

Public Involvement Agreement

Introduction

The Health and Care Research Wales Communications, Engagement and Involvement Team provides the research community in Wales with support to enable active public involvement in research.

This document is a guide that explains what the Communications, Engagement and Involvement Team and the members of the Public Involvement Community can expect from each other. It also outlines the benefits for the members.

What you can expect from us:

On registering you will:

- Be given the opportunity to meet the team to learn more about your role as a member of the Public Involvement Community.
- Be provided with suitable training, support and advice. This means we'll make sure you have access to the right kind of training for your role, along with any help or advice you might need to do your role well.

Throughout your involvement journey

- We will develop adverts for involvement opportunities, inviting you to express your interest, these adverts will be posted on [our website](#), shared in [our weekly bulletin](#), emails and, where appropriate, shared via social media.
- We will review and shortlist all expressions of interest for involvement opportunities based on the required experience and knowledge provided in the **"Who can get involved"** section of the opportunity advert. This might mean that we won't be able to put your name forward for all the opportunities you express an interest in. If that happens, we'll let you know.
- For each opportunity, we'll tell you who will pay for your expenses and time, this will either be us or the researcher's organisation. You can find this in the "What reward is offered for taking part?" part of the opportunity. If you're picked, we'll send you a copy of this opportunity. If the opportunity is with us and not the research organisations, then we'll arrange and pay for your travel and overnights stays for the involvement activities, if required. However, you will need to tell us before you take part in the involvement opportunity as we need to approve these costs beforehand. If we can't pay these costs upfront, we'll reimburse you based on our guidelines. These guidelines are called **"Public involvement guidance on payment for expenses and offer of payment for time"** and they apply to everyone who's part of the involvement community. [Please refer to the website for latest documents.](#)
- We can provide vouchers to access the Benefits Advice Service if you are in receipt of benefits. This will help you make an informed choice about accepting an offer of payment for time (or a portion of it) for an involvement opportunity. [Please refer to the website for latest documents.](#)
- We may ask for your feedback on involvement opportunities.

Communication

Throughout your journey we will:

- Provide regular newsletters sharing information on the latest research taking place in Wales, opportunities to become involved and participate in research, along with any events you may be interested in.
- Treat you with respect, courtesy and fairly, regardless of sexual orientation, age, parental or marital status, disability, religion, colour, race, ethnic or national origins, or socio/economic background at all times.
- Comply with all appropriate legislation in respect of information that is communicated verbally, electronically or in writing, always ensuring confidentiality.
- Keep some information about you, but we'll make sure we follow all the rules set out by the UK's data protection laws (GDPR). We'll only ask for information that we really need and that's relevant to your involvement. Your information will be kept safe and secure. Only people who need to see your information will be able to access it. We won't share your details with anyone else unless you give us permission, or if we're legally required to do so.
- Respond to your concerns or complaints as quickly as possible.

What we expect from you

On registering you should:

- Take up the offer of meeting the team to discuss your role in the Public Involvement Community. This will allow us to provide you with any support you may need and give you the opportunity to ask any questions you may have.
- Make the most of opportunities for training, support and guidance offered. We have an online course that can be completed at your own pace which introduces public involvement in Wales.

Throughout your involvement journey:

- Please read the **"what is required section"** of the opportunity and have the correct experience and knowledge to submit an expression of interest. If you have any questions, are unsure if you meet the criteria or need support with this you can contact the team before submitting your expression of interest.
- Submit expressions of interest for involvement opportunities that you are interested in and meet the criteria for.
- Submit 'payment for time' information within an eight-week window.
- Provide details of activities you are contributing to, where we are covering the public involvement costs, so that we can agree any expected expenses prior to the activity, via our pre-approval process. This will include us booking and paying for reasonable travel and accommodation where applicable. As outlined in our guidelines: Public involvement guidance on payment for expenses and offer of payment for time for individuals registered with the involvement community. [Please refer to the website for latest documents.](#)
- Consider speaking with the Benefits Advice Service, if you are in receipt of benefits, when you are offered payment for time for any involvement activities. [Please refer to the website for latest documents.](#)
- Respond to requests for feedback on your involvement opportunities.

Communication

Throughout your journey you should:

- Consider signing up to the weekly newsletter so you can keep up to date on the latest research taking place in Wales and find out about any new opportunities to help with research.
- Always be kind and respectful to the staff of Health and Care Research Wales, members of the Public Involvement Community, and everyone else in the research community. We expect you to treat others fairly, regardless of sexual orientation, age, parental or marital status, disability, religion, colour, race, ethnic or national origins, or socio/economic background.
- Maintain the confidentiality of information received. It must be securely stored at all times and confidentially and securely destroyed when no longer required.
- Be transparent in your dealings with us, including declaration of any conflict of interests including those which may have an impact on the opportunities you are involved in.
- Let us know anything that causes concern for your safety/wellbeing or that of others.

Rights / Entitlements for Public Involvement Community Members

This is entirely voluntary and not a contract of employment. It can be cancelled at any time by us or you.

If you are unhappy with any aspect of your application and/or membership, please get in touch with us as soon as you can. We'll do our best to handle the situation quickly and fairly, and we'll be open and honest with you about what's happening.

You can choose to leave the Public Involvement Community whenever you want. All you need to do is let us know that you've decided to leave, and we'll take care of ending your membership and letting the researchers who you're involved with know.

This is not an employment opportunity, it is a voluntary opportunity and as such you will not be entitled to employment benefits (such as but not limited to sick leave, annual leave, maternity leave).

If you are found to be in breach of any part of this Public Involvement Agreement or act in a manner that is improper or unacceptable, we have a right to remove you from any involvement opportunity and/or the Public Involvement Community with immediate effect.

If issues arise that mean we need to consider removing you from the Public Involvement Community, we will discuss this with you first and try and resolve it. If we cannot do so we may decide to remove you from the Public Involvement Community. We will inform you of this decision by way of a letter which explains the reasons for making this decision and how your removal will take place. Even though there's no option to appeal this decision (since this is a volunteer network and not a job), we're open to having a meeting with you to discuss why we made this choice if you want, but please understand that once we've made our decision, it is final.