

Assessment of SHARE & Follow-up on recommendations

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General remarks

The management team (MT) of the SHARE institute has received the report of the peer review committee and is happy with the general approval and clear recommendations by the committee. The assessment shows that SHARE research aligns very well with the UMCG research strategy. The Management Team of SHARE highly appreciates the interest of the PRC and all in all looks back on the assessment with great pleasure, satisfaction and pride. The recommendations for improvement by the SHARE institute, particularly in the field of societal impact, open science and diversity are addressed below.

Research quality

1. *The committee recommends that SHARE put in place pathways that further strengthen the opportunities for knowledge exchange and the consistent implementation of Open Science principles. Given SHARE's investment in research cohorts, biobanks, and big data, it is ideally positioned to fulfill a leading role in the implementation of Open Science principles.*

SHARE acknowledges the importance of Open Science and is in full support. We are already well on our way with the percentage of Open Access publishing. Next step will be to also create a structure in which researchers (inside and outside of the UMCG) can access our aggregated data, in order to use them for additional analyses. This is not just an issue of SHARE and therefore is addressed by the UMCG, which for this purpose has set up the CBCH (Cohort Biobanking Coordination Hub) that coordinates the quality, harmonization, availability and visibility of the UMCG cohorts. Following up on that, we support the development of a structure with the correct legal procedures to allow broader access to our data. SHARE takes its position here and will draw attention to this topic and process where and when possible: during meetings with our research program leaders, during institute research meetings etc.

2. *The committee encourages the Institute to continue shared reflection on how to define and measure research quality, and thus to move beyond classical quantitative criteria for measuring research output. Developing shared criteria in line with Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) principles will help to establish innovative tools and processes for measuring research quality, and support the development of responsible, consistent, and transparent uses of metrics that align with SHARE's academic and scientific values.*

Clearly, the analysis and presentation of research output is an issue that is addressed by the UMCG as a whole, in dialogue with the UMCG research community represented by the

research institutes and the departments. By signing the DORA declaration, the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO), the Netherlands Organization for Health Research and Development (ZonMW) and the Netherlands Federation of umc's all acknowledge the importance of formulating new indicators. For the current evaluation field weighted citation impact has been used as a numeric measure for scientific output whereas other 'brute force' output parameters such as journal impact factors were avoided. The UMCG closely follows the discussion on DORA and is open for further development of tools that support the DORA principles. Of course SHARE will participate in these developments.

Societal relevance

- 3. The committee feels SHARE would benefit from a more consistent, progressive, and nuanced approach to patient and public involvement. Many research programs involve patients or lay partners in their research, but not always as co-designers or consultants throughout all stages of the research, including in the initial design and set-up of a research project. The committee advises a stronger alignment of methods of patient and public involvement within SHARE and the sharing of best practices between programs.*

Patient and public involvement in our research at all stages is definitively a topic to be addressed by SHARE in the coming years, aligned with societal trends of inclusion. Sharing best practices in our research programs and discussions with program leaders and in research meetings can help develop the notion of enhanced patient and public involvement in our research. The UMCG has dedicated staff that will be able to support the process (e.g. with lectures and workshops for the program leaders, which in fact are already offered). Examples of good practice (national and international) will help us shape a consistent approach towards potential guidelines for our researchers.

- 4. Though societal relevance is a very strong feature of SHARE, it does not yet have an optimal approach for evidencing and measuring impact. The committee recommends that SHARE find ways to monitor and measure impact - both quantitatively and qualitatively - in a concrete and consistent manner. It may be useful to look to academia for options that would fit with SHARE activities. SHARE would thus benefit even more from the societal impact they have, and be a shining example for others, by drawing out and evidencing what they achieve.*

SHARE is fully aware of the restrictions of the current systems (primarily Pure) to optimally present our societal relevance. In our self-evaluation we added qualitative narratives of some of our most prominent projects that potentially give a much better impression of the impact our research has on the (regional, national, international) societies. We will explore innovative

examples in and outside the UMCG in order to further develop a format that can help our researchers to optimally exhibit their stories illustrating societal impact. We have recently started to implement a menu of societal impact indicators in our BI portal, from which departments and institutes can make a selection that is relevant for their type of research.

Viability

5. *SHARE's strategic goal is to continue to mature as a 'Prevention Institute.'* Though many research programs do indeed share an interest in issues of prevention, the concept of prevention is not necessarily experienced as the most important common denominator among SHARE researchers. The committee recommends strengthening its identity as a prevention Institute at all levels, making this more consistent and explicit.

The SHARE MT fully agrees with the committee, the opportunities for a better focus on prevention are available but have to be addressed. It will help to create a complete overview of how exactly prevention research features in the SHARE research programs. Based on such further inventory, we will define specific SHARE prevention themes and bring programs together on these themes to further enhance critical mass and inter-program co-operations. Notably, we feel that the Aletta Jacobs School of Public Health and the VALUE program (from which the school originated) can play a pivotal role in the process by showing the economic rationale for prevention, investing now for potentially larger benefits in the future.

6. *SHARE can invest more in stimulating and facilitating interaction at Institute level. It could proactively invest in collaboration among researchers at all levels, advanced (assistant and associate and full professors) as well as early career levels (PhD's and postdocs)—for example, by (a) providing a platform for peer-to-peer support, (b) offering support for collaborative applications for grants and funding, and (c) promoting more structural and shared reflection on the indicators for research quality and societal relevance. This can contribute to increasing the visibility of SHARE both within UMCG as well as for external partners.*

SHARE acknowledges the delicate position of our early-career researchers. In the SHARE Spring Meeting (May 2022) we have already invited early-career researchers (PhD students as well as post-docs and assistant professors) to present their ideas on what they need for their development and research. Surely, intervision, support and collaboration with more senior researchers will help and additionally will strengthen the scientific community. This bottom-up approach will provide us with information on where we can best (and first) act as an institute to better support our junior talent. Also, at the UMCG level there is more and more attention for the position of these future research leaders, including the installment of a postdoc council. Support in grant application is offered structurally at a central level and ad-

hoc within SHARE. We have the ambition to expand the ad-hoc procedure to a more structural procedure within the institute, to improve the content-related aspects of proposals.

- 7. The committee observes that the ratios between senior researchers, postdocs, and PhD students vary considerably across programs, and that an optimal balance between senior and junior researchers is sometimes missing. This is a potential weakness that could negatively affect the opportunities for and quality of research of researchers within these particular programs, who have different workloads with regard to supervision, teaching and research. The committee recommends careful (career) support and guidance tailored to the specific circumstances of each researcher and research program.*

Indeed, ratios vary considerably, sometimes due to differences in success in awarded grant applications and specific choices made in spending these acquired funds. We will investigate the situation in the various SHARE research programs in order to identify the underlying mechanisms as well as identifying the optimal ratio, which might differ per program related to the research topics and specific foci. SHARE (as well the UMCG as a whole) will enhance its careful attention for our young career researchers (also see above for planned first meetings) and initiate discussions on optimal ratios of senior versus junior scientists.

- 8. The precarity of early career researchers at UMCG is a particular point of concern for the committee and poses a possible threat to the viability of its institutes, including SHARE. It recommends that SHARE invests in mentorship and other forms of support for its postdocs that are aligned with the specific challenges faced within the research programs of the Institute. Given the large differences in numbers and opportunities for postdocs in the different programs, SHARE can offer a strategy for their career development, attuned to its needs as an Institute, while leveraging the cross-university opportunities for support in their individual disciplines.*

See above remarks on envisaged more specific and proactive postdoc early career support.

Conclusion

The MT of SHARE is very happy with the assessment and recommendations of the PRC. The PRC recognized SHARE's strengths, achievements, potentials and opportunities and formulated recommendations in line with trends already existing within the institute. Therefore, it is common-sense and straightforward to implement the recommendations of the PRC.