

FAQs about Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement

What is public and patient involvement (PPI) in research?

Involvement is where research is carried out 'with' or 'by' members of the public rather than 'to', 'about' or 'for' them (NIHR Involve). It focuses on providing patients and the public with opportunities to directly influence the research process. Patients and the public can get involved in all stages of research from identifying topics, defining the outcome measures, evaluating the outputs and communicating the findings.

What is public engagement (PE) with research?

Engagement is where people are engaged in activities or events where they consider, contribute to, learn about or inform research. Engagement tends to work best when activities are targeted at a specific audience and the participants are actively involved. Examples of public engagement are very wide ranging and can include: hands on activities for families, citizen science (delivering research), public discourse influencing policymakers, co-creating or being an audience for arts or broadcast projects, educational resources for schools.

How are PPI and PE related?

Both approaches value the views and involvement of people in research. The starting point is to be collaborative, rather than to assume or reinforce divisions between experts and the public. Involvement and engagement can have many different forms but the key principle is valuing people's experience and their contributions.

What's the evidence?

Developing the evidence base for Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement is a growing area and a key priority for the Public Programmes team within our work. NIHR Involve has developed standards for PPIE which will inform our evaluation of its impact (<http://www.invo.org.uk/current-work/standards/>).

A systematic review of studies exploring the impact of PPI on service users, researchers and communities, found that service users reported feeling empowered and valued, gaining confidence and life skills and that researchers developed a greater understanding and insight into their research area, gaining respect and a good rapport with the community. The community involved in research also became more aware and knowledgeable about their condition. (Brett J et al. A systematic review of the impact of PPI on service users, researchers and communities. *Patient* 2014 7 (4); 387-395)

How can I understand the impact of my PPIE?

Like PPIE, understanding impact is bespoke to each project or programme of work. Effective evaluation of PPIE is planned from the beginning, with defined success criteria against the aims and objectives of the PPIE. The Public Programmes Team can help you to think through your evaluation, and plan its delivery and analysis.



How does the Public Programmes Team support NIHR Manchester BRC and CRF research?

We have a team of staff to support and facilitate PPIE across the BRC themes. Each BRC theme has a dedicated project manager. <https://www.manchesterbrc.nihr.ac.uk/public-and-patients/>

Support includes: providing learning and development opportunities for researchers, one to one mentoring, and support for grant applications. Our infrastructure includes patient panels, patient contacts and a Young People’s Advisory Panel serving all themes, allowing us to serve all BRC and CRF researchers with patient input into their grant applications and projects.

The Public Programmes Team has a strategic focus to diversify our research community and has a programme of work to develop relationships with new communities, and to be as inclusive as possible across all areas of our work.

How can I get in touch?

Our group email is publicprogrammes@mft.nhs.uk and telephone number is 0161 276 6614.

Individual contacts are as follows – please contact the relevant project manager to find out more about consulting with patient panels.

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