

National Institute of Health Research (NIHR)
Health Services and Delivery Research (HSDR) Evidence Synthesis Centre, Sheffield

Public Involvement Opportunities Information Sheet

About the Evidence Synthesis Centre

The Evidence Synthesis Centre ('the Centre') at the University of Sheffield is funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) to carry out reviews of health and social care services. Review topics cover a wide range of issues important to people's health and wellbeing, and consider how services are organised and delivered across general practice, hospitals, social care, dentists, and pharmacies. The aim of all the reviews we do is to provide information to improve the delivery of health and social care services and to reduce inequalities. The Centre has been funded by NIHR since 2014; our current funding runs from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2024.

How are the review topics identified?

Organisations, like the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), identify topics that need to be reviewed. The reviews will provide evidence to inform decisions they will make about health and social care policies and services. They often need information on these topics urgently. An evidence review is an efficient way to quickly provide answers to their questions.

What is an evidence review?

To conduct an evidence review, the Centre collects, evaluates and summarises the results from existing research on the topic. The Centre involves patients, carers, the public, and people who commission services, to ensure their experiences and views inform the review. They produce a final report which highlights the findings and suggests priorities for the future. Information on previous reviews can be found here <https://scharr.dept.shef.ac.uk/hsdr/projects/>

The report from every topic review will reach decision makers. This is an opportunity to have an impact beyond local level and to help shape information that will be seen by decision makers and policy makers.

Evidence reviews are sometimes called "evidence synthesis" or "systematic reviews". You might find this short film helpful in explaining what is involved in systematic reviews: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-FQsnaAtOU>.

About the Public Involvement Opportunities

We will have two types of public involvement opportunities for Public Advisors:

1. **Public Advisory Group (PAG)** will provide advice to the Centre throughout the current funding contract from 2020 to 31st March 2024.
2. **Topic Experience Groups (TEG)** will provide advice specific to each review topic and will run for the length of each review which can be between three months and a year.

Public Advisory Group (PAG)

Duration: The PAG will run throughout the current Centre contract from 2020 to 31st March 2024.

Membership: It will have between 9 and 15 members. Across all PAG members, the aim is to have a diverse range of backgrounds and experiences of using health and social care as a service-user or carer.

Purpose/Role: The PAG will:

- provide advice and challenge regarding public involvement and engagement across the Centre and topic reviews.
- act as a “bridge” and provide links with wider members of the public, groups and communities, particularly seldom-heard communities and individuals.
- help develop plans for engagement, involvement and recruitment for each Topic Experience Group, and help identify experiences and key information required for TEG members.
- on occasions, contribute to the work of a Topic Experience Group.
- take part in external facing engagement events to raise awareness of the Centre, its research and PPI opportunities.

Meetings: will be approximately every four months and will last for up to two hours. For the foreseeable future, they will be held online with the option to dial in with a telephone. We will support people to take part in the group and support access needs. Face to face meetings might be considered in the future. Contact between meetings can be by telephone, email and/or video calls.

Topic Experience Groups (TEGs)

Background: Each review will be on a specific topic. It is important that people with knowledge and experience of the topic are involved in the review. People's input will help shape the review, the final report, and its distribution to key audiences.

Experiences can be as a patient or carer and from a wider understanding of others' experiences.

Duration: Each TEG will be formed for the duration of the specific review; this may be between three months and a year.

Membership: Each TEG will have between 6 and 12 members who have experience of the review topic. We will take a flexible approach to recruiting people. We may bring together people from different regions, or we may select a group or location that has significant experience of the review topic.

Purpose/Role: Each TEG will:

- help the research team to identify questions to ask that are important to patients.
- contribute knowledge that helps to understand what the findings mean.
- be a "critical friend" by providing constructive challenge.
- give advice on ways to share the findings with key audiences, ensuring a variety of formats and methods are used.
- help to produce materials and ensure information about the findings is written in plain English.

Meetings: We want to involve people from the beginning of each topic review. We don't always get much notice about the topics, however we will work flexibly to provide a range of ways in which people can get involved to ensure involvement in the groups is accessible to a diverse range of people.

What experience do I need?

If you are a member of the public who has had experience of using NHS or Social Care services, and are enthusiastic about improving services, we would love to hear from you.

We are particularly keen for people from diverse backgrounds to join us, and people who can provide links to wider communities and groups who are seldom heard in reviews of health and social care services. Previous experience of public involvement is not necessary.

It is important that you have an interest and willingness to work in partnership with other Public Advisors, researchers and health professionals and are able to see issues from different perspectives and listen to and respect others' viewpoints.

Training and support

We offer support for all Public Advisors. All PAG and TEG members will have an induction which will be held online. If all people attending the induction agree, we might record this for anyone who is unable to attend. We will help people to identify any training needs and ways to meet these.

Payment and expenses

We reimburse Public Contributors for their time at £25 per hour. We cover reasonable expenses; all claims for expenses must be accompanied by original receipts or images of receipts.

Some payments may affect your entitlement to welfare benefits, pension, or your liability for income tax. You are advised to check with the Benefits Agency and/or the Inland Revenue as appropriate.

How do I apply?

We are currently recruiting Public Advisors for the Public Advisory Group (PAG). Further details and an application form can be found on the Centre website:

<https://scharr.dept.shef.ac.uk/hsdr/public-involvement/how-do-i-get-involved/>

Or you can email Liv Newton, Project Administrator, o.m.newton@sheffield.ac.uk.

**Please complete the application form and return to:
Liv Newton, Project Administrator, o.m.newton@sheffield.ac.uk
by the **closing date: 5pm on Friday 16th October 2020****

Along with the application form, there is an Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form. This is a short, **optional** questionnaire; there is no obligation to complete this and it will not affect your application if you choose not to. However, if you do complete it, it will be extremely helpful to us in monitoring the equality and diversity of our recruitment practices.

If you would like to have an informal chat about the roles before applying please email Joyce Fox, Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement Advisor, joyce.fox@sheffield.ac.uk.

We will contact everyone who applies with the outcome of their application.