

Communications Strategy

Introduction

Our NIHR ARC EoE strategy focuses on fulfilling the NIHR vision and achieving the aims of the NIHR ARC in the East of England (EoE). Taking learning from our predecessor CLAHRCs, our ARC research strategy is to work locally and regionally on nationally and internationally important research questions in health and social care (HSC), and to create a vibrant and inclusive infrastructure for applied health and social care research, implementing evidence to benefit our citizens and communities.

Our ARC EoE values are Inclusivity, Diversity, Engagement, Co-production, Sustainability and Excellence.

Our research will focus in particular, but not exclusively, on four key populations in focus (PiFs); 1) Peterborough and Fenland; 2) Great Yarmouth and Waveney; 3) Stevenage; and 4) Thurrock.

This communication strategy is owned by the NIHR ARC EoE Board, which has regional representation from collaborators and partner organisations, and supported by the ARC EoE Core team and research themes.

Strategy

Our Aim

The aim of this communications strategy is to enable the successful transition from CLAHRC EoE to ARC EoE, to raise the profile of our research collaboration within the region and beyond, and to enhance translation of our research into policy and practice, its successful implementation, and to produce an environment that leads to increased research capacity in the Health and Social Care sector in the East of England.

Our Objectives

We shall work with patients, communities (in particular the PiFs) and collaborators, to develop a shared understanding and common language to ensure that our strategy is driven by the needs of our population.

Our communications strategy will ensure that with our research agenda is aligned with NHS and social care delivery organisation's and other partners priorities.

We shall work with our partners to achieve increased uptake of ARC EoE funded research findings locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

Our communications will increase awareness of ARC EoE as the leader for applied health and care research, and a natural agenda item internally and externally across the region.

We shall ensure our communications feed into and support the NIHR ARCs National Communication Strategy.

Insight

We have learnt from our predecessors, CLAHRC CP and CLAHRC EoE, that fostering and establishing **relationship-based approaches to working with our partners** are key to the success of the programme. In ARC EoE we will continue to horizon scan in the changing landscape to ensure key stakeholders are involved and the voice of the region is heard.

Strategic Options

Our approach to communication in the ARC EoE has been developed through the overall ARC EoE strategic approach which focuses on the four PiFs with patient, community, involvement, engagement and participation being key to ensuring our values are met.

Multiple regional events involving regional and national collaborators have fed into this communication strategy through facilitated table and theme discussions around the plans of ARC EoE for the next five years.

Partners

Targeting our communications message when and as needed to our partners including but not restricted to:

NIHR-DH including ministers and senior civil servants
Academic and professional societies including Royal Societies
NHS England
Public Health England
Health Education England
Industry
Third Sector and Charities
Patient, Community and Public bodies including INVOLVE
NHS Trusts and Integrated Care Systems
Health and Wellbeing Boards
Local Authorities
HEIs
Innovation Infrastructure EAHSN (Eastern Academic Health Science Network)
NIHR Research Infrastructure (CRN,
Patients, communities and the public (PiFs)
Other ARCs

Proposition and top-line Messaging

ARC EoE is committed to increasing the knowledge and delivery of applied health research, encouraging collaboration and implementation across the East of England whilst developing individuals, teams and organisations through capacity building.

ARC EoE will do this by increasing the patient, community, involvement, engagement and participation in all areas of its work.

Outline of Approach

Methods of communication

ARC EoE will continue to deliver through traditional communications including the ARC EoE website, partner organisations' websites, weekly newsletters via mail chimp, briefing documents, bites, project blogs and other publications in addition to more current social media outlets such as Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and the NIHR Hub via Google.

ARC EoE will continue to discuss joint communication initiatives with other NIHR and key regional collaborators (e.g. EAHSN).

At a national level our communications will be delivered through our annual report, our links with the NIHR National Comms team and our collaborative work with the other 14 ARCs.

Members of our Board and Fellow alumni will act as Ambassadors and contribute to the 'pull through' of the research findings in relation to their own organisation and links with their counterparts across the region. This links directly to the ARC EoE implementation strategy.

An action plan with detailed activities will be developed alongside this strategy to support the push and pull through of research evidence and to enhance the continued work of ARC EoE in research capacity building in the NHS.

Resources:

Current resource;
Senior Programme Support Officer at 0.6wte.

Interdependencies

The strategy will align closely with and draw on the ARC EoE implementation strategy (in particular Communities of Practice) and its emphasis on relational working and exploiting the knowledge and expertise of all partners. The ARC EoE PCIEP strategy is cross cutting themes within the ARC and will ensure that all communication is planned, presented, reviewed by the relevant communities and individuals.

Risks and Assumptions

It may be difficult to reach all intended audiences including; diverse groups; remote regions; those who do not utilize social media or technology, so priority targeting in an ever-changing environment will be discussed at theme meetings and theme leads meetings.

Duplication of effort and risk of conflicting communication from different organisations about key communities, topics and projects (e.g. ageing and multi-morbidity, adolescent and child mental health)

Evaluation and Review:

The strategy and action plan will be reviewed annually and the impact of ARC EoE research will be discussed in relation to Comms at the biannual Board meetings.