NIHR | School for Primary Care Research

NIHR SCHOOL FOR PRIMARY CARE RESEARCH (SPCR) PUBLIC COLLABORATOR TRAINING BOOKLET

This package has been collaboratively developed **Exeter Collaboration for Academic Primary Care (APEx) Public Collaborator Group** and **SPCR Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement leads**.

LAST UPDATED: FEBRUARY 2026

Share your ideas & get in touch:
If you want to add a training session or resource to the booklet, or have any feedback, please get in touch via spcr@keele.ac.uk

Introduction

Patient and public involvement is about researchers working as equal partners with patients, carers, and members of the public to do research. Many different terms are used to describe people who are involved in research. But the term 'public collaborator' will be used throughout this booklet because it is the preferred term by the APEx Public Collaborator Group who developed this booklet.

The purpose of this *Public Collaborator Training Booklet* is to provide public collaborators with a central place to access and engage with a range of support and learning opportunities to build your skills and confidence for patient and public involvement in research. The booklet will be updated annually to ensure it includes new training as it becomes available.

This package is split into three core topic themes – **Research methods**, **Interpersonal skills**, and **Public Collaborator Roles.** Under each of the core topic themes there are *Explore, Grow,* and *Support* training options:

Explore training includes introductory materials that may be useful to public collaborators who are new to patient and public involvement and would like a little bit more information.

Grow training includes materials that will help public collaborators with experience of patient and public involvement grow new skills that will be useful in future involvement and engagement work.

Support training includes opportunities for public collaborators with experience of patient and public involvement to come together and reflect upon their experiences, learn from one another and take new strategies forward.

Table of Contents

Research Methods and Approaches

As a public collaborator you may work on a range of different research projects, and each may use lots of different methods to investigate the topic. Training available in this core topic will help you to explore the different research methods that are used in health and social care research, grow a new range of research skills to engage in patient and public involvement within a range of projects, support one another to engage in meaningful patient and public involvement in a range of projects and can practice new skills that you have developed.

Explore

Improving Healthcare Through Clinical Research
Find out how medical treatments are discovered, tested and evaluated to improve healthcare for all.

Format: Online course (click here)
Provided by: University of Leeds and National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR)

Public Involvement in Research
On this course you will consider why patients and the public would be involved in research and explore participatory research approaches.

Format: Online course (click here)
Provided by: Imperial College London

Patient and Public Involvement in Research and Co-production
This webinar provides an introduction to PPIE and co-production. It covers who is involved, what it is, why it is important and how it can be done effectively. Also public collaborators share their experiences of their involvement and engagement work to provide a real-world context to the session.

Format: Recorded webinar (click here)
Provided by: NIHR Applied Research Collaboration (ARC) North Thames.

Approaches to Patient and Public Involvement (PPI)

This webinar introduces the NIHRs definition of public involvement, explores the strategic commitments to public partnerships, discusses the expectations of PPI in NIHR and explores the different approaches to public involvement.

Format: Recorded webinar (click here)
Provided by: NIHR

National Standards for Public Involvement

This session explores the UK Standards for Public Involvement in Research and the next steps in their development.

Format: Recorded webinar (click here)
Provided by: NIHR

Patient and Public Involvement Training Focusing on Involvement in Health Data Research

This course focuses on supporting people to increase their knowledge, skills and confidence as a patient and public involvement representative in Health Data Research.

Format: Online course (click here)
Provided by: Crohn's and Colitis UK

Why Experience Matters: Qualitative Research

Explore the methods and tools qualitative researchers use to understand human behaviour and solve social problems.

Format: Online course (click here)
Provided by: Griffith University and Deakin University

Introduction to Research Ethics: Working with People

This session explores conducting ethical research when working with people.

Format: Online course ([click here](#))
Provided by: University of Leeds

Evidence-based Medicine

This course explores what evidence-based medicine is, why it matters and how the evidence and practice are being championed and improved.

Format: Online course ([click here](#))
Provided by: Cochrane Training

Introduction to Systematic Reviews

This course will introduce you to the concept of systematic reviews. It will explore the different kinds of systematic reviews and look and their advantages and limitations. It will look at how systematic reviews are done and what each section of a review looks like.

Format: Online course ([click here](#))
Provided by: Cochrane Training

Grow

People with Lived Experience in Peer Review

Public collaborators have a crucial role in the peer review of research. This course helps people to grow their skills and confidence to review new research studies.

Format: Online course (click here)
Provided by: Can-SOLVE Chronic Kidney Disease Network

Understanding and using Systematic Reviews

This course will support you in developing the ability to find relevant systemic reviews, and understand its results.

Format: Online course (click here)
Provided by: Cochrane Training

Critical Appraisal of Rapid Reviews

This course will explore how to critically appraise rapid reviews, so that you can understand the strengths and weakness of a review.

Format: Online course (click here)
Provided by: Cochrane Training

Navigating Digital Health: A Guide to Data and Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare

This guide will help you to understand more about the use of data, using data in research, the problems and benefits of using data and provide an introduction to artificial intelligence.

Format: Online resource (click here)
Provided by: Imperial College London

Evaluating Impact in PPIE

What are the different approaches that can be used when evaluating public involvement? What resources can we use when planning and evaluating involvement?

This two-hour workshop looks at the issues to consider, defines impact, and how impact can be captured through different tools. We will be looking at four specific tools: PiiAF, PIRIT, the Public Impact Log and the Cube Evaluation Framework.

Format: Recorded webinar (click here)
Provided by: People in Health West of England, the University of Bristol's Centre for Academic Primary Care, and the NIHR's School for Primary Care Research

---

Randomized Controlled Trials

This course will explore how clinical trials can be controlled and randomized, and what is needed to make sure randomized controlled trials are run well.

Format: Online course (click here)
Provided by: Cochrane Training

Interpersonal Skills (Coming Soon)

In your role as a public collaborator, you will be engaging with a wide range of people. Training in this core topic will help you explore different behaviours and strategies to interact effectively with different people. It will help you to grow your ability to engage effectively with a diverse range of people and support you to reflect upon, practice and enhance the different approaches that you use.

Please feel free to reach out to spcr@keele.ac.uk if you have any existing training or resources to be included in this section.

Public Collaborator Roles (Coming Soon)

As a public collaborator, you may have the opportunity to take on a co-applicant role. Training in this core topic will help you explore the public co-applicant role. It will help you grow your confidence and skills in fulfilling the public co-applicant role. It will help you reflect upon and enhance your ability to effectively contribute to research projects as a public co-applicant.

Please feel free to reach out to spcr@keele.ac.uk if you have any existing training or resources to be included in this section.