



GALENOS

GALENOS: Global Alliance for Living Evidence on aNxiety, depressiOn and pSyChosis

Terms of Reference for the Mental Health Ontology Advisory Board

Summary

This document defines the purpose and structure of the Mental Health Ontology Advisory Board (MHOAB) of GALENOS. It describes its responsibilities and its members. The Terms of Reference are effective until 31st January 2026.

GALENOS and the Mental Health Ontology

The [GALENOS research programme](#) is a three-year Wellcome-funded evidence synthesis project that will produce a series of free-to-access living systematic reviews on anxiety, depression and psychosis. These reviews will focus on the most promising scientific findings (from human and non-human studies), that will allow researchers across the world to understand the underlying mechanisms and assess early pharmacological treatments, social and psychological interventions, together with diagnostic, prognostic, and predictive tools.

The Mental Health Ontology is being developed to support the search, data extraction and synthesis stages of these systematic reviews. *The ontology will include, label and define entities that characterise mental health, including mental health interventions, their mechanisms, outcomes and contexts.*

Purpose and remit of the MHOAB

The role of MHOAB members is *to provide advice and scrutiny to the Mental Health Ontology's development, scope and content based on their experience*. MHOAB members are non-executive and do not make decisions; they bring expertise and content knowledge. For example, MHOAB members may be asked to comment on the clarity and comprehensiveness of the Mental Health Ontology's entities and structure.

Membership

MHOAB members are generally mental health clinicians and researchers. They may have expertise in the field of evidence synthesis, ontologies or basic science. Members are invited to join the board and they will report directly to the GALENOS Ontology Team (Professor Susan Michie, Professor Janna Hastings and Dr Paulina Schenk; referred to as GOT). There is no maximum capacity and no renumeration, and membership will continue until the end of the GALENOS Project grant.

Frequency of meetings

The meetings will be held approximately every 6 months. The schedule of these meetings will be determined by the GOT in discussion with the MHOAB based on business needs and availability. Meetings will happen virtually and will be minuted.

Working practices

The GOT will seek advice from the MHOAB in a variety of ways, including formal MHOAB meetings, by email and online meetings. The GOT sometimes, where it requires specific expertise/advice, may consult particular members on specific matters rather than the whole board. On other occasions, the GOT may need to make quick decisions and will be unable to consult the MHOAB in advance (but the MHOAB will be notified afterwards).

Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interest are defined as any personal, or business interest which may or may be seen as, influencing a member's judgement in performing their role. MHOAB members must declare to the GOT any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest that might impact their MHOAB duties, and the GOT must maintain an accurate and up-to-date register of all conflicts.

Resignation process

A MHOAB member may at any time resign, with immediate effect, by informing the GOT in writing.