

Welcome to the Autumn 2014 Newsletter

Welcome

From Una Rennard, Chair of INVOLVE 2014 Conference Planning Group



On behalf of the INVOLVE 2014 Conference Planning Group I'd like to welcome you to this year's conference edition of our newsletter. This newsletter gives you just a taster of the exciting couple of days we have planned at the National Exhibition Centre (NEC) in Birmingham.

This year's conference "Changing Landscapes" is bigger than ever. In an effort to meet the growing demand for places we have moved to the NEC for this year's event. We hope this conference will give people an opportunity to reflect on and explore the changes that are going on in and around public involvement.

As in previous years we have received an unprecedented number

of applications to present a huge range of topics in several different ways. As a result we have a packed schedule with lots of variety.

We have also been overwhelmed by the quality and quantity of poster submissions and have tried to ensure a number of opportunities over the two days to view and discuss the posters with presenters. We have also taken the opportunity this year to promote the use of plain English by running a poster competition that will present awards for posters that are clear and easy to understand for a wide audience.

In this newsletter we have four fascinating articles from projects that will be presenting at the conference. We chose these projects as they reflect the scope of the conference and the diversity of the changes we need to embrace and make:

- How listening to patients and responding to their concerns can lead to embracing patient involvement throughout an organisation
- The importance of understanding the characteristics of seldom heard patient groups in order to be able to really involve them in research.
- An innovative and exciting patient led social media activity to connect patients with a rare condition that enabled them to be part of the research agenda both in the UK and the US.
- A thought provoking discussion about putting patients at the heart of the research agenda.

We hope that these and other projects presenting at the conference will lead to stimulating debate and discussion over the two days.

I am also pleased to let you know there will be two pre-conference sessions. These sessions will start at 11.00 am on the first day and will run for up to an hour:

- **Practical guide to the INVOLVE conference** – for anyone new to the INVOLVE biennial conference or to conferences in general, or who wants to come along and ask questions about the two days.
- **International forum** – for anyone interested in sharing perspectives on involvement and working internationally.

If you are new to the INVOLVE conference you can find our conference guide on our website (www.involve.nihr.ac.uk/involve2014). It covers a wide range of issues including tips and information on what to expect. An accessibility report is available on the conference website, with advice on getting to and around the NEC, and the facilities available there www.profbriefings.co.uk/involve2014/involve14accessibility.html

To keep up to date on all the latest conference news visit our website (www.involve.nihr.ac.uk/involve2014) or follow us on twitter [@NIHRINVOLVE](https://twitter.com/NIHRINVOLVE)