

NIHR Applied Research Collaboration East of England

**Public and Community Involvement, Engagement and Participation
(PCIEP) Strategy**

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A collaborative approach, which values active co-production with our four populations-in-focus (Great Yarmouth; Peterborough and Fenland; Stevenage; and Thurrock), is at the heart of the Applied Research Collaboration East of England (ARC EoE) Public and Community Involvement, Engagement and Participation (PCIEP) strategy. Our host Trust, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (CPFT) has a leading, national role in PCIEP and will champion our work in this area, and our increasingly close working with the Eastern Academic Health Science Network (EAHSN) helps support this. However, we recognise that more is needed to achieve our goal of establishing a model of PCIEP that increases meaningful and effective engagement and involvement of diverse groups and enables truly collaborative and co-produced research design and implementation.

This strategy sets out the aims and objectives of PCIEP and how we will achieve these. We will use the INVOLVE definition of involvement (www.invo.org.uk) which defines public involvement in research as research being carried out ‘with’ or ‘by’ members of the public rather than ‘to’, ‘about’ or ‘for’ them, and uses the following terms to distinguish between the different activities:

- **Involvement** – where members of the public are actively involved in research projects and in research organisations
- **Participation** – where people take part in a research study
- **Engagement** – where information and knowledge about research is provided and disseminated

We aim to:

1. Extend research into PCIEP

[The Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care East of England \(CLAHRC EoE\)](#); ARC EoE’s predecessor, delivered significant change through its Patient and Public Involvement in Research theme, which investigated and developed new and optimal ways to achieve PCIEP in applied health research and its implementation. The theme continues to nationally lead in terms of recommendations for [feeding-back the results of research to participants](#). Building on these achievements, the ARC EoE [‘Inclusive Involvement in Research for Practice-Led Health and Social Care \(IIRP\)’ theme](#) will further develop methods for best-practice in PCIEP.

2. Extend PCIEP of diverse groups

We will strive to be an exemplar of diverse and thriving community engagement, involvement and participation in health and social care research and implementation. To ensure the involvement of diverse groups, ARC EoE will make use of already established links, and seek new connections with local communities and regional organisations that represent communities.

3. Extend PCIEP of under-represented communities

Increasing engagement, involvement and participation of under-represented communities is a priority for our ARC, our university partners, and for the [NIHR East of England Public Involvement Collaborative](#) (NIHR EoE PI Collaborative). We will reach out to under-represented communities in our ARC's four populations-in-focus, which were selected as areas in the East of England with socioeconomic and health inequalities that could benefit from research. We will work to involve community

representatives (such as community workers, patients, service users and carers) from each area, in shaping our work through wide-ranging and regular engagement activities.

UK National Standards of Public Involvement

We will use the UK Standards for Public Involvement as a framework in our strategy. These are based on initial work in values and principles of public involvement undertaken by NIHR INVOLVE and Health and Care Research Wales. They provide clear, concise statements of effective public involvement against which improvement can be assessed; details of the standards can be found in Appendix 1. We will support researchers in using these standards in project reports and updates to reflect and identify areas for future improvement.

We will strive to meet each standard as a whole programme, using them to reflect upon and improve practices. The six standards, and how we plan to meet them, are as follows:

1. Inclusive Opportunities

ARC EoE will provide inclusive and accessible opportunities for patients, carers, service users and public members at all levels of our governance and stages of research. We will do this by:

- Adopting a ‘community-led’ approach whereby we support communities to define what is important to them about their health and wellbeing and the factors that impact on these, to inform the research we undertake
- Co-designing, co-developing and co-producing our research and PCIEP with members of the public to ensure it is relevant, informative, and accessible
- Advertising any public member roles widely across the region via a range of communication platforms and networks to maximise the chance of reaching a range of people
- Recognising that people should be paid for their time and expertise by following guidance from our host Trust, the [NIHR CED \(Centre for Engagement and Dissemination\)](#) and university partners
- Undertaking inclusion and diversity workshops delivered by the IIRP theme and Shaping Our Lives (a user-led organisation)
- Investing in training for ARC colleagues designed to increase knowledge, awareness and confidence in addressing issues related to community engagement, widening participation, diversity and inclusion

2. Working together

We will work with and value public members in our research, implementation and core business activities. We will do this by:

- Fostering close working relationships between public members and researchers via the PCIEP Coordinating Group. This group will be co-chaired by a public member and will serve to offer mutual support, and opportunities to work together and learn
- Working with individuals and community groups from our PIFs and advisory groups within our university partners at every stage of the research process,

and using emerging findings from the IIRP theme to foster community-led approaches

- Including members of the communities from all our PiFs in our implementation workshops
- Working with people in ways that suit them including attending community groups rather than expecting them to come to us, inviting members to participate and 'present' their work at ARC meetings and events
- Mapping our engagement activities across the PiFs to ensure a coordinated approach to working with communities
- Working with the NIHR EoE PI Collaborative on common goals of community engagement
- Following the good practice guidance in the [INVOLVE and NIHR Research Design Service's 'Reaching Out' initiative](#), to ensure regional NIHR PCIEP strategic objectives support community approaches

3. Supporting and Learning

We will offer and promote opportunities for support and learning that build confidence and skills to enhance public involvement. We will do this by:

- Developing and delivering PCIEP training for researchers new to PCIEP in partnership with the [NIHR Cambridge Biomedical Research Centre \(BRC\)](#)
- Working with the NIHR EoE PI Collaborative and other organisations to deliver events and workshops to promote PCIEP within ARC EoE and the wider NIHR
- Working with our public members to review their roles, identify learning and networking opportunities to ensure they can meaningfully contribute and participate
- Ensuring PCIEP members participate in various workstreams, research themes and groups to empower them to make informed contributions
- Signposting PCIEP members to learning in the region and across the national ARC network
- Sharing the [CLAHRC EoE PCIEP Handbook for Researchers](#) to new members of the ARC EoE
- Exploring and funding training in diversity for ARC researchers to enable them to increase their knowledge, awareness and confidence in addressing issues related to equality and diversity (see Inclusivity above)
- Learning from the COVID-19 pandemic to make sure that public members are supported in using online platforms and technologies to ensure that they can continue to participate when face to face meetings are not possible
- Acknowledging that online platforms suit some members of the public well, while ensuring we work with those communities who are digitally disadvantaged to support them to be involved

4. Communications

We will communicate effectively with all our partners, collaborators, and the public to develop shared understanding. We will do this by:

- Exploring various communication channels and tailoring these to suit individual needs to be as accessible and flexible as possible
- Disseminating ARC EoE PCIEP activity via national platforms by sharing updates at national ARC PCIEP meetings, the NIHR EoE PI Collaborative, in

the Annual Report, through social media channels, the ARC EoE website, newsletter, BITEs and at events and conferences

- Developing the PPI page of the ARC EoE website with public members and including content that is relevant to the researchers and communities we work with
- Working closely with the Eastern AHSN to support our communication within and beyond the region
- Sharing [CLAHRC EoE's PCIEP Feedback Guidance](#) with researchers which highlights how to communicate clearly and effectively with a range of audiences, including PCIEP representatives

5. Impact

We will measure and evaluate the effectiveness and impact of PCIEP across ARC EoE. We will do this by:

- Evaluating the effectiveness and impact of PCIEP across ARC EoE by the IIRP theme
- Supporting ARC EoE themes to evaluate the impact of PCIEP on their research
- Producing a well contextualised and innovative body of PCIEP evidence that will aim to inform NHS and Social Care PCIEP policy and practice.
- Engaging PCIEP members in our reviews of success

6. Governance

We will provide opportunities for the public to influence and be actively involved in the governance and leadership of the ARC at all stages of our research and projects so that our decisions promote and protect the public interest. We will do this by:

- Involving PCIEP representatives in the development of our PCIEP strategy and its yearly review
- Involving PCIEP representatives in recruitment and appointment panels, particularly for key ARC EoE positions
- Involving PCIEP representatives on our Board, Expert Advisory Group, Capacity Building Committee and PCIEP Coordinating group, which will be co-chaired by a lay member
- Making PCIEP a standing agenda item at theme and implementation meetings, and inviting PCIEP representatives to contribute to research and implementation meetings and events
- Holding 'community engagement events' across our four PiFs where members from those communities will participate and inform our research
- Ensuring PCIEP representatives sit on all steering groups and advisory groups in our studies and have the necessary support and training to be a critical friend in these meetings

Appendices

Appendix 1 - UK Standards for Public Involvement



INCLUSIVE OPPORTUNITIES: We offer public involvement opportunities that are accessible and that reach people and groups according to research needs.



WORKING TOGETHER: We work together in a way that values all contributions, and that builds and sustains mutually respectful and productive relationships.



SUPPORT & LEARNING: We offer and promote support and learning that builds confidence and skills for public involvement in research.



COMMUNICATIONS: We use plain language for timely, two way and targeted communications, as part of involvement plans and activities.



IMPACT: To drive improvement, we capture and share the difference that public involvement makes to research.



GOVERNANCE: We involve the public in our governance and leadership so that our decisions promote and protect the public interest.

<https://sites.google.com/nih.ac.uk/pi-standards/home>

Appendix 2 - UK Standards for Public Involvement

ACRONYM	DEFINITION	INFORMATION
ARC EoE	Applied Research Collaboration East of England	ARC EoE is funded by the NIHR. It is a five-year collaboration between Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust, and the Universities of Cambridge, East Anglia, Hertfordshire and Essex along with other NHS Trusts, Local Authorities, Regional Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships (STPs), patient-led organisations, charities, and industry partners across the region.
BRC	Cambridge Biomedical Research Centre	The BRC is based on the Cambridge Biomedical Campus, and combines scientific research in world-class institutes, patient care in NHS hospitals, and drug discovery in pharmaceutical companies.
CPFT	Cambridgeshire & Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust	The Trust delivers many of the NHS services that are provided outside of hospital and in the community such as physical, mental health and specialist services. ARC EoE is hosted by CPFT.
CRN	Clinical Research Network	Funded by the NIHR, the CRN provides an infrastructure which allows high-quality clinical research to take place in the NHS, so that patients can benefit from new and better treatments. It supports research across 30 different health themes. There are 15 CRNs across England.
EAHSN	Eastern Academic Health Science Network	The EAHSN is funded by the NHS and the Office for Life Sciences to bring together academia, citizens, health services and industry to realise the value of innovations more quickly.
IIRP theme	Inclusive Involvement in Research for Practice Led Health and Social Care theme	The IIRP theme is one of seven ARC EoE research themes. It aims to find the best ways of involving patients, service users, carers and members of the public with different experiences, in research on health and social care.
INVOLVE		INVOLVE was part of, and funded by, the NIHR to support active public involvement in NHS, public health and social care research. Replaced by NIHR CED, a new NIHR centre for patient and public involvement, engagement & participation and research dissemination
NIHR	National Institute of Health Research	The NIHR is the nation's largest funder of health and care research. It works in partnership with the NHS, universities, local government, other research funders, patients and the public to deliver and enable world-class research that transforms people's lives, promotes economic growth and advances science. It is largely funded through the Department of Health and Social Care.

NIHR EoE PI Collaborative	NIHR East of England Public Involvement Collaborative	Membership includes public involvement leads and patient representatives from NIHR and AHSN organisations in the east of England region. The remit of the group is to align regional public involvement strategies, plans and resources to deliver NIHR priorities in the region.
NIHR CED	Centre for Engagement and Dissemination	The Centre brings together activities in patient and public involvement, engagement and participation with research dissemination. The aim is to further enhance the strong collaborative culture already established in involvement, engagement across the NIHR.
PCIEP	Public and Community Involvement, Engagement and Participation	PCIEP is where members of the public are actively involved in research projects and in research organisations.
RDS	Research Design Service	The RDS provides design and methodological support to health and social care researchers across England to develop grant applications to the NIHR and other national peer-reviewed funding programmes. RDS advisers in bases across England offer a unique breadth of experience and a proven track record in improving research applications. Advice is confidential and free of charge.
Shaping Our Lives		A national organisation and network of user-led groups, service users and disabled people. It is a user-led organisation committed to inclusive involvement and specialises in the research and practice of involving diverse communities in policy, planning and delivery of services.

Appendix 3 – Organisational Chart

NIHR ARC East of England: governance arrangements

