KCE Trials

Selection process and resources for investigators

Strengthening workshop 13th June 2019, Brussels
Jilly Harrison
Overview

- Selection process 2019 investigator-led call
  - Aims and advisory boards
  - Process

- How to best use the protocol template
- Resources for investigators (on website)
Aim of the programme

- Provide high quality ‘routine clinical practice’ data to answer questions important to patients and decision makers
Selection process

Right Q
Important Q

Panel

Robust design

Budget, contract, set-up

Trials team

Trials Board
Right & important clinical question

- Need for evidence
- Panel of clinicians score all proposals for the importance of the question:
  - Is it an important research question for clinical practice in Belgium?
  - Is it the right research question?
- Investigator-led - bottom up
- Prioritisation Group (PG) confirms the results of the panel scoring
Selection process

Right Q
Important Q

Robust design

Budget, contract, set-up

Panel

Trials team

Trials Board
Methodology review

- Ensure a study design that will give a robust answer in a timely manner
- **Trials Board**: experts in all aspects of clinical trials methodology
- Review proposals and give comments/feedback to applicants
  - Team to justify decisions and how they impact the proposal
Robust trial design

- 2-step process (RO → FRP) several cycles
- TB methodology
  - A maximum of 5x TB review for each call
- This takes in aspects that affect the chance of getting a robust timely answer
  - Trial design
  - Professional, specialised team
  - Feasibility
  - Budget
Key success factors for publicly funded trials

**SELECTION CRITERIA**

- Panels
- Trials Board
- Need for the evidence
- Value for money/ROI
- Scientific rigour

**IMPLEMENT RESULTS**

- Prioritisation Group
- KCE Board
- Clinical Trial Unit

**PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**
Clinical Trials Unit

- The Chief Investigator’s (CI) hospital/university will usually take on the sponsor responsibilities and be the CTU to provide support (contracts, budget, monitoring, eCRF/data management, stats etc.)

- Certain institutions are willing to provide sponsorship &/or CTU services to CI’s who are not staff, contact Trials for details
  - There may need to be a match in interests
Methodology review II

- **RO: TB decision letter**
  - *RO declined*
  - RO declined & CI invited to submit an updated RO
  - Shortlisted & invited to submit a FRP

- **FRP: invited to submit a FRP**
  - Often taking into account TB comments
  - FRP form & guidelines
  - Protocol template, budget tool & guidelines
  - FRP advance up to 12,500 euro
International studies

- We want to move towards joint calls with other international funders
- International trials are eligible for the 2019 investigator-led call
  - Belgian led: normal review process, timelines may need to be extended slightly
  - Belgian participation: must be able to comment on the trial – usually limited support and in line with lead-group
## Timetable 2019 call

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Review step &amp; meeting</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6th June 2019</td>
<td>Call launched</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17th September</td>
<td>Submission deadline</td>
<td>Followed by in/out of scope (PG) panel, confirmation by PG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19th December 2019</td>
<td>Decision letters sent</td>
<td>Declined or sent to review by TB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 2020</td>
<td>1st TB meeting RO review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2 2020</td>
<td>Deadline submit ROs / FRPs</td>
<td>Also updated research outlines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2 2020</td>
<td>2nd TB reviews ROs / FRPs</td>
<td>Recommendations to fund - confirmation by PG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Submission portal

- [https://kce.smartsimple.ie](https://kce.smartsimple.ie)
- Intuitive but guidelines and help available
- All users should create a personal account
- CI introduces proposal, can invite collaborators to work on it in system (CTU)
- All communication via portal (email)
- Word version of application form (with guidance notes) available for developing proposal but all submissions in portal
Selection process

Right Q
Important Q

Robust design

Budget, contract, set-up

Panel

Trials Board

Trials team
After recommendation to fund

- TB recommendation to fund (± changes)
  1. Protocol changes requested by TB
  2. Feasibility check (feasibility advance)
  3. Budget & payment schedule negotiations
  4. Contract negotiations
- Agreement 1, 2, 3 & 4
- KCE Board approves funding (funding isn’t awarded until KCE Board approval)
Selection process

Right Q
Important Q

Robust design

Budget, contract, set-up

Panel
Trials team

Trials Board
Prioritisation and decisions

- **Prioritisation Group (PG):**
- Prioritises & ranks pending proposals
- Takes account of the available budget, the overall portfolio of research, the care needs of patients and the most efficient use of public resources
- Makes final recommendations to the KCE Board
Funding decision: KCE Board

- KCE Board has the final say in any decision to fund
- The funding isn’t awarded until the KCE Board approves the project
- and then the contract can be signed*

* other conditions apply
Good news, bad news

- Funding level is high – we aim to cover the real cost of a high quality trial
- You have a “good” chance of success
- We are demanding
  - Methodological review (several cycles)
  - Feasibility (at sponsor; resources, experience and at site level; no. sites, patients)
  - Study set-up (contract, conditions, close FU)
  - Study follow-up (status update calls …)
2019 Investigator-led call open – Chief Investigator submits research outline

**Flowchart:**

1. **RO:** Invited to submit a FRP
   - TB decision letter
   - Recommendation to fund
     - Protocol changes & Budget negotiation & Contract negotiation
     - KCE Board approves funding

2. **FRP:**
   - Resubmit FRP
   - TB decision letter
   - Declined

**Notes:**
- RO: Research Outline
- FRP: Full Research Proposal
How to best use the protocol template?

- Sponsors don’t have to use the KCE protocol template
- It’s a template and **must be adapted to your trial**
- It was designed for drug (IMP) studies and then simplified
- Keep the level 1 headings during review (or make sure all topics present)
Protocol template

- If you use exemptions due to low risk trial clearly explain what you will do and why e.g.:
  - Omitting drug labelling or having drugs prescribed and collected from community pharmacies
  - Risk assessment to refer to in e.g. monitoring plan for risk adapted monitoring
Protocol: hints and tips

- KCE reviews the protocol before the proposal goes to PG for approval
- KCE to sign off (signature page) the protocol submitted to EC and all subsequent versions
- KCE representative as observer in TSC
- PPI representatives in TSC
- Avoid duplication, only have information once and refer to it in other places
Health economics

- In the protocol you must describe the data that you will collect for an eventual HE analysis

- However, although you can perform a HE analysis, KCE does not see this as part of the project (and will not fund the analysis)

- You may describe possible eventual analysis / possible strategies
Patient information sheet

To facilitate the eventual use of the trial data for a HE analysis or other analysis by KCE we would like this to be covered in the ICF. The sponsor can use whatever wording they choose. The proposal below is meant to help the sponsor.

Objectives

The aims of this study is [to show which of the treatments works better / works / to show if treatment X works better than the current standard treatment] in a real-life setting. If the study shows that the treatment works better, then the study data will also be used to look whether it provides better value for money.

Where will your data be used?

By consenting to participate in this study you also consent that your data from this study can be used by the funder (KCE) or similar public healthcare research institutes in Europe for further analyses, for example to determine whether one of the treatments studied provides better value.

The following paragraph is to be included in case the national number is collected in the study:

You agree that for such further analyses your Belgian national number is collected and used by a trusted third party (NAME TTP) to link your study data to data from other sources (healthcare billing data and minimal clinical data sets collected during hospital stay).

Under no circumstances the researchers performing the additional analyses will see your identity and all researchers will be bound by professional confidentiality.

- The text is provided in English, French and Dutch
Call resources on website

Downloads (all documents Call 2019)

- Call text 2019 V1.0 (pdf) and Timelines 2019 V1.0 (pdf)
- Application form (including guidance notes) V2.0 (Word)
- Budget tool V4.0 (Excel) and accompanying guidance notes V4.0 (pdf)
- Template support letter candidate sponsor V1.0 (Word)
- Research agreement template V3.0 (Word)
- Protocol template for Full Research Proposal V2.0 (Word)
- FAMHP statement on the non-commercial status of trials funded under the KCE Trials programme (2004 law), to be added to submission to FAMHP where applicable. (pdf)
- Top ten tips and tricks for a successful research outline V3.0 (pdf)

Documents for trials with international sponsor

- Budget tool for international trials v3.0 (Excel) and accompanying guidance notes v3.0 (pdf)
- Template support letter Belgian coordinating centre international trials V1.0 (Word)
- Template letter of commitment international sponsor V2.0 (Word)
- Research agreement Belgian coordinating centre template V2.0 (Word)

Links

- Answers to frequently asked questions
- Resources for investigators
Resources for investigators

- Information on pragmatic trials
- Information on patient and public involvement
- Non-commercial status of KCE funded trials (FAMHP)
- Risk-adapted approaches for clinical trial management
- Sign up to KCE Trials newsletter
Take home message

- Read the guidelines and check fit with programme aims
- Communicate with colleagues, CTU and investigators throughout Belgium
- Get input from collaborators (e.g. CTU) well before submission deadline
- Take on board TB comments
THANK YOU!

http://ikce.yourict.net/?q=node/1957