

Mission statement

Our mission is for involvement to support and guide the work of the Mental Health and Technology theme (MH&T) of the NIHR Biomedical Research Centre (BRC) and the NIHR MindTech Healthcare Technology Co-operative (MindTech), so ensuring that patient and public involvement is embedded and fully considered in all aspects and at all stages of the research.

We will do this by:

- Further developing and expanding the existing MindTech Involvement Team to encompass the work of both MindTech and the MH&T of the BRC.
- Introducing co-leadership with an Involvement (lived experience) Co-lead and a Researcher Co-Lead.
- Having a multi-level approach to involvement

Through these developments, we intend to produce a world class involvement process that we will be eager to share with other organisations.

Proposed Involvement team structure

MindTech has an active, experienced and passionate team of involvement volunteers who contribute to a range of research activities at various levels including strategic, operational and individual project levels and participate in internal and external events. It is proposed to expand the remit of this team to incorporate the MH&T BRC involvement function.

We recognise that involvement of people with lived experience of mental health problems is essential, crucial and key to our work. We also recognise that individuals with a range of public perspectives are also valuable since these bring a variety of outlooks and skills. These individuals could be family members, carers, friends or individuals with experience of involvement in other areas.

The leadership of the group will be co-produced. Lead by an Involvement (Lived Experience) Co-lead (to be appointed) (0.4FTE), and a Researcher Co-lead (Dr Sue Brown) (0.4FTE).

Academic support will be via the BRC MH&T Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) Academic Lead (Prof Mike Slade) who will attend BRC MH&T involvement meetings in an advisory role, and will provide strategic support.

We will adopt a multi-level approach to involvement. That is, we will involve team members at all levels and stages of projects and involve them in tasks according to their individual skills and interests.

So,

- At the strategic level, there will be 2 PPI Members (Involvement Co-lead plus one other) at all steering, strategy and operational group meetings.
- At theme level there will be at least one involvement team member attached to each theme; this may vary with the BRC, as a developing structure.

- There will be involvement team members at individual project level as part of the project teams.
- There will also be PPI involvement in Dissemination, Participation and Engagement. These have a wider remit and will be considered elsewhere.

All of the above will require an increase in the size of the involvement group. This offers an opportunity to increase the diversity of the group (e.g. in terms of age, disability, ethnic origins and gender) and to offer a pathway for individual development through sharing information, training and peer mentoring, where more experienced volunteers can mentor less experienced colleagues.

Engagement and Participation

Engagement and participation are the responsibility of everyone and this includes the involvement team.

Engagement

We expect to see the Involvement Team included in all aspects of engagement, from design of activities to delivery. Opportunities should exist to be involved in written communications, presentations and conferences etc.

Participation

Advice about participation is likely to be given at project level by someone attached to the study, and there is the option of approaching the wider involvement team on specific issues.

Resources

We will allocate 2% of our budget to Involvement activities (excluding staff costs).

Staff costs

Leadership will be jointly with Lived Experience Co-lead (0.4FTE) and a Researcher Co-lead (Dr Sue Brown) (0.4FTE) (both funded 50% by MH&T BRC and 50% by MindTech).

Administrative support will be provided for tasks including meeting organisation, minutes, PPI impact assessment etc.

Involvement team member costs

In recognition of the importance of PPI, team members will be offered a fee for their time according to agreed rates (to be determined). There may be different rates depending on the type of activity (e.g. strategic or operational) but at present we apply one rate for all activity.

No team member should be out of pocket due to participating in involvement work; all reasonable travel expenses will be met according to agreed scales.

Other costs

Other costs will include meetings, catering, events, training and other support costs.

Training and development

We recognise the importance of training and development for people to be involved at different levels. We offer individuals the opportunity to develop their interests and skills, and support them on that journey.

Service user research

The involvement team is committed to developing service user research and will establish a plan to do so, including consultation with relevant people internal to the Institute of Mental Health and externally.

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the PPI strategy

A system of monitoring will be put in place to determine the effectiveness of the PPI strategy.

Financial: Performance against financial budget will be monitored and reported on a quarterly basis.

Key milestones will be agreed, and progress against these will be monitored and reported. These will include:

- Milestones relating to the development of the involvement structure and agreed activities.
- Record of attendance by Involvement team members at organisation-level meetings.
- Recommendations made by involvement team members will be formally logged and when complete the impact of the proposal will be assessed and recorded.
- Training provision and uptake (internal and external).
- Growth of the involvement Team in terms of numbers and diversity.