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# Public Involvement in research

Ann-Marie Towers, Reader, University of Kent  
John Potts, lay co-applicant, Kent.



**Kent  
Research  
Partnership**

Building research capacity  
in adult social care

# Familiarise yourself with the principles

- NIHR defines public involvement in research as being carried out **WITH** or **BY** members of the public (not to/about/for them).
- **Involvement** is sometimes confused with:
  - **Engagement** (dissemination and raising awareness of research or its findings).
  - **Participation** (requires consent and ethical approval).
- See: NIHR Briefing notes for researchers
- <https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/briefing-notes-for-researchers-public-involvement-in-nhs-health-and-social-care-research/27371>



## National Standards

- Copied from the UK Standards for Public Involvement (10/9/21)  
<https://sites.google.com/nihr.ac.uk/pi-standards/home>



## Case Study

- 4-year programme of work
- Funded by NIHR HS&DR
- Aims to build capacity in social care research.
- Four work packages
- Large team
- See project webpage for more information:
- <https://www.pssru.ac.uk/kascp/>



# Public involvement in our study



- Lay co-applicant Mr John Potts
  - Identify and prioritise the aims and objectives of the partnership.
  - Draft and review the Plain English Summary.
  - Gain support for from other public groups.
  - Respond to panel and peer review comments.
  - Co-lead PPI Working Group with Gina Walton (KCC)....



# PPI Working Group

- 8-10 people with lived experience of adult social care:
  - People using services
  - Informal carers
  - Volunteers/retired care workers
- The group will
  - Help agree strategic research priorities for the partnership priority setting.
  - Consult on themes and activities regarding Communities of Practice.
  - Review fellowship pilot projects and partnership funding applications.
  - Opportunities for co-research within funded projects.
  - Support wider dissemination.

All working group members will be paid by Kent County Council for their time at INVOLVE rates (£150 per day or £75 per half day).

## Study Steering Committee

- Three people with lived experience
  - 2 informal carers of people who have used social care
  - 1 person using social care services.
- All steering committee members will be paid by University of Kent for their time at INVOLVE rates (£150 per day or £75 per half day).

## Training and Support

- Innovation Delivery Team at KCC testing new training scheme with Health Education England.
  - Blends insights from leadership psychology and communication with techniques used by professional performers.
- 1-day training course can help Public Involvement representatives feel more confident in multi-stakeholder meetings and events.



# Types of involvement

- Identifying and prioritising
  - From proposal stage
  - Through communities of practice.
- Developing funding applications
  - Review applications and have opportunities to be co-applicants.
- Managing and undertaking research
  - Study Steering Committee (managing)
  - Opportunities for co-research (undertaking).
- Evaluating the research
  - One working group member will be involved in evaluation of the programme.
- Dissemination and impact
  - Invited to contribute to outputs, presentations, write blogs, speak at events....

# My experiences of being involved

- Already had strong networks with the sector:
  - Adult Social Care People's Panel
  - Chair of the Patient and Public Advisory Group (Kent and Medway Strategic Transformation Project)
- Invited to the first meeting by Gina Walton, KCC.
- Complete access to every stage of the process.
- Given time to participate in a comprehensive manner.
- Appointed as a member of the study's Senior Management Group and joint lead of the PPI Working Group.

# Top Tips

## Researchers

- Ensure you have sufficient time to involve people properly.
- Involve people in every stage (not just 'here's a summary').
- Listen to and value the advice public co-applicants/advisors give you.
- Support your public involvement representatives (training/pre-meetings).
- Recognise and value involvement by paying people for their time.

## Public involvement representatives

- Be confident in your views and experience.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help.
- Challenge the research team and make sure you fully understand the issues.
- Use your networks and personal experience.

- **NIHR Funding and Disclaimer**

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# Thank you

For more information or to get involved  
please contact the Kent Research  
Partnership team

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