

Research Design Service – North West – Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement Strategy

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), Research Design Service (RDS), provides design and methodological support to health and social care researchers in the North West of England to develop grant applications to the NIHR and other open national peer-reviewed funding programmes. Appropriate and meaningful public involvement is an important element of all health and social care research and a central part of our work is to promote, encourage and support 'early, meaningful and sustained public involvement.'

How the strategy was developed

The strategy was developed by the public involvement specialist team, based on the national RDS strategic objectives, which were developed by the RDS Public Involvement Community (RDS PIC) in 2016 and agreed to remain by the RDS Strategy Group in 2018 until 2023. The strategy is underpinned by the Going the Extra Mile Recommendations, RDS PIC Public Involvement Work plan and the UK Standards for Public Involvement (NIHR, 2019).

Patient and public involvement and engagement (PPIE) in the RDS North West

The PPIE team is made up of four members, a Strategic Lead and three specialist advisers who are located in each of the three local services, Greater Manchester, Cheshire and Merseyside and Lancashire and South Cumbria, to provide focussed local support while working as a team regionally. Each member of the PPIE team feeds back and is informed of local needs at their bi-annual regional RDS North West (RDS NW) meetings for advisers. Progress is reported to the Regional Executive Team (RET) which then acts or advises on any issues arising, considering implications for RDS NW, clients and staff alike and also the wider RDS community and other regional partners. As well as our staff, we run a [public involvement fund](#), to support PPIE activities across the regions.

Aim

Our aim is to publicise, encourage, support and facilitate appropriate and meaningful public involvement in all the work of the RDS.

Objectives

To meet our aims we have the following objectives.

Support and learning

- Provide high quality, evidence based public involvement support and guidance for researchers at the grant application stage.
- Provide financial support for high quality public involvement activities related to the development of national, peer reviewed funding applications.
- Develop and maintain the skills and knowledge in public involvement amongst RDS NW advisers so that a high quality, up-to-date advice is provided.

Communication

- Work nationally with the NIHR Centre for Engagement and Dissemination, other RDS's and national stakeholders in relation to our public involvement work.
- Provide leadership and direction to bring together the practice of public involvement in health and social care research conducted in the North West.

Inclusive opportunities

- Further increase diversity and inclusion in public involvement and promote awareness of public involvement in research.

Governance

- Facilitate and monitor public involvement throughout RDS NW activities.

Impact

- Capture and share the difference that public involvement makes the design and development of research.

Support and learning

Objective 1 - Provide high quality, evidence based public involvement support and guidance for researchers at the grant application stage.

- Contribute to RDS NW research design and support workshops/activities. The team attends, presents and runs 'market place' stalls at the RDS NW NIHR funding programme events held across the region, where public contributors are also involved, both in presentations and taking part in the 'market place' sessions.
- Provide advice to the front line advisers on public involvement
- Provide feedback to applicants
 - on their applications
 - on the applications submitted to our mock funding panels.
- A public involvement specialist to attend mock funding panels and recruit and support the public advisers on the panel.

Objective 2 - Provide financial support for high quality public involvement activities related to the development of national, peer reviewed funding applications.

- Oversee our Public Involvement Funds (PIF). This involves:
 - publicising the fund
 - assessing applications and providing detailed developmental feedback
 - making awards and monitoring reporting of the activities of the Fund
 - regularly monitoring and updating the guidance on the Fund
 - regularly reviewing the scope of the Fund
 - for example, we undertook a systematic review of the RDS NW PIF applications and feedback and we have produced a 'top tips' for applying to the fund, on RDS NW website, and updated our guidance on the fund and included information about how the fund can be used for co-production initiatives.

Objective 3 - Develop and maintain the skills and knowledge in public involvement amongst RDS NW advisers so that high quality, up-to-date advice is provided.

- Ensure public involvement is included in the induction of new RDS NW staff.
- Regularly update the Public Involvement Team and Adviser Induction programmes.
- Undertake regular training needs analysis with frontline advisers.
- Contribute to RDS NW staff development days/activities.
- Support advisers with their public involvement advice on a case by case basis.

Communication

Objective 4 - Work nationally with the NIHR Centre for Engagement and Dissemination, other RDS's and national stakeholders in relation to our public involvement work.

- Contribute to public involvement developments with other RDS regions.
- Contribute to national PIC activities, attend the PIC meetings and events, participate in working groups and strategic developments.
- Work with other NIHR organisations, such as the Applied Research Collaborations, and their public advisers forum, Clinical Research Networks, NIHR Manchester Biomedical Research Centre, and the Health and Innovation Agency and Liverpool Health Partners to develop our work on PPIE.

Objective 5 - Provide leadership and direction to bring together the practice of public involvement in health and social care research conducted in the North West.

- Embed public involvement throughout the work of the RDS.
- Embed the values outlined in the PPI National Standards, by increasing awareness of value statement (put on RDS website) and including it in Core Induction programmes.
- Work with NIHR partners and members of the public to inform, promote and encourage use of the UK Public Involvement Standards.
- Review, update and maintain the public involvement section of the RDS website and provide relevant and up to date information on our activities and public involvement and have a regular slot on the newsletter.
- Work with other organisations, i.e. Liverpool Health Partners and parts of the NIHR, such as the Applied Research Collaborations, to support and publicise public involvement across the region.

Inclusive opportunities

Objective 6 - Further increase diversity and promote awareness of public involvement in research.

- Embed diversity and inclusion as part of all of our public involvement training.
- Work with national PIC on initiatives to provide support for appropriate means to engage people and communities.
- Raise awareness of best practice examples of inclusive diverse public involvement via our website using reports from the public involvement funds.
- Ensure all advisers are in receipt of diversity and inclusion training from host institutions.
- Ensure our public advisers are recruited as inclusively as possible and attempt to ensure recruitment from a diverse group.

Governance

Objective 7 - Facilitate and monitor public involvement throughout RDS NW activities to ensure public involvement is central to the delivery and overall strategy of the RDS NW.

- Maintain a team of specialist public involvement advisers. The team consists of a Strategic Lead and three specialist advisers who are located in each of the three local services to provide focussed local support while working as a team regionally.
- Monitor activities – i.e. work on public involvement fund (see above), feedback on events, develop case studies
- Maintain records and audit trails of public involvement activities
- Produce annual reports and data on our activities
- Produce strategic documents to outline direction of our work
- Attend and participate in RDS team meetings, and specialist public involvement advisers attend all RDS committees, public involvement is a standing item on the agenda
- Have regular quarterly public involvement specialist team meetings
- Recruit and support public advisers who participate in our work, i.e. mock funding panel public adviser members and RDS NW events.

Impact

Objective 8 - Capture and share the difference that public involvement makes to research.

- Develop and maintain systems for capturing our work and the impact it makes.
- Annually review public involvement fund reports to ascertain impact.
- Develop case studies to show case our work and present these on our website to aid the development of good practice.

Activities and indicators of success 2020 to 2023

- Develop and communicate case studies to indicate impact of our work
 - success indicator – case studies on website and reported annually.
- Monitor public involvement fund
 - success indicator – Annual reporting on regular review and indications of changes made.
- Presence at events
 - success indicator – regular attendance, feedback on events, report this in RDS NW annual report.
- Annual review of website
 - success indicator – up to date website, and monitor web traffic, google analytics etc.
- Monitor training needs of front-line advisers
 - success indicator – annual review of training needs, people's awareness and confidence in public involvement implementation of review.
- Developing collaborations and partnerships
 - success indicator – explore how to approach this, produce scoping review
 - monitor number of collaborators and partnerships.
- Involvement in national work
 - success indicator – document evidence and outcome of activities.