

Research Inclusion Strategy

September 2024

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Responsible Group (Consultation & Approval Committee/Groups which signed off the policy)	TSOG, PCIEP Co-Ordinating Group, MOG, Academic Career Development Lead
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Statement of Commitment and Vision

The National Institute for Health and Care Research Applied Research Collaboration East of England (NIHR ARC EoE) is a 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, patient-led organisations, charities, and industry partners across the region. NIHR ARC EoE is funded until March 2026. NIHR Applied Research Collaborations (ARCs) support applied health and care research that responds to, and meets, the needs of local populations and local health and care systems.

Working with communities to reduce health inequalities is central to our research and we are committed to embedding inclusion into everything that we do. Diverse people and communities shape our research, and we aim to create an environment where opportunities to be involved in, engaged with and participate in health and care research are inclusive and accessible for all.

This strategy has been designed to address inequalities associated with the protected characteristics of the [Equality Act 2010](#) and extends to others which may also impact health and social care inequalities. We acknowledge that all people have unique experiences of discrimination and disadvantage that are exacerbated by the overlap of multiple identities (the concept of intersectionality).

This strategy outlines the commitment of NIHR ARC EoE to value diversity and champion equity and equality and sustain a research environment where everyone feels included.

The strategy accompanies our [Public, Community, Involvement, Engagement and Participation Strategy](#), as public contributors and participants are key stakeholders in an inclusive research environment. Similarly, this strategy compliments the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) approaches and strategies of our four university partner organisations and the ED&I strategy of our host organisation ([Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation Trust](#)). This strategy is also informed [NIHR Research Inclusion Strategy 2022-27](#).

We outline our commitments in this strategy and have identified areas that we can address during the ARC Extension Period (in the short-term, until March 2026) and areas that we will address in future iterations of ARC, demonstrating our long-term vision and commitment and an inclusive health and care research environment.

We work closely with Health Innovation East and our NIHR Colleagues in the NIHR BioResource, NIHR Cambridge Biomedical Research Centre and NIHR Research Delivery Network (formerly Clinical Research Network). Our strategy recognises and celebrates our shared responsibility to create inclusive research environments and we are committed to working together to make this happen.

Our commitment

National Institute for Health and Care Research Applied Research Collaboration East of England is committed to championing diversity, equity and equality and sustaining a research environment where everyone feels included.

Objectives

Inclusive Leadership and Governance

1. Leadership and Governance roles are open to and draw from a variety of backgrounds and experiences.

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
We will apply our host trust (CPFT) ED&I Strategy and CPFT Recruitment, Selection and Retention Policy to all leadership recruitment.	Business and Operations Manager	Short-term (1-2 years)

2. Research inclusion is embedded within governance processes.

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
Initiate and maintain research inclusion as standing agenda item across ARC governance committees to share updates on Research Inclusion strategy.	PCIEP Lead, ARC Management Operations Group, Theme Leads, (future Research Inclusion Lead)	Short-term (1-2 years)

3. Grow opportunities for partnership working to build a collective responsibility for research inclusion.

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
Investigate opportunities within the ARCs, partner universities and regional NIHR infrastructure to highlight research inclusion obligations (e.g., training) and promote best practice (such as use of Equality Impact Assessments).	PCIEP Lead, ARC Management Operations Group, Theme Leads, (future Research Inclusion Lead)	Short-term (1-2 years)

Inclusive approach to capacity building

- Increase diversity of researchers, trainees and workforce recruitment of ARC researchers to reflect a wide range of backgrounds and experiences

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
Develop mechanisms to collect demographic information about applicants and awardees.	Academic Career Development Lead	Short term (1-2 years)
Collect information about fellowship experiences, to understand inclusivity and accessibility of opportunities.	Academic Career Development Lead	Short term (1-2 years)

- Ensure researchers and workforce have the necessary knowledge, skills and tools to support inclusive research.

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
Collate and highlight appropriate and relevant research inclusion, equality, diversity and cultural competency training.	PCIEP Lead	Short-term (1-2 years)
Collate and share resources and support for the completion of Equality Impact Assessments (e.g., EqIA).	PCIEP Lead	Short-term (1-2 years)
Monitor uptake of Equality Impact Assessment drop-in sessions and inclusion, equality and diversity training needs.	PCIEP Lead, future Research Inclusion Lead	Medium-term (2-3 years)

Inclusive research participation and involvement opportunities

- All research projects will actively consider accessibility, inclusion and impact on health inequalities.

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
Track use of Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA), Health Inequalities Assessment Tool (HIAT) or equivalent. for new projects (including aligned projects) from October 2024.	PCIEP Lead ARC Core Team - Projects List Tracking	Short-term (1-2 years)

- Extend Public, Community, Involvement, Engagement and Participation of diverse groups and underrepresented communities.

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
In line with our Public, Community, Involvement, Engagement and Participation (PCIEP) Strategy, we will	PCIEP Lead, Theme Leads	Short-term (1-2 years)

continue to ensure the involvement of diverse groups.		
Continue to reach out to underrepresented communities in ARCs Populations in Focus (PiF) areas (Great Yarmouth, Peterborough and Fenland, Stevenage and Thurrock).	PCIEP Lead, Theme Leads	Short term (1-2 years)
Consult with ARC EoE PCIEP Coordinating Group and Public Involvement Hub about research inclusion, providing guidance and training to public contributors.	PCIEP Lead	Medium term (2-3 years)

8. Extend research into Public, Community, Involvement, Engagement and Participation

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
In line with our Public, Community, Involvement, Engagement and Participation (PCIEP) Strategy, we will continue to investigate and develop new and inclusive research involvement opportunities through the Inclusive Involvement in Research theme.	Inclusive Involvement in Research for Practice Theme, PCIEP Lead	Short-term (1-2 years)

Monitoring and accountability

The strategy will be reviewed every year by the Management Operations Group. The next review will take place in October 2025.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategies

You can read the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategies of our funder (NIHR), host organisation and partner universities here:

National Institute for Health and Care Research

[National Institute for Health and Care Research \(NIHR\) Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy \(2022-2027\)](#)

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation Trust

[Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation Trust Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2019-2024](#)

University of East Anglia

University of East Anglia [equality, diversity and inclusion policies](#).

University of Cambridge

[A copy of the 2016-2021 strategy is available here.](#) Further information is available on the [University of Cambridge website](#).

University of Hertfordshire

University of Hertfordshire do not have standalone EDI strategy. EDI plans stem from the wider university strategic plan, [available here](#).

University of Essex

[University of Essex Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2019-2025](#)

ARC EoE List of acronyms and definitions

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.
RDN	Research Delivery Network	Building on the success of the NIHR's Clinical Research Network, the RDN will work across the health and care system, with staff in all health and care settings, and distribute funding to support the effective and efficient initiation and delivery of research. The NIHR RDN will operate as 1 organisation across England, through a network of 12 Regional Research Delivery Networks (RRDNs) and a central Coordinating Centre (RDNCC).
HIE	Health Innovation East	Health Innovation East 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.
MHoLC	Mental Health Over the Life Course research theme	This ARC EoE research theme aims to reduce social and health inequalities for people with mental health difficulties, especially in communities with high health needs.
AMM	Ageing and Multi-morbidity Theme	The ARC EoE Ageing and Multi-morbidity theme identifies the best ways to improve how older people and anyone living with multi-morbidity are supported by health and social care and their local communities to stay well and be active members of their communities.
HEP	Health Economics and Prioritisation in Health and Social Care	People need and want more and more from health and social care, while funding is limited. Research in this ARC EoE theme will help health and social care services deliver the greatest benefit possible from public funding.
PEoLC	Palliative and End of Life Care	This ARC EoE research theme investigates regional and national inequalities in palliative and end of life care provision and the needs of an ageing population living with multiple health conditions.

PEDs	Population Evidence and Data Science	In partnership with the other ARC themes, this cross-cutting theme conducts research into how to better use data and increase its value on population health.
PEDHSC	Prevention and Early Detection in Health and Social Care	This theme aims to address health inequalities and to work with local communities and health and social care organisations to develop and evaluate prevention and early detection strategies.
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 and Care 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.
PIFs	Populations in Focus	ARC EoE aims to understand community health research needs locally by working in partnership with communities and organisations who live and work in the Populations in Focus areas; Stevenage, Peterborough, Fenland, Thurrock, Great Yarmouth and Waveney,
RSS	Research Support Service	The NIHR Research Support Service (RSS) provides free and confidential advice to develop funding applications within the remit of the NIHR, including clinical, applied health and social care research, and post-award advice to award holders.
EqIA	Equality Impact Assessments	An equality impact assessment (EIA) is an evidence-based approach designed to help organisations ensure that their policies, practices, events and decision-making processes are fair and do not present barriers to participation or disadvantage any protected groups from participation.
HIAT	Health Inequalities Assessment Toolkit	The HIAT aims to support people to integrate an intersectional equity lens into research, and consider how people with lived experience and policy or practice expertise can help in this process.
EDI	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	Equality is about ensuring everyone has the same opportunities and are not treated differently (discriminated

against) because of their personal characteristics. There are nine 'protected characteristics' under the equality act. Diversity recognises, values and accounts for people's different background, skills and experiences. Inclusion is where differences between people and groups are seen as a benefit, ensuring people feel comfortable to share their experiences and feel valued.

EDI strategies are widely used in our partner organisations reflecting the EDI needs beyond the research environment. The National Health Service is the publicly funded healthcare system in England, and one of the four National Health Service systems in the United Kingdom.

NHS

National Health Service