

# Patient and Public Involvement in a Biomedical Research Centre (BRC): How patients and the public can provide leadership



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Health Research

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## What is the BRC?

**NIHR Biomedical Research Centres** are partnerships between hospital trusts and universities.

They conduct **translational research** that seeks to transform scientific breakthroughs into life-saving treatments for patients.

The NIHR BRC at Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust and King's College London has developed a five year **Public Engagement strategy** to ensure that local people are fully engaged with our vision and our work.



Patients reading research information leaflets

## Engagement Strategy

**Our Public Engagement Strategy has 3 work streams:**

### 1) Patient and Public Involvement (PPI)

- involvement at all stages of the research process

### 2) Public Engagement in Science

- a two way process of communicating our research and gathering feedback from members of the public

### 3) Recruitment

- how can we improve patient recruitment to BRC research?

Our strategy also promotes the idea that patients and public should have greater leadership in BRC engagement work.

To this end we established in 2012 the BRC's **Patient and Public Involvement Advisory Group (PPIAG)** to provide strategic leadership and oversight.

Membership of the PPIAG is open to patients, carers and other local people who have taken part in research and have previous experience of advising on research projects.

Support is provided by BRC core staff.

## Key examples of PPIAG leadership

**The PPIAG meets every 6 weeks to:**

- Review BRC public engagement activity
- Help shape our future research activities.

**PPIAG members also attend other BRC management groups to provide patient/public perspective on their activity.**

## PPI training for patients

**Lay people with experience of PPI** have been trained and supported to train BRC researchers in concepts and methods of PPI in research.

Evaluation of training provided has been extremely positive.

## Networking with other Biomedical Research Centres

The PPIAG promoted the need for lay people involved in all BRCs to network and share experiences.

This led to our BRC organising the first national BRC PPI Networking event, held at Guy's Hospital on the 24<sup>th</sup> March 2014.

## Research Participant Evaluation Tool

PPIAG members **supported and collaborated** on the development of a tool to **assess patient experience** of taking part in clinical research in our BRC.

Information collected by this questionnaire tells researchers what participants think about being part of their research.

**The results will be used to ensure continuous improvements in research participant experience.**



Our Patient Advisory Group at Kings and Guys and St Thomas hospital

## Research statement in Trust communications

**The PPIAG have supported and driven forward a strategy** to ensure that a statement about the Trust's research activities is included in all outpatient letters.

Making this change has required not only finding the right formula of words but also looking at how to **bring about the organisational changes** needed to make this happen.

**To see the full range of Public Engagement activities at our biomedical research centre, please visit our website:**

<http://www.guysandstthomasbrc.nihr.ac.uk/getinvolved>

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