

# PPI/E Support Available for Researchers



# General Support

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**As part of our commitment to embedding meaningful Patient & Public Involvement and Engagement (PPI/E) across the breadth of research taking place on campus, we have developed infrastructure and expertise to support researchers involving the public in their research.**

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Cambridge BRC Patient and Public Involvement team is happy to work with researchers and research staff across campus to design and implement PPI strategies appropriate to their research.



## **PPI Strategy development for funding applications**

The BRC PPI Strategy Lead is happy to work with researchers to develop a PPI strategy that is suitable for their proposed research. Our team is also happy to review PPI sections in grants and advise on their content.

## **Building PPI Capacity within research teams**

The PPI team can advise on the development of role descriptions for recruitment of PPI leads or support for research projects and is happy to share PPI vacancies across our network. We also have a range of PPI training available (details overleaf) to build skills in new and existing team members across campus.

## **Recruitment of PPI contributors**

Our PPI team can help you identify who will be important to involve in your research and advise on the best avenues to recruit each audience.

We have been building relationships with a number of community and patient groups across the East of England, who are willing to hear from researchers with involvement opportunities – the list of groups we have worked with is available on our website.

We also have a wide network of PPI colleagues across the UK, through whom we can advertise involvement opportunities to help you find the right people to involve in your research.

## **PPI Resources and templates**

The PPI team has a range of PPI resources available to support researchers.

Our Researcher Kit includes information about ethics, reimbursements, writing for lay audiences and keeping PPI records. We can also provide examples of role descriptions for public contributors and terms of reference for patient groups.

## **Troubleshooting and pastoral care**

We have developed a campus PPI network to provide a forum for PPI practitioners across campus to network with one another, share best practice and identify issues and training needs.

All staff working in PPI on campus are welcome, and we meet twice a year over coffee and cake to discuss PPI.

# CUH PPI Panel

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**The Cambridge University Hospitals (CUH) PPI Panel is made up of around 70 members of the public from in and around Cambridge who are interested in getting involved in our research.**

They range in age from mid-20s to mid-90s and have a variety of experience with health care and research, including current and former patients, and people with no health conditions at all. As well as being willing to get involved directly in projects on campus, panel members have their own networks and are often instrumental in introducing us to new groups and people who might be relevant to your research.

Researchers are encouraged to involve the panel in their research as a 'public' voice, while also recruiting and involving patients or community groups with direct experience of the research topic.

## **Involving the panel in your research**

### **Document review**

The easiest way to involve the panel is to ask them to review one or more of your research documents – for example, your lay summary, patient information leaflet, consent form, questionnaire or study protocol. Some researchers even ask the panel to review their entire research proposal.

Documents for review are sent to the PPI panel by email through our PPI coordinator. Panel members have two weeks to provide their feedback, which the PPI coordinator then compiles into an anonymised report for the research team. Researchers are then asked to provide a

short response, summarising the changes they have made as a result of the panel's feedback.

### **Focus/discussion groups**

Some research topics are more easily discussed in person, or your research project might not yet be at the stage where it has any documents. The PPI team can organise and facilitate discussion groups with PPI panel members to discuss your research project.

Researchers are asked to fill out a short form to help us understand where your project is up to, and then panel members can be invited at a time that suits everyone. One or two members of the research team usually give a short introduction to their research and lead discussion, with the PPI team providing facilitation support to help things go smoothly. We also take notes for you so that you can focus on the discussion.



### **Further involvement**

Panel members are happy to be invited to further involvement opportunities, such as sitting on oversight groups, steering committees or participating in PPI groups for the duration of the research project. Some panel members have even gone on to be co-applicants on research projects.

### **Finishing up a PPI project?**

Membership of the CUH PPI panel is open to anyone from in and around Cambridge who is not currently employed in a media or research position. If you have a research project that is coming to an end, but your contributors would like to continue being involved in research, you are welcome to invite them to join our panel.

# Training

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**We run PPI training courses for researchers and research staff throughout the year, with seasonal training calendars published on our website.**

Training courses are developed in collaboration with our public contributors and are free of charge to BRC, NHS and university-affiliated staff.

The PPI team is happy to run bespoke sessions for research themes and departments for >5 attendees, with options ranging from 30-minute overviews to full-day intensive sessions.

## **Introduction to PPI for Researchers**

This introductory session runs 4 times per year and covers what PPI is (and is not), why it is important and tips to do it well.

The session includes the chance to hear from one of our CUH PPI panel members about their experience of involvement, and a case study from a researcher about how they have involved people in their research.

## **Building and Maintaining PPI Groups**

This looks at different ways a PPI group can work, how to recruit group members and how to keep them involved throughout the research lifecycle.

The session includes one of our CUH PPI panel members sharing their experiences, case studies looking at PPI groups already on Campus and hearing from a researcher

who has worked with a PPI group for their project. This session runs 3 times per year, according to demand.

## **PPI Toolkit: Ways to involve the public in research**

This session looks at some of the methods that can be used for PPI to help researchers find ways that might be suitable for their project. The session covers activities that can be used throughout the research cycle, with examples from research taking place on campus.



## **Writing Lay Summaries for health research**

This interactive session looks at what makes a successful lay summary and things to avoid based on feedback from our public contributors. It has an interactive session at the end, working on writing a summary for a hypothetical research project.

## **Training for members of the public**

The PPI team has also developed training and induction materials that can be co-delivered with research teams who are starting with new public contributors. The materials cover what PPI is, why it is important and how it helps research, as well as looking at the research cycle itself.

**You can contact the PPI team for support at any stage of your research project.**

**To arrange document reviews or discussion groups with the PPI panel email:**

**To contact Dr Amanda Stranks, NIHR Cambridge BRC PPI Lead, email:**