

INVOLVE

Minutes of the Strategic Alliances Working Group Meeting

Tuesday 13 December 2007

Present: Richard Baker, Angela Barnard, Chris Caswill, Simon Denegri, Stuart Eglin (Chair), Carol Lupton, Poonam Jain, Marianne Miles, Mark Petticrew, Jane Royle and Maryrose Tarpey.

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

- Apologies were received from Sue Banton, Mark Petticrew and Laura Serrant-Green
 - There were no conflicts of interest reported.
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2. Notes of meeting held on 09 October 2007

- **Corrections to the minutes of 09 October 2007**

To add in additional sentence under Agenda Item 7 Operational Plan 2007 / 2008 m) social care workshop): 'Chris Caswill was concerned that the delays by INVOLVE in following up the approach made by David Guy Head of Knowledge Transfer at the ESRC have impeded the development of proposed ESRC/ INVOLVE joint workshops for 2007/2008'.

- With this amendment the minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.
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3. Matters arising

Group members activity form:

This was a form devised by Strategic Alliances to collect information from all Group members on their activities for INVOLVE, or where they referred to the work of INVOLVE. The most recent form was sent out at the end of November

2007 covering the period June to November. Amendments to the form suggested were:

- Editing the form to include Group observers as well as members.
- Giving the form a title that clearly distinguishes it from the Strategic Alliances group networks grid.

Action: The Support Unit to insert above amendments to the form for future use. The next form will be sent out to Group members and observers at the end of May 2008.

The next meeting will receive information on returns covering June - November 2007.

Young Peoples Public Health Reference Group (YPPHRG)

The YPPHRG have been told they have been successful in their bid to the Wellcome Trust subject to amendments which are under negotiation. This will provide an opportunity to expand and extend the work of the YPPHRG.

A members only section of the INVOLVE website

At the last meeting both Empowerment and Strategic Alliances working groups suggested that it might be helpful to have a private forum where they can discuss issues within the working group and view the discussion points raised. This is now up and running within the existing INVOLVE discussion forum. The Support Unit is also looking into the possibility of providing a shared area on the website where current INVOLVE draft documents can be stored and accessed by members.

Action: Maryrose Tarpey to email Strategic Alliance members with a reminder on how to join the discussion forum. Members to feedback at the next meeting.

4. Communication Strategy - annex C

Simon Denegri provided an update on the appointment of Dovetail Management Consultancy to develop INVOLVE's Communication Strategy. Penny Cole from Dovetail will be attending the main Group meeting to discuss their proposal and to seek the views of members.

Strategic Alliance members discussed specific queries they wanted to raise with Penny in the afternoon discussion.

In relation to Phase 1 of the work:

- make sure Dovetail were aware of the importance of INVOLVE's website as a communications tool;

- query the proposed method of consulting with the research community. Suggest use of focus group(s) rather than a very small number of individual interviews

In 2.2 Phase 2 of the work brief:

- members suggest the focus should be on the overall image of INVOLVE and the various strands of INVOLVE's work rather than on the particular work of specific individuals within INVOLVE.

Dovetail are due to submit their report and recommendations on Phase 1 of the work by end of January 2008. An update of this work will be provided at the next meeting.

5. Developing plans for working with the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)

Stuart Eglin provided an update on establishing working links within the ESRC. General developments include plans to:

- hold a joint one-day social research seminar with the ESRC National Centre for Research Methods (NCRM) now scheduled for September 2008.
- INVOLVE will be contributing to three sessions during the ESRC Research Methods Festival in July 2008. Two organised by Peter Beresford and Kathy Boxall on the impact of and how to do active public involvement in social care research; and the third organised by Melanie Knetch (ESRC Communications and Information Directorate), will focus on public engagement. INVOLVE will also have a stand throughout the event.

Ongoing work to build working links with David Guy, Head of Knowledge Transfer ESRC:

In December 2007 the Support Unit wrote to David Guy at the ESRC to continue discussions about future joint working. Possible practical activities were suggested for his consideration:

- i) the idea of taking the work in social research beyond the NCRM / INVOLVE seminar by setting up a Knowledge Transfer partnership linking in with Southampton University where the NCRM is based and David Guy ESRC; and
- ii) The possibility of running a workshop of mutual interest at the INVOLVE National Conference on 11th - 12th November 2008 in Nottingham

Following this update working group members discussed how to carry forward the proposed partnership with Knowledge Transfer, ESRC and reiterated

INVOLVE's commitment to building partnership working with the ESRC. This is seen as a priority for 2008/2009. In the short term members cautioned against timetabling joint workshops until better thought through in terms of their purpose.

The following actions were agreed:

Action:

- **Stuart Eglin to write to David Guy and request an increased dialogue between INVOLVE and the ESRC with the aim of developing a joint statement of what the alliance would hope to achieve, and to agree working arrangements. To suggest this could best be achieved through a series of planned joint meetings. An exploratory meeting to agree the parameters of this arrangement would be proposed in the letter**
- **Formation of a sub-group of six Strategic Alliance members to take forward the dialogue on INVOLVE's behalf. These are Richard Baker, Angela Barnard, Chris Caswill, Simon Denegri, Poonam Jain and Stuart Eglin.**
- **Maryrose Tarpey to arrange a teleconference for this sub-group to discuss format of meetings once we have heard back from David Guy and prior to the first joint meeting.**
- **David Guy would be asked to suggest ESRC colleagues who would also be invited to participate in this proposed series of meetings.**

Chris Caswill was concerned that this suggestion (of routine meetings) may not be well received by David Guy who prefers action rather than meetings and is keen to pin INVOLVE down to agreed activities. David's interest is in knowledge transfer and the public engagement process. There needs to be tangible actions, for example, he may be interested in funding a research project exploring impact of public involvement.

Progress on this will be discussed at the next meeting.

6. INVOLVE Group networks

- **developing the grid**

This is an on-going piece of work for Strategic Alliances aiming to record INVOLVE's level of contact with key relevant organisations. It is envisaged that by using a summary table to refer to INVOLVE's networks, the working group can consider whether and how to increase or decrease the level of activity with different organisations as well as highlight gaps. At the October 2007 meeting Angela Barnard and Simon Denegri volunteered to rework the table to take account of members' suggestions. Copies of Angela's amended draft with a covering note were tabled at this meeting. Her revised version of the table included two additional categories:

- i) priority status (ie: low, medium or high) – definitions included in the table; and
- ii) action and by whom

Action: Maryrose Tarpey to circulate to all members Angela’s suggested amendments to the table for further comment. As agreed at the previous meeting the table will be a regular agenda item at future working group meetings, so that each of the categories are regularly reviewed and updated.

• **Public involvement and the NIHR - Annex I**

Jane Royle produced this paper summarising public involvement within the National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) and Policy Research Programmes (PRP) and highlighting recent involvement of the Support Unit with the programmes. This paper was highly commended by members as being very informative and strategically very useful as a document. It requires further work to develop and validate the entries before being more widely circulated. It was suggested that it could be updated on an annual basis.

Action: Follow up work on this paper including validation of the entries and additional information required on some of the organisations will be picked up by the Support Unit.

Carol Lupton to provide information on PRP.

7. Budget – annex D

There were no questions about the budget.

8. Operational Plan 2007 – 2008

Please note that the letters refer to those used in the Operational Plan.

i) INVOLVE conference

Kate Sainsbury will be providing an update on the conference at the main Group meeting this afternoon.

j) Feedback on commissioning guidelines

Jane Royle reported that to date there have been between 700 and 1,300 downloads from the website of each of the seven commissioning guidelines. The most popular downloads have been: the Guidelines for commissioners on public involvement in peer reviewing (1,331); Guidelines for members of the public in

getting involved in grant applications (1,044); and Guidelines for researchers on public involvement in grant applications (1,011). Hard copies of the latter document have been most popular at our INVOLVE stands.

In addition, the Policy Research Programme has adapted: 'Being a member of a Commissioning Board' for their public members on committees, and the Programme Grants for Applied Research have adapted 'Peer review guidelines for members of the public' for their programme. The Service Delivery and Organisation programme has adapted the guidelines for both commissioning board and peer review for public members on their commissioning groups.

k) Involving service users in the National Research Ethics Service (NRES)

In October the INVOLVE Support Unit and the NHS R&D Forum ran two pilot training sessions on active public involvement in research for Research Ethics Committee (REC) members. The INVOLVE Support Unit also contributed to the NRES service user and carer advisory group and are currently continuing discussions on undertaking a survey of lay members of RECs, as well as producing a joint statement for when ethical approval is needed for active public involvement in research.

Carol Lupton confirmed that approval had been given to establishing a dedicated social care REC nested in NRES.

l) Communications Strategy

This was covered in agenda item 4.

m) Social Care (workshop and examples)

Social care examples:

The project brief to identify examples of public involvement in social care research was widely circulated and resulted in 15 applications. An advisory group drawn from Strategic Alliances and Empowerment working group members have already shortlisted and will interview selected applicants on 20th December 2007. Members of the advisory group are: Poonam Jain, Laura Serrant-Green, Stuart Eglin, Patsy Staddon, Sarah Carr and Mary Nettle.

Work is due to start in February and finish end of May 2008 (see also Item 9 Operational Plan 2008 / 2009)

Social care workshop:

The joint one-day social research seminar with the ESRC National Centre for Research Methods (NCRM) is scheduled for September 2008

Action: Poonam Jain and Carol Lupton to be sent information on the planning and programming of this event.

n) James Lind Alliance (JLA)

INVOLVE continues to be a member of both the JLA steering group and monitoring group. We are involved in a joint piece of work collecting information from research funders on how they involve the public in setting the research agenda and commissioning research. We will be attending a special JLA Strategy and Development meeting on Monday 17th December to consider their core objectives for the next three years (2008 – 2010).

9. Operational Plan 2008 / 2009

It was noted that Strategic Alliances's budget is already largely committed for 2008 – 2009. This includes:

- the INVOLVE conference
- Social Care Examples: May want to consider the possibility of commissioning a follow-up to the initial work due to report end of May 2008. Further work could look at a smaller number of examples of good practice in-depth
- Social Care Workshop: rescheduled for September 2008. Venue and catering covered in 2007/2008 budget. 2008/9 budget should allow for additional running costs and production of a conference report.

Other activities with no budget allocated include:

- Commissioning: developing the work on public involvement and research commissioning – ongoing
 - James Lind Alliance – ongoing
 - Communications strategy – follow up work
 - ESRC development work – ongoing
 - Involving service users in research ethics review service – ongoing
 - Research Design Service – INVOLVE may also need to consider applying to DH for additional resources to support this work
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10. Any other business

- Research Design Service (RDS)
Stuart Eglin provided a brief update on the RDS which will be superceding the current Research and Development Support Units (RDSUs) in October 2008, except in the East Midlands and North West Strategic Health Authority areas where current RDSU services will continue to 31 March 2010. At our awayday in October 2007 RDSs were identified as potentially one of the ways INVOLVE

could support the development of 'hubs' for public involvement in research around the country.

Since the awayday a statement about the importance of a commitment to work with INVOLVE supporting public involvement in research was included in the tender document for RDSs (this had been drafted at the awayday and followed up by Kay Pattison at the Department of Health); and Roger Steel from the Support Unit attended the briefing day for all those interested in applying to be an RDS.

- UK Clinical Research Collaboration (UKCRC) Patient and Public Involvement Strategy
Simon Denegri explained that this strategy was in draft form and in January 2008 will be circulated more widely for consultation.
 - Launch of the Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC) 'natural ground' project
Simon also explained that the AMRC are facilitating 12 of their member organisations to work together to develop and share their policies of public involvement within their individual organisations.
 - Angela Barnard reported contact with someone who runs a PR and Communications practice. He was interested to hear about INVOLVE's work and our need for a long term communications strategy. He was also interested in the prospect of encouraging some of his pharmaceutical clients to adopt patient and public involvement in their research. Angela agreed a date to meet in early January 2008.
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