
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY 2014-18

Introduction

The CLAHRC East Midlands will build on strengths and strategic goals of the partner organisations to provide a single dynamic system to support world class research, implementation and evaluation of new innovations. Public Involvement (PI) is a prerequisite of National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) funding and fundamental in the Government's vision for shared decision making throughout the NHS¹. Public involvement is mandatory in all of the CLAHRC EM projects and key performance indicators for PPI will capture the impact and levels of involvement.

Vision

Our vision is that public involvement will be embedded across the CLAHRC East Midlands, with patient and public perspectives being integrated into all aspects of the research process and the organisation as a whole. This will contribute to and enable the further development and sustaining of a thriving health research environment, so as to improve the health and wellbeing of the people of the East Midlands.

Fundamentally our purpose is to increase the public involvement with research and establish patient needs and opinions in order to influence the research agenda for patient benefit. To provide a platform for patients and public to be directly involved in the whole research process including priority setting agenda and project design.

Strategic Aims

The intention of this Public Involvement strategy is to put in place a wide range of opportunities for public involvement across all of the CLAHRC's structures, themes, projects and activities. The use of multiple methods of engagement will enable the participation of more diverse groups. It is recommended that the CLAHRC should:

- Provide clear mechanisms and structures to support engagement and partnership working throughout the research process with particular focus on priority setting and implementing evidence into practice;
- Increase engagement opportunities within the CLAHRC and in its partner organisations with the development of a Patient and Public Partners' Council;
- Ensure that individuals and groups have a voice and identify new engagement strategies focusing particularly on the engagement of ethnic minorities, disengaged and vulnerable groups, including the development of the East Midlands Centre for Black and Minority Ethnic Health;
- Ensure that planning, priority setting, fund allocation and reconfiguration of the CLAHRC's projects and activities is driven by the needs, views and preferences of the region's population;
- Where possible, provide opportunities and support for individuals to develop their own project ideas through to fruition;
- Add to the evidence base for Public Involvement and, particularly, the understanding of the impact of involvement on the project outcomes and to the individuals involved;
- Capture and share best practice, raising the profile of involvement in applied health care research.

There is evidence that health care policy and decision making can be changed for the better through good PI. There are, however, certain things that must be in place for this to happen, including adequate funding and people sufficiently well-informed to enable meaningful engagement. The Public Involvement strategy will build on current PI activities and provide the infrastructure to improve involvement and participation.

Delivering our Strategy

The public involvement across the CLAHRC programme will coordinate the following core elements:

1. **Collaboration and Co-operation:** The creation and support of diverse project teams including representatives from multi-professional and multi-organisational groups and with patient and public involvement.
2. **Capacity Building:** Increase capacity to deliver change across the local health economy:
 - The development of a training pathway to provide project teams, trust staff and patients and public with the tools and skills to effectively participate in research
 - Opportunities for stakeholders to be involved in research as partners or participants.
 - Developing a research knowledge base for healthcare professionals and public
 - Building a healthcare environment receptive to change
3. **Expert Support:** The Public Involvement Programme Lead and the Patient and Public Partners' Council will act as a point of contact to utilise the expertise of stakeholders to assist with the research projects.
4. **Evaluation:** Public Involvement Impact Assessment Framework (PiiAF) will be implemented to capture the Public Involvement activity of the CLAHRC EM as a whole organisation and individual projects. The development of the PiiAF was funded by MRC several CLAHRCs will be implementing it and intend to evaluate it over the next 5 Years (<http://www.piiaf.org.uk/>) Indicators in the PiiAF will assess the level of involvement, and potentially the impact, of PI on:
 - Research design, delivery, dissemination and implementation
 - Improved quality and efficiency in health care provisions
 - Community awareness and engagement in the CLAHRC programme
5. **Centre of Excellence:** The CLAHRC EM will provide a centre of excellence as part of an existing active network, by establishing the leadership, research and training capability. Working in collaboration with the CLAHRC partners the shared resources will offer the potential for larger and more effective research. The programme will engage large numbers of healthcare staff and public to build research and change capacity across healthcare organisations
6. **Knowledge Transfer:** The Public Involvement Programme Lead will have responsibility for bringing together all CLAHRC Themes providing a systematic programme of education and knowledge transfer with an evaluation study designed to capture the Public Involvement in the CLAHRC over the 5 years. Public Involvement will be integral to all CLAHRC research projects and activities, with guidance provided for both researchers and the public. The development of local programmes of work will build on the PPI work of the CLAHRC for LNR and NDL best practice and recommendations from INVOLVE and NIHR.

Our Commitment

NIHR CLAHRC EM has made the following commitments to engage patients and the public within and across its themes, structures and activities:

- A Public Involvement Programme Lead and designated work stream will support and monitor patient and public involvement across the CLAHRC
- PPI will be on the agenda for all project and theme steering groups and ensure that public and patient perspectives inform the design, delivery and dissemination of activities and impacts are reported

- Documents intended for a general audience, including patients and the public, will be reviewed by lay people to ensure that they are clearly written and appropriately targeted
- Meetings will have clear terms of reference and appropriate methods for encouraging and supporting contributions from lay members
- There will be PPI representation on the Executive Board, the Scientific Committee and on the Governance Board
- Meetings involving patients and lay representatives will be held at accessible times and in accessible locations
- Patients and lay members of groups and committees will:
 - Be provided with clear role descriptions which will be regularly reviewed
 - Be provided with profiles of other members
 - Be assigned an academic or clinical mentor who will support their full and active participation and be available to answer questions and address any issues or concerns
 - Be provided with training and other appropriate support to ensure that they can effectively contribute
 - Be otherwise supported to ensure that they are full members of the group and that their views and opinions are given full consideration
 - Receive reimbursement for all reasonable expenses incurred
- Study participants and lay members of groups and committees will be provided with information about the outcomes and impacts of all activities to which they contribute
- Develop a structure to promote, support and acknowledge effective Public Involvement within the CLAHRC, including:
 - Training for anyone connected with the CLAHRC in effective stakeholder involvement and engagement
 - Appropriate financial and other resources to support Public Involvement activities
 - Ensure that Public Involvement activities are correctly costed in a research bid proposal

¹ (Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/liberating-the-nhs-white-paper>)

'Patients and public are not simply participants in research, they are full partners. Many are acting as advisors on research or participant information materials, helping to identify and prioritise research and assess funding proposals and, increasingly, acting as researchers themselves. This involvement ensures that what we do reflects their needs and views and adds immeasurable value to the quality of the NHS, public health and social care research' - (<http://viewer.zmags.com/publication/26f799ac#/26f799ac/1>) NIHR Annual report 2012/13.