

IEMAG

Minutes of meeting – Wednesday 12 January 2022

Attendees: Philip Nolan (Chair), Ajay Oza, Alan Cahill, Breda Smyth, Brendan Murphy, Cathal Walsh, Catherine Timoney, Chris Brunsdon, Conor Keegan, Conor McAloon, Conor Teljeur, Darragh Turner, Darren Dahly, Eilis O'Reilly, Elizabeth Hunter, Francis Butler, Guy McGrath, James P Gleeson, Jim Duggan, Justin Gleeson, Maire Connolly, Malachy Corcoran, Mark Roantree, Patrick Wall, Seán Lyons, Simon More

Apologies: Ann Barber, David McEvoy, Eoghan McCarthy, Jamie Madden, John Kelleher, Máirín Ryan

DOH: Ronan O'Kelly, Libby McCrohan

Secretariat: Denis Ryan, Ivan Murphy

Modelling Update

- The Chair gave a presentation to update the group on the performance of the models regarding the recent Omicron wave and put forward a number of proposals on how they could be improved.
- It was agreed the models performed well but likely underestimated infections and significantly overestimated admissions to critical care. It was proposed that the focus over the next few weeks should be on refining the CHUP model and re-running the SEIR models with a reduced number of scenarios.
- The group discussed the utility of carrying out a seroprevalence study to establish the level of population-based immunity which would be used to improve future projections. It was agreed that this would be beneficial, but members were conscious that recovery from one variant may not confer a person with immunity to another variant and that this would have to be taken into consideration.
- The group considered the issue of long covid.
- The group discussed the under-ascertainment of cases and work being carried out to estimate the extent to which it occurs.

HPSC Update/ Epidemiology Progress Update

- Secondments within the HPSC have been extended to allow for work to continue. Regarding the establishment of the modelling and statistics unit within the HPSC, the additional funding to the HPSC for this purpose was not granted by the HSE.
- There is a meeting planned for Friday 14th January between IEMAG, CMP and HPSC to discuss these collaboration further.
- There was no update on the geospatial work over Christmas. LEA data was suspended over the holiday period but has now recommenced.

Data Engineering Group Update

- The group is working on a case study based around close contacts which will integrate data from CIDR, CCT and CoVax. The aim is to develop a data asset and a white paper for future information needs. Going forward, fortnightly meetings involving all stakeholders will be held to discuss governance matters. The groups is currently working to ensure data owners have clear sight of how it is to be integrated and analysed.

AOB

- The group discussed the importance of the timely establishment of a dedicated modelling unit withing the HPSC in order to allow for a successful transition of work from the IEMAG to the new unit. Members were concerned that the learnings acquired since the IEMAG was stood up would be lost if this unit is not established before the IEMAG stands down.

Epidemiology Modelling

Actions:

1	Re-run SEIR models with a more limited range of scenarios.
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Healthcare Demand Modelling

Actions:

1	Refine CHUP model.
2	Continue to monitor the relationship between infection and outcome.

Transition to HPSC

Actions:

1	Meeting with HPSC and CMP on Friday 14 th January
2	Continue work on enabling Geospatial Group access to small area data.

Miscellaneous Actions:

Next Meeting: 3 February 2022