

Examples of public involvement in the Research Design Service (RDS)

Public involvement in the management of the Research Design Service

Purpose of public involvement in the management of the Research Design Service (RDS)

In some regions, the RDS is involving patients and the public in the workings of the RDS. In some cases this is about public scrutiny of the work the RDS does, in others it is about ensuring public contributions to the public involvement work programme.

How is it done?

West Midlands RDS (www.rds-wm.nihr.ac.uk/web/quest/home) has recruited two public members to the RDS Advisory Board and see this role as being an external 'critical friend' to the RDS. These public members were appointed on the basis of their experience of public involvement in research and their strategic links to relevant regional, national and European networks. Patient and public members are part of the RDS Yorkshire and Humber Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) Forum (www.rds-yh.nihr.ac.uk/ppi-forum.aspx). This multi-perspective group aims to ensure there is public involvement in the development and delivery of all the RDS core public involvement activities and has a role to monitor progress.

Patient and public members are also part of the RDS South Central (www.rds-sc.nihr.ac.uk/) PPI Working Group. Also a multi-perspective group, it was set up to promote, encourage and support the active involvement and participation of patients and the public in health research in the South Central region. It is co-chaired by a staff member from the RDS and a public member of the group, and at least two public members are required to make the group 'quorate'.

What are the benefits of public involvement in the management of the RDS?

Areas of work that patients and public members have been directly involved with include:

- planning and delivery of key local events such as the development day on public involvement for RDS staff and regional networking events
- supporting the development of an induction pack for new members of the group
- contributing to the RDS more generally by giving views on key documents, such as annual reports and to key meetings such as operational management team

- contributing to the recruitment of the relevant staff, for example the Public and Patient Involvement Officer
- supporting relations and understanding between other local research and NHS Trust organisations by crossover of the public members.

This example has been produced by INVOLVE (www.invo.org.uk) working with members of the Research Design Service Involvement Forum. This Forum is facilitated by INVOLVE and brings together the patient and public involvement leads of National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Research Design Services. The Forum aims to support their work in advising on public involvement in research design and to share knowledge, resources and good practice.

For more information about public involvement in the Research Design Services see www.invo.org.uk/find-out-more/information-for-researchers/research-design-services-information