

Health Determinants Research Collaboration Southampton

Public Involvement and Community Engagement Plan



Better evidence, better decisions.

Introduction

The conditions in which we live, work and learn significantly impact our health and wellbeing. These social, economic, and environmental factors are known as the 'building blocks of good health'. Council services such as education, housing, social care, employment, transport, and access to green spaces, impact these.

Southampton City Council has received funding to establish a [Health Determinants Research Collaboration \(HDRC\)](#). HDRC Southampton aims to foster a culture of 'better evidence for better decisions' around the building blocks of health, with the goal of improving health and reducing inequalities.

A key principle of HDRC Southampton is to work with members of the public and local communities to ensure that we understand and address the issues that are their priority, and that the work is shaped with and by them. This Public Involvement and Community Engagement (PICE) plan sets out the main aims and objectives for PICE, provides an overview of our activities, and explains how we will measure our progress.

We use the INVOLVE definition (www.invo.org.uk), which describes public involvement in research as 'research conducted with or by members of the public, rather than to, about, or for them'. The INVOLVE definition distinguishes between the following activities:

Involvement – members of the public are actively involved in research projects and organisations.

Participation – people take part in a research study.

Engagement – information and knowledge about research are provided and disseminated.

HDRC Southampton intentionally uses the term 'public involvement and community engagement' instead of 'patient and public involvement' to better describe the people, communities and organisations we work with.

Our Approach for Public Involvement and Community Engagement

Our PICE plan is based on the [UK Standards for Public Involvement](#) (see below). These standards will serve as the foundation for HDRC Southampton's PICE approach. We will review our PICE plan annually and report to our funders, the National Institute of Health and Care Research (NIHR), to ensure our work continues to align with the UK Standards for Public Involvement.



The Process of Developing our PICE Plan

Our PICE plan is based on established public involvement and engagement models, including local practice such as the [Southampton Youth Voice](#) and [Raising Voices in Research Local Plan](#). It has been co-created with the Black and Asian community from St Deny's Activity Centre and our HDRC Southampton PICE Group.

Our PICE Group guides our PICE activities, helping us reach and engage the public, especially those that are seldom heard, in the work of the HDRC Southampton. The group includes public contributors, colleagues from Southampton City Council Stronger Communities and Resident Services Teams, as well as representatives from Southampton Voluntary Services, Monty's Community Hub, Abri, Saints Foundation, University Hospital Southampton and Solent University. They bring invaluable lived experience, local knowledge, and diverse perspectives, and are trusted members of their communities.



Aim

To embed PICE into every aspect of HDRC Southampton's planning, development and delivery.

Objectives

- To advance meaningful PICE, giving everyone the opportunity to influence what research is undertaken and get involved in that research.
- To build on methods of engagement to hear and action the voice of children and young people.
- To refine Southampton City Council's Equality and Safety Impact Assessment to help place equality, diversity, cohesion and integration at the heart of all we do.
- To monitor and evaluate the impact of HDRC Southampton, sharing findings and acting on them in partnership with our communities, to ensure our approaches are relevant and meaningful.
- To illustrate the impact of the work of HDRC Southampton and how it is making a difference to people's lives and communities.



Ethical Considerations

When engaging and involving members of the public and communities in the work of HDRC Southampton, including research design and delivery, we will adhere to ethical guidelines and address any potential ethical concerns by:

1. Allocating sufficient time and funding for public involvement
2. Avoiding tokenism
3. Registering the public involvement activities conducted during the research design stage with the NIHR Research Support Service Specialist Centre for Public Health
4. Communicating clearly from the outset
5. Public contributors have the right to stop taking part at any time, without having to give a reason.
6. Operating fairness of opportunity
7. Differentiating qualitative research methods and public involvement activities
8. Working sensitively
9. Being conscious of confidentiality
10. Valuing, acknowledging, and rewarding public involvement.

These ethical considerations are adapted from Panday-Wood et al., 2017; and Southampton's [Raising Voices in Research Local Plan](#).

For guidance on ethical considerations when engaging with the public and communities, please contact the Research Governance Officer at hdrc@southampton.gov.uk



Training for meaningful public involvement

We recognise the importance of training and capacity building to support members of our local communities to meaningfully participate in PICE activities. To support this, we will encourage the use of existing local and regional resources to provide public contributors with necessary training, and we have budgeted for this and for related expenses.

Payment and Recognition

HDRC Southampton recognises the importance of compensating public involvement. Our Payment for Participation Policy follows the [NIHR payment guidance for public members](#), detailing the rates, conditions and processes for public contributor payments and expenses.

Demonstrating Impact

We have created an evaluation framework to assess our public involvement approaches, identify what works well, and where improvements can be made. We are using the Public Involvement in Research Impact Toolkit (PIRIT) (Newman et al 2023) to track public contributions and demonstrate their impact against the UK Standards for Public Involvement.

Communication and Dissemination

We will form a communications and dissemination working group with public contributors to co-develop our plan. This plan will include an online presence featuring case studies, blogs, and information about HDRC Southampton's work, helping visitors to the website find areas of interest and ways to get involved. We will use various communication channels to promote our work, celebrate achievements, and share learning with the public and communities.

Children and Young People

In response to the [Southampton Youth Voice Report](#), we will incorporate its recommendations to actively engage children and young people in our initiatives. We intend to collaborate with existing partners who have experience of working with children and young people to minimise duplication and avoid consultation fatigue. HDRC Southampton will coordinate with the framework established by Southampton City Council to facilitate a cohesive and integrated approach to youth involvement.

Standard 1

Inclusive Opportunities



What the standard says

Offer public involvement opportunities that are accessible and that reach people and groups according to research needs.

Research to be informed by a diversity of public experience and insight, so that it leads to services which reflect these needs.



How we will achieve this

We will listen to voices that reflect the diversity of our local population, ensuring under-represented groups have a voice.

- Work with community representatives, Southampton City Council Stronger Communities Team, Southampton Voluntary Services, Solent University, and University of Southampton to identify and facilitate engagement with under-represented and under-served communities.
- Provide opportunities for research priority setting by the public and communities through participation in appropriate engagement events and activities (e.g. world cafes).
- Create inclusive opportunities that promote and support the participation of individuals and communities from diverse geographical areas, cultural backgrounds, and nationalities. These opportunities should aim to co-produce research and make applications for research funding to do that research through communities of practice.
- Regularly share opportunities for public involvement in HDRC Southampton through community leaders and trusted individuals within communities.
- Go to where our communities are for inclusive involvement. For example, attend existing public engagement events, places of worship, community venues and youth clubs.
- Monitor inclusivity using a refined Southampton City Council Equality, Safety, Impact Assessment.



Standard 2

Working Together



What the standard says

Work together in a way that values all contributions, and that builds and sustains mutually respectful and productive relationships.

We deliver better research when we work together on a common purpose. Different perspectives are respected and embraced through clearly defined roles and responsibilities.



How we will achieve this

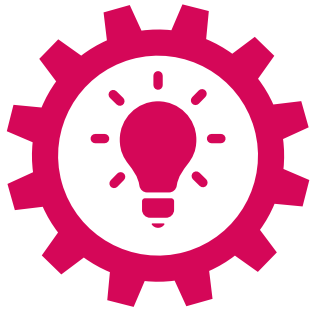
We will have a culture that respects different perspectives, values contributions, and supports mutually respectful and productive relationships.

- Establish a Public Involvement and Community Engagement (PICE) Group to inform and manage PICE activities.
- Collaborate with the PICE Group, public contributors and communities to create a PICE plan for effective public involvement in the work of HDRC Southampton.
- Clearly define and communicate the goals of HDRC Southampton by collaborating with public contributors.
- Include two-way feedback into all public involvement activities. This allows public contributors to share their experiences with the HDRC staff and for staff to provide feedback on the impact of their involvement.
- Allow flexibility in the way that people choose to engage individually or collectively.
- Seek funding to train community peer researchers, including both young people and adults.
- Facilitate workshops to address both actual and perceived power imbalances.



Standard 3

Support and Learning



What the standard says

Offer and promote support and learning opportunities that build confidence and skills for public involvement in research.

Remove practical and social barriers that stop members of the public from making the most of public involvement in research.



How we will achieve this

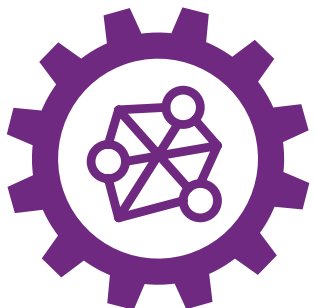
We will provide support and learning opportunities to enable inclusive public involvement and engagement.

- Offer face-to-face or online introductory sessions to help public contributors understand HDRC Southampton goals.
- Provide support and guidance for reviewing and giving feedback on documents as part of their involvement in the HDRC.
- Offer opportunities for public contributors to discuss their support and development needs related to their involvement in the HDRC.
- Encourage the use of the online [NIHR Learning for Involvement resources](#) and the [NIHR Applied Research Collaboration Virtual College training](#), which is accessible to all public contributors.
- Provide peer mentoring for public contributors.
- Support public contributors in their use of technology to join online meetings (e.g., Microsoft Teams) to remove barriers to participation.
- Create a payment policy to reimburse public contributors for their time and expertise, ensuring that financial barriers to participation are removed.



Standard 4

Communications



What the standard says

Use plain language for well-timed and relevant communications, as part of involvement plans and activities.

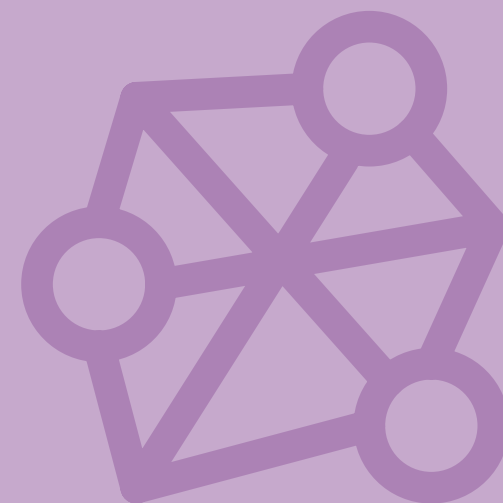
Communicate with a wider audience about public involvement and research, using a broad range of approaches that are accessible and appealing.



How we will achieve this

We will use innovative approaches and appropriate methods of communication to exchange timely information.

- Form a working group with public contributors and partners to co-develop HDRC Southampton's communications and dissemination plan.
- PICE Group members to review and support HDRC Southampton's communications and dissemination activities.
- Share regular news and blogs to highlight PICE activities and their impact on communities, using visual aids like photos and infographics.
- Use simple language when communicating with the public and provide easy to understand summaries.
- PICE Group members to regularly help create and review plain language summaries for research studies.
- Produce accessible animations and infographics and, as appropriate, translate these into multiple languages to disseminate HDRC learnings and research findings.
- Create an open access Evidence Repository to share research findings, evidence reviews, and key learnings from HDRC Southampton.



Standard 5

Impact



What the standard says

Seek improvement by identifying and sharing the difference that public involvement makes to research.

Understand the changes, benefits and learning gained from the insights and experiences of people with lived experiences.



How we will achieve this

We will capture, monitor, and share our learning.

- Collaborate with public contributors and partners to create a PICE evaluation framework to monitor the impact of HDRC Southampton's PICE approach.
- Keep public contributors engaged by sharing a 'you said, we did' update (even when no changes were made) and give them opportunities to provide feedback on our approach, ensuring their voices are valued and heard.
- Collaborate with public contributors and partners to develop actionable next steps from HDRC Southampton's work.
- Use the Public Involvement in Research Impact Tool (PIRIT) to track and report on the impact of public involvement in the work of HDRC Southampton.
- Publish HDRC key learnings, research findings and evidence reviews in easy-to-read formats in our Evidence Repository.



Standard 6

Governance



What the standard says

Involve the public in research management, regulation, leadership and decision making.

Public involvement in research governance can help research be more transparent and gain public trust.

How we will achieve this

We will offer opportunities for members of the public to get involved in management, governance and decision making.

- Maintain public contributor representation in the HDRC Southampton Steering Group and PICE Group.
- Keep involving public contributors and communities in setting research priorities and activities.
- Notifying members of the public about their opportunity to attend the Health and Wellbeing Board during HDRC Southampton's annual progress report.



Acknowledgements

We thank everyone who contributed to the development of this PICE plan. Special thanks to our public contributors at St Deny's Activity Centre, our PICE Group members, and our partner organisations for their invaluable insight, enthusiasm and support.

Get involved and learn more

Email Us: hdrc@southampton.gov.uk

Visit Us: www.soton.cc/HDRC

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