



How are people getting involved in research?

People are getting involved and fulfilling crucial roles throughout the whole research process:

- at a policy level through membership of national research boards as well as in developing local strategies for involvement in research
- on commissioning panels for research, working with research funders to decide what research should be chosen and funded
- reviewing research grant applications
- advising, collaborating and leading on individual research projects
- communicating research findings



For further information:

- View our website www.invo.org.uk
- Join our mailing list to receive our newsletter and email alerts
- Find out about research projects with active public involvement through our online database of research projects
- Visit the online invoNET library www.invo.org.uk/invoNET.asp to view references and abstracts on the impact of public involvement in research
- Read our wide range of publications (these can be downloaded from the website or contact us for a free hard copy)
- Visit People in Research to find out which organisations are looking for people to get involved www.peopleinresearch.org

If you have any questions please contact us at:

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Please contact INVOLVE if you, or someone you know, needs this information in a different format.


NHS

**National Institute for
Health Research**

INVOLVE

Supporting public involvement
in NHS, public health and
social care research

This leaflet introduces the work of INVOLVE and how researchers and members of the public are working together in health and social care research.

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INVOLVE works with others towards creating the research community of the future which will be broader, more inclusive and more representative of the population as a whole.

INVOLVE is a national advisory group which supports greater public involvement in NHS, public health and social care research. The advisory group is made up of 30 members including researchers and research managers, representatives from voluntary sector organisations and members of the public e.g. patients, carers and service users. The Group meets four times a year and is supported by a small team based in their office near Southampton. We publicly advertise for new members every two to three years.

INVOLVE is funded by The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). We were established in 1996 and known as Consumers in NHS Research until we changed our name to INVOLVE in 2003 and broadened our remit to include social care and public health research.

“It’s because of INVOLVE that I’ve taken part in a lot of work with research commissioning groups, taken part in research myself and without their support I wouldn’t be doing what I’m doing now.”
(Service user and carer)

“Well it’s helped me because INVOLVE has provided a central expertise and a central resource which I’ve been able to tap into.”
(Researcher)



What does INVOLVE do?

We share knowledge and learning on public involvement in research.

- INVOLVE provides resources for researchers and research commissioners and funders on how to involve members of the public in research
- We publish a Public Information Pack (PIP) to support members of the public who are thinking about getting involved in research
- INVOLVE explains the benefits of public involvement in research by speaking to researchers and research networks, holding workshops and conferences and through its website and publications
- We are working with others to build knowledge and understanding of public involvement in research and facilitate invoNET, a network of people interested in this area www.invo.org.uk/invoNET.asp



What is public involvement in research?

By public involvement in research, we mean the active involvement of people in research processes so that research is carried out **‘with’** or **‘by’** members of the public rather than **‘to’**, **‘about’** or **‘for’** them – for example, being a co-applicant on a research grant or sitting on a research steering committee.



Why is public involvement important?

Members of the public bring perspectives and skills that are not always the same as those of researchers and health and social care professionals. Their involvement helps to ensure that the entire research process is focused on what is important to people and is therefore more relevant and acceptable to the users of services.

Public involvement also enables researchers to communicate better with diverse audiences and creates an environment in which more people are going to want to take part in research.

If research reflects the needs and views of the public, it is more likely to produce results that can be used to improve health and social care services.

“The involvement of service users in the analysis provided a fresh perspective which was quite different to research undertaken with professional researchers taking the lead.”
(Researcher)

“Medical knowledge isn’t the only important knowledge. It’s important to know what it’s like to actually have a condition or to use services and how that impacts on someone’s life, medical knowledge doesn’t tell you that.”
(Service user)