
Kristy Horan	CDGN bioinformatician		
Mathilda Wilmot	AusTrakka National Analysis Team (NAT) Genomic Epidemiologist		
Caitlin Selway	AusTrakka NAT Bioinformatician		
Connie Lam	AusTrakka NAT Genomic Epidemiologist		

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS

Members of the CDGN are able to propose the appointment of a new member by providing a rationale for the appointment to be considered by the Network. The proposal will be discussed at the next CEG meeting and the appointment of a new member will be made if agreed upon by members. Appointments may be made on a project-specific basis, in which case membership will be limited to the duration of the project.

Members that are unable to participate in CDGN for a prolonged period of time (e.g. 3 months) are able to nominate a proxy for the duration of their leave. The proxy should be someone from the member's

laboratory with similar expertise. The proxy will be a time-limited tenure to represent the member with meeting attendance dates be communicated to the CDGN Secretariat ahead of time.

TENURE OF MEMBERSHIP

- CDGN chairing arrangements will be reviewed every two years.
- CDGN membership will be reviewed every twelve months.

MEMBER ROLES

Definition of roles and responsibilities:

Chair – responsible for the approval of agenda items, agenda papers and for chairing meetings as scheduled.

Deputy Chair – responsible for the approval of agenda items, agenda papers and for supporting the Chair in meetings as required.

Member – full member of CDGN and is associated with a public health laboratory. Members are able to participate in decision-making process for all agenda items tabled and attend the annual face-to-face meeting (where one is held).

Expert Member – associate member of CDGN and is able to participate in decision-making process and discussion of meetings they are specifically invited to, and any other items at the discretion of the Chair. Breadth of invitation to meetings will be decided by the CEG.

Proxy Member – nominated individual representing a member while they are on extended leave, and are able to participate in decision-making process and discussion of meetings. Proxy membership will cease upon return of the member from their leave.

All members are required to:

- attend and participate in meetings
- review and action meeting outcomes and contribute to network activities and projects as required,
- adhere to the CDGN Deed of Confidentiality, under the PHLN governance structure, and
- disclose any conflict of interest as they arise

REPORTING

- Outcomes from CDGN meetings will be shared with all members (and other relevant interested parties with approval by Network members).
- As an Expert Reference Panel of PHLN, the CDGN Chair will be responsible for providing regular updates to PHLN on CDGN activities.

MEETING FREQUENCY

- Monthly via teleconference, with ad hoc meetings as required.

MEETING STRUCTURE

The CDGN meeting structure consists of three core components:

- (1) rotating standing items
- (2) focused group discussion, and
- (3) follows the 2024 CDGN Meeting Schedule approved by the CEG.