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As a doctor and researcher, I chair a number of research groups which include patients and members of the public. These PPI members can have a powerful impact on research – chairs play a vital role in enabling them to do this – but we need to know how best to work together effectively. This guidance, which aims to help chairs like me, is most welcome, timely and very useful. I commend it to you.

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This guidance has been written to assist Chairs of research groups that include PPI members. It focuses on the aspects of chairing that PPI members have identified as being important. It does not aim to provide general advice on good chairing. However many of these suggestions are likely to benefit all group members – whatever their background – and will help groups to work together more effectively.

Public Involvement and Patient Experience (PPIE) is a key element of the NHS Five Year Forward View. It is a way of working that involves patients and the public in the design, development, delivery and evaluation of health and social care services. PPIE is a key element of the NHS Five Year Forward View. It is a way of working that involves patients and the public in the design, development, delivery and evaluation of health and social care services. PPIE is a key element of the NHS Five Year Forward View. It is a way of working that involves patients and the public in the design, development, delivery and evaluation of health and social care services.

Key messages

- Make sure you get to know your PPI members
- Make PPI members feel welcomed, included and respected
- Make clear to all research group members that PPI perspectives are valued
- Treat PPI members as equals – equivalent to other members of your group
- Ensure PPI members are given practical support so they can meaningfully and effectively contribute to meetings
- Help other group members understand the benefits of PPI and encourage them to give the PPI perspective due consideration.

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- It is often helpful to plan the seating arrangements so that PPI members are in a position to be noticed by the Chair – make sure they aren't always sat at the far end of the table, nor always right next to the Chair.
- Ensure there is time on the agenda to discuss any PPI items – avoid creating the impression that these are being 'tacked on' as an afterthought at the end of the meeting.
- It is often helpful to have a 'break at any time' policy – this may be important for people who experience fatigue or have problems concentrating.

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- Make sure important contributions made by PPI members are noted and correctly attributed in the minutes.
- Consider asking for feedback on your chairing - check it was effective and that the decisions were clear and acceptable to everyone.
- Try to be available to answer any queries, and provide open lines of communication for people to provide additional thoughts by email or telephone.
- Provide feedback to PPI members as to where their input has been particularly valuable.

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The development of this guidance was recommended following an evaluation of PPI in the UK Clinical Research Collaboration (UKCRC – www.ukcrc.org) in 2009.

The UKCRC, in collaboration with the National Cancer Research Network, commissioned TwoCan Associates (www.twocanassociates.co.uk) to carry out this work. This involved carrying out some background research and asking chairs and PPI members to share their experiences of chairing. An email was sent to a range of organisations, including INVOLVE, The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE), the UK Clinical Research Network and the National Institute for Health Research Central Commissioning Facility. Around 90 people responded. TwoCan ran a workshop with some of the respondents to reflect on the findings. A final draft of the guidance was produced with help of a small group of advisors and sent for comment to everyone who took part in the project.

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We use the term ‘patient and public involvement’ (PPI) to refer to the active involvement of patients and members of the public in research and related activities.

We use the term ‘PPI member’ to refer to patients, carers and members of the public who become members of research groups or committees.

We use the term ‘research group’ to refer to groups or committees at a local, regional, national or international level that provide some form of advice or decision-making about health or social care research.



We would like to thank all the PPI members and chairs who contributed to this project.

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- INVOLVE
- Involving People/Cynnwys Pobl
- James Lind Alliance
- Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency
- National Cancer Research Institute
- National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence
- National Institute for Health Research Central Commissioning Facility
- National Institute for Health Research Clinical Research Network Coordinating Centre
- National Institute for Health Research Evaluation, Trials and Studies Coordinating Centre