
INVOLVE

Minutes of the Strategic Alliances Sub-Group Meeting

Wednesday 21 March 2007

Present: Sue Banton, Sarah Buckland, Sofie De Broe, Stuart Eglin (Chair), Marianne Miles, Chris Caswill, Carol Lupton

1. Welcome, apologies, introductions, declarations of conflicts of interest and ground rules

- Apologies were received from Bob Revell and Mark Petticrew
 - There were no conflicts of interest reported
 - The group were reminded of the ground rules for the meeting
-

2. Notes of meeting held on 14th December 2006

- The notes were agreed to be an accurate record of the meeting.
 - Agenda item 5 –Brief update on Operational Plan – a correction was needed: 'Royal College of Physicians' should read 'Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health'.
-

3. Matters arising

The forms to record INVOLVE related activities that Strategic Alliances members have been involved in, will continue to be tested by Group members in the coming months. Group members will feed back and review the received information at the next June meeting.

Action: Support Unit to feed back information received about Group member activities at June meeting.

4. Group member networks

A brief discussion took place about how the information about the Group members' networks was going to be used. It was suggested the information on Group members' networks could be used for the following purposes:

- to identify gaps in the expertise and background of Group members when recruiting new Group members
- as a resource to identify organisations with whom INVOLVE has links and those with whom INVOLVE does not, to identify future useful relationships
- to assist Support Unit staff in identifying useful contacts, when undertaking specific pieces of work

Some suggestions were made about which organisations the Support Unit might seek to develop further links with.

Action: Support Unit to identify from the list of network contacts 5-10 organisations that they are already working with, and 5-10 they thought it would be useful to work with.

Action: Strategic Alliances sub-group to discuss at the next meeting any ongoing work as well as potential future work with the organisations identified.

5. Evaluation of Commissioning Guidelines

Stuart Eglin welcomed the plans for the evaluation and thought they were a useful contribution on how to monitor and evaluate the work of INVOLVE. The question was raised whether a similar approach could be taken to monitor the usage of the Public Information Pack. It is important to reflect on how the information INVOLVE produces is being used.

Action: Strategic Alliances should keep Evidence Knowledge and Learning informed of the evaluation, as this work is linked to building the evidence and dissemination of INVOLVE publications.

Action: Jane Royle to talk to Sue Banton about how the Royal Society of Paediatrics and Child Health are using and adapting the commissioning guidelines.

6. Update on Operational Plan 2006/2007

a) Evaluating guidelines for Public Involvement in Commissioning Research

See agenda point 5 above.

b) INVOLVE conference

An initial meeting of the conference planning group is planned for April.

Action: Marianne Miles volunteered to be part of the conference planning group.

c) Young People's Reference Group (YPRG) on public health research

Sofie De Broe reported that Anita Franklin has left the National Children's Bureau. Anita reported that the funding of INVOLVE had mainly been used to organise the meetings and bring the young people together. These meetings main outcome had been the identification of research topics which were of interest to them. The YPRG continued to struggle with finding further funding to undertake research activities (the funding of the group runs until October 2007).

Marianne Miles suggested the YPRG could link with the Medicines for Children Research Network Consumer Involvement Steering Group which will include the National Children's Bureau and Sue Banton. This may identify ways to take things forward from here.

Action: Support Unit to identify what has been achieved so far with the YPRG and what are the future plans.

Action: Carol to talk informally to Policy Research Programme colleagues about Young People's Reference Group and its links to the Public Health Research Consortium.

Action: Support Unit to discuss with Mark Petticrew the development of public involvement within the Public Health Research Consortium.

d) James Lind Alliance (JLA)

Stuart stressed the amount of progress JLA was making.

Action: Support unit to follow up the planned activities of JLA which could have potential for greater involvement with INVOLVE.

e) Involving service users in research ethics committees

Sarah Buckland reported that the Central Office for Research Ethics Committees was interested in working with INVOLVE in developing guidance for public involvement in research and to do a survey among its lay members.

Carol updated the sub-group that a paper is being written by the Department of Health summarising the situation regarding ethical review and social care.

Action: Support Unit to provide a fuller update on activities regarding ethics and work with COREC (to be called the National Research Ethics Service (NRES) on the 1st of April) at the next meeting.

f) Developing a Discussion Forum

Members of Strategic Alliances agreed that a greater effort should be made to make the Discussion Forum work.

Action: Members of the Strategic Alliances sub-group agreed to encourage use of the Discussion Forum by adding contributions.

7. Draft operational plan 2007/2008 (annex E)

The following activities were agreed.

- a) INVOLVE conference 2008
- b) Disseminating and evaluating commissioning guidelines for public involvement in commissioning research
- c) Involving service users in the National Research Ethics Service
- d) Communications
- e) Social Care
- f) James Lind Alliance

There was some further discussion about two of the items. Item d) increasing awareness around public involvement and item e) social care workshop.

d) Communications

Strategic Alliances wishes to increase awareness about public involvement in research. This could include releasing small notices in the press and wider media. A different approach in order to achieve this was to consider INVOLVE awards, or the establishment of beacons for individuals and organisations that make a special effort towards public involvement in research.

The budget for the year 2007/08 operational plan should be able to include writing of articles. The question was raised whether this could be part of a bigger project and strategy in terms of resources and national coverage.

e) Social care

Chris Caswill reported that he had approached David Guy to discuss the possibility of a joint workshop with the Economic and Social Research Council. Both agreed there should be mutual benefit in a closer working association for both INVOLVE and ESRC. ESRC has an interest in health research and in improved relations between researchers and stakeholders. The ways in which co-operation could be developed was discussed and it was agreed that specific practical joint activities would probably be the best route. David Guy had offered £20,000 for four joint ESRC/ INVOLVE workshops,

with the expectation that INVOLVE would take on the organisation and administrative support of the workshops. The suggestion was that each of the workshops would focus researcher and stakeholder interactions with respect to a health theme or set of medical conditions. These workshops would be jointly badged as ESRC / INVOLVE activities.

There was a positive response from the members of Strategic Alliances to working with the ESRC. However it was agreed that further discussions were needed to discuss the content, timing and number of workshops to be planned. There was also some discussion around how best INVOLVE could help to support and encourage public involvement within the ESRC and amongst researchers funded by the ESRC.

Action: Support Unit to arrange a meeting with David Guy and others from the Economic and Social Research Council to discuss workshop plans. The meeting to include Chris Caswill, Stuart Emlin and Carol Lupton as well as staff from the Support Unit.

8. Draft Strategic Plan 2007/2011

Stuart Emlin suggested keeping the discussion of the Strategic Plan for the main Group meeting.

9. Budget

Action: Carol Lupton to discuss with Sarah Buckland a query about the INVOLVE budget.

10. Any other business

There was no other business.
