Guidelines an authorship for UNLOCK projects

These guidelines were agreed by the UNLOCK Group at its meeting on 24th May 9th 2013.

- The first or last author is the author that leads the analysis. This is usually the UNLOCK member that proposes the research question to the group. This author takes on the problem ownership, co-ordinates data input from other UNLOCK members, leads the analysis and gets the job done. There is also the possibility of assigning a junior (PhD) researcher as first or last author.
- UNLOCK members who contribute data are co-authors. Experience to date suggests that members are able to contribute to the data for some projects but not others, depending on the datasets available. Contributing data to a project acts as a final check on being an author.
- The order of authors depends on their relative contribution to a specific paper. The first author will propose the order for the agreement of the other authors.
- Authorship is not necessarily restricted to one named author from each of the contributing UNLOCK members. Where two or more individuals have worked on the data, they can be named as authors depending on their relative contribution to a specific paper. Therefore, a research assistant who works with a lead UNLOCK member can also be named as an author if their contribution warrants this.
- Authorship will be specified in project proposals, although this may change as a study progresses as more people join the study or some leave.
- Any disagreements about authorship will be referred to the UNLOCK Steering Committee for resolution.
- The recommended criteria for authorship and contributorship of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICJME) which can be viewed at http://www.icmje.org/ethical_1author.html will be applied.