

Involving the Public in Research

The National Institute for Health Research

Research Design Service for the
East of England

A guide to actively embedding
PPI within research

The Benefits of PPI

Involving service users, carers and the public helps you to:

- *Improve the quality of the research by adding another dimension.*
- *Ensure questions are relevant and timely.*
- *Assist in the dissemination of the findings to a wider lay audience.*
- *Obtain external funding.*

Demonstrable PPI is an increasingly important element upon which NIHR research proposals are assessed.

Contacting the NIHR RDS for the East of England

If you wish to find out more or request our services, please contact the Central Co-ordinator at:

The NIHR Research Design Service for the East of England
University of Essex
Wivenhoe Park
Colchester
CO4 3SQ

Tel: 01206 874856

Fax: 01206 873765

E-mail: rdseoe@essex.ac.uk

Web: www.RDS-eoe.nihr.ac.uk

Support for PPI

The NIHR, Research Design Service is a unit especially designed to provide the help and assistance you need to develop your research project and in particular, can help you to ensure that your proposal includes the required PPI elements.





The Importance of Public & Patient Involvement (PPI) in Health Research

Patient and Public Involvement, also known by its acronym PPI, is a key component of the modern NHS.

The views and opinions of local people, in terms of PPI in health research, informs decision making in the modern NHS and helps to balance clinically driven concerns.

Evidence of carefully considered and active, ongoing, PPI is a key aspect to obtaining research funding from a number of National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) funding streams.

It is essential therefore, that forces are joined with the lay public and service users as questions raised by them are invariably different from that of clinicians.

The NIHR now requires evidence of active PPI in applications to a number of funding streams in order to obtain a successful outcome.



Who are 'Service Users'?

When talking about 'the public', the NIHR includes:

- People who use health and social care services
- Informal carers and families
- Parents/guardians
- Members of the public who may be targeted by public health programmes
- Organisations representing the users of NHS services and community groups.

Adding Value

People who use health and social care services have a wealth of experience and unique understanding which makes their input invaluable. They can provide a fresh outlook and alternative steer and thus ensure that the research remains useful to all involved.

A strategy to do this must be clearly thought through and ideally designed in conjunction with service users. The time required to foster successful and meaningful involvement should not be underestimated.



What is Classed as 'Active Involvement'?

'Active Involvement' is a partnership between the public and researchers in the research process, rather than the use of people as 'subjects' of research.

PPI in research includes either a general lay perspective or a more experiential view based upon direct use of specific services.

Active involvement is not simply participation in a study, it covers aspects such as:

The involvement of service users, carers and members of the public in study design, development of protocols and data collection.

The inclusion of service users, carers and members of the public in steering groups and project teams.

