Raising the Standards of Public Involvement in Primary Care Research

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Abstract

Introduction

The National Standards for Public Involvement in research have been launched to improve the quality of public involvement. Keele University is a test site for the National Standards. We present some of our approaches and resources to implement them in primary care research.

Methods

In partnership with Keele Research User group (RUG), we used the Standards to audit current processes and co-produce new resources to improve public involvement. Over 12 months, we implemented each of the six Standards across the Research Institute and Clinical Trials Unit.

Results

The audit highlighted areas for improvement in how we deliver public involvement. We have developed new resources and practices for the six Standards, including:

- **Inclusive Opportunities**: A Diversity and Inclusion policy and new recruitment plan to ensure fair opportunities for public involvement
- **Working Together**: Clear role descriptions for all public involvement roles
- **Support and Learning**: Induction sessions for new public contributors and RUG ‘Buddy’ peer-mentoring scheme with more experienced members supporting new members
- **Communications**: a brief guide to encourage clear, two-way communication and feedback with public contributors
- **Impact**: Tips on capturing and evaluating the impact of public involvement
- **Governance**: A Public Involvement and Engagement Strategy, and funding formula to support public involvement budgeting

Discussion

We have used the National Standards to reflect on current practices and develop new resources to improve public involvement in research. They are helping to drive a culture change towards better public involvement. More is to be done to encourage wide spread awareness and adoption of the Standards.

Patient and Public Involvement (PPI)

This is a co-produced project and our Research User Group (RUG) Steering Committee is a co-applicant and partner. The RUG Steering Committee consists of 15 RUG members who work with Keele’s PPIE team to improve quality in public involvement and ensure other RUG members have a
rewarding experience. They have discussed, shaped and developed this project alongside the PPIE team. The RUG Steering Committee have helped audit our practice, co-create new resources and approaches; and provide the internal overview of the project’s progress. Their involvement has helped the PPIE team ensure the successful implementation of the National Standards.