



# Patient and Public Involvement Strategy 2024 - 2027



## Foreword from the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences Patient and Public Involvement Advisory Group

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We are delighted to introduce the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences (FHLS) Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) Strategy 2024-2027. This strategy recognises the importance of involving patients and the public in the culture and research practices undertaken within the Faculty.

We as individuals have different experiences of involvement, but collectively we believe that involving patients and/or the public is a crucial way to help shape health and social care research for the better. Here are some of our thoughts about what PPI means to us:

*"I never imagined that my lived health experiences would add such value to health research. I feel heard, valued and given the space to contribute by helping to shorten the gap between the patient and health services available. I feel we all need to come together and work for better health outcomes". (Patricia)*

*"My involvement in health research as a public health research adviser has been beneficial in ensuring that I am a voice for seldom heard neurodiverse groups to better shape the future of providing more supportive health and social care for these groups of people". (Jamie)*

*"The importance of good and meaningful PPI is to have people with lived experience involved and have their opinions noted and included. People like us with lived experience are a valuable asset in any research being undertaken, we are here and we want to be partners". (Jimmy)*

We take this opportunity to encourage other patients and members of the public to get involved in health and social care research and urge researchers to involve us as partners in the research process and strategic decision-making processes as a matter of course.

*"Our vision is for high-quality health and social care research driven by and for patients and the public, which improves everyone's health and wellbeing now and in the future"*

**On behalf of the FHLS PPI Training Working Group**

# Introduction

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Involving patients and members of the public in health and social care research is embedded within United Kingdom (UK) health policy. The involvement of patients and the public as partners in the design, execution and evaluation of health research is now an expectation of most large funding bodies in the UK.

This has been driven by evidence that involvement can enhance the relevance, quality, and validity of the health research.[1],[2] Research developed in partnership with patients and the public is also shown to be more applicable to their needs and therefore more readily adopted.

In March 2022, Universities UK, which represents the collective voice of 140 universities across the UK, signed a new 'shared commitment' to improve patient and public involvement in their health and social care research.

Universities UK, of which the University of Liverpool is a member, commits to listening to and learning from the people and communities we involve and apply and share that learning; build and share the evidence of how to involve patients and the public and what impact this has; support improvements in equality, diversity, and inclusion in public involvement; and promote the UK Standards for Public Involvement that includes six key areas:

- Inclusive opportunities
- Working together
- Support and learning
- Governance
- Communications
- Impact

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[1]Brett J, Staniszewska S, Mockford C, et al. **A systematic review of the impact of patient and public involvement on service users, researchers and communities.** *Patient* 2014;7:387–95.

[2]Brett J, Staniszewska S, Mockford C, et al. **Mapping the impact of patient and public involvement on health and social care research: a systematic review.** *Health Expect* 2014;17.

# Definitions

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When using the terms '**patient**' or '**public**' we include people who use health and social care services (i.e. patients, potential patients, carers, etc) as well as people from organisations that represent people who use such services.

**Patient and Public Involvement (PPI)** is an active partnership between patients and the public and researchers in the research process, rather than the use of people as 'subjects' of research. PPI in research is often defined as doing research 'with' or 'by' people who use services rather than 'to', 'about' or 'for' them.

PPI is different to public '**Engagement**' where information and knowledge about research is often provided and disseminated to the public via science fairs, public debates, media coverage or general dissemination of research findings. **Public engagement and PPI activities are often complementary. Please access the [Faculty of Health and Life Sciences Public Engagement webpage](#) to find out more about the work of the Public Engagement team.**

PPI also differs to '**Participation**' which describes patients and/or the public as participants or subjects of a research study.



# Our team

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PPI sits within the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences (FHLS) and Clinical Directorate. As a Faculty, we have an Academic Lead for PPI and a PPI Policy Manager. We report to the Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor Clinical Research and Head of Clinical Operations. PPI across the Faculty is supported by PPI leads within each Institute and Department.



**Jennifer Preston**  
PPI Policy Manager



**Professor Kerry Woolfall**  
PPI Academic Lead

# Our vision

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To develop a culture in which PPI is seen as a strategically important activity that ensures our research has an impact on the wider public and society. This strategy will strengthen our vision by creating an integrated, embedded structure of PPI across FHLS, with greater ambition to connect, collaborate, and communicate the impact and value that PPI has added and informed how we work in the future.

# Our mission

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Our mission is to establish good practices in PPI which can improve transparency, public trust and confidence within the FHLS and the wider health and social care sector.

# Our approach

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The FHLS PPI strategy focuses on embedding a culture, structures and practices of PPI that meet the UK Public Involvement Standards. We will achieve this by:

- Promoting patient and public awareness of health and social care research and actively seek the involvement of patients and members of the public in our activities.
- Increasing awareness across the FHLS community of the benefits of PPI and encourage researchers to involve patient and public members at the earliest possible stage in the planning and development of their research.
- Equipping researchers with the skills to understand the mechanisms and systems for PPI that will provide the scope and capacity to help them to plan, conduct and disseminate research studies that are important and relevant to patients and the public.

To achieve these aims a three-pronged approach will be employed, focusing on the main areas:

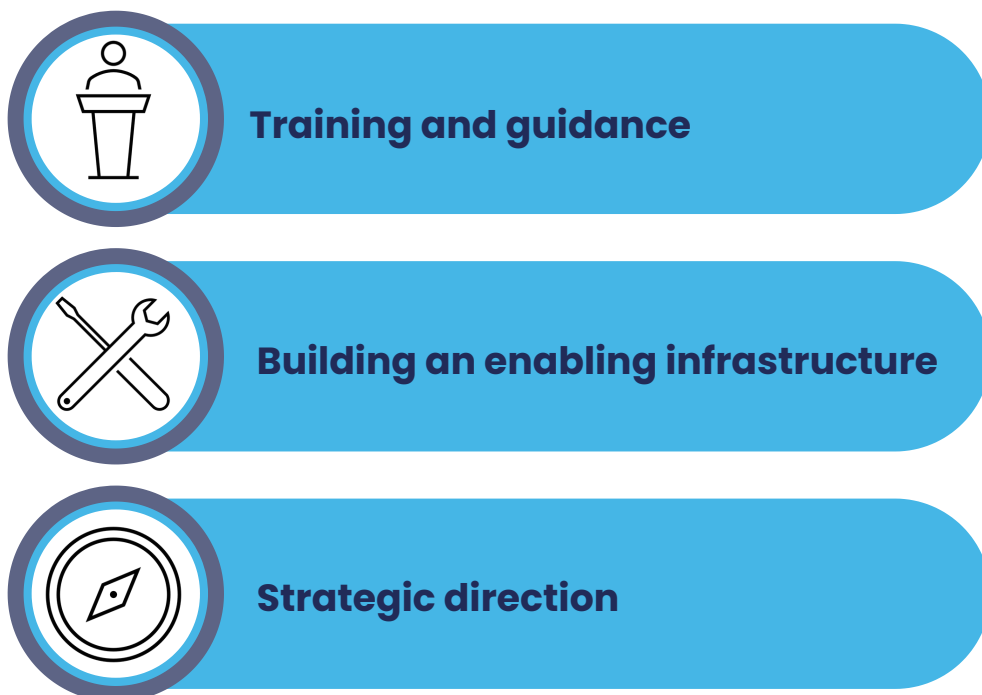


Figure 1: Three-pronged approach to embedding PPI into the FHLS

# Training and guidance

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Effective PPI requires that patients and the public have the necessary skills and knowledge to become actively involved in all parts of the research process. Researchers and those with a specific PPI role (i.e. PPI Coordinator) should be confident and competent in facilitating this involvement. Patients and members of the public should understand and have confidence in the value of research in improving health and social care services and the benefits of involvement to themselves and others.

The FHLS has a responsibility to ensure that appropriate training and guidance are in place to support PPI in all research projects.

Training and guidance will be informed by existing programmes and resources already available locally or elsewhere in the UK.

Documents to support training and guidance should be practical, accessible, easy to read and in a variety of formats to suit different learning needs, styles, and research roles.

## **Our objectives for the next 3 years will be:**

- Develop a training programme for researchers, PPI coordinators and patients and the public, drawing on existing National PPI training and guidance.
- Co-produce (with patients and the public) bitesize learning modules to support meaningful PPI.
- Facilitate access to dedicated PPI resources and toolkits.
- Produce local guidelines where needed to support PPI activity for patients and the public.
- Disseminate guidance and information on the FHLS webpages.
- Organise PPI study days for researchers, patients and the public.
- Develop mechanisms to formally recognise contributions to PPI within the FHLS, such as awards or patient and public acknowledgements.
- Develop a patient and public awareness campaign about the benefits of health and social care research. The campaign will be co-produced with patients, the public and colleagues across the FHLS, including the communications team.



# Building an enabling infrastructure

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The FHLS PPI Training Working Group has a key role in creating an infrastructure that will embed PPI in its various activities and enable researchers, patients and the public to work together by removing any barriers and obstacles that might impact on delivering meaningful PPI.



An effective infrastructure depends on collaboration and partnership with colleagues within the FHLS and partner organisations.

## **Our objectives for the next 3 years will be:**

- Develop support systems to facilitate PPI for researchers, PPI coordinators, patients and the public (e.g. PPI payment and safeguarding guidance)
- Source funding to establish a PPI fund to support PPI activities including grant application development.
- Support researchers applying for research funding with the development of PPI plans.
- Work with the University's Peer Review College to support PPI plans in research applications and prepare staff for PPI questions in mock interviews.
- Work with the Research Support Office and the Joint Research Office, pre-award, post-award, JRO (Joint Research Office) (former SPARK, Peer Review College) to ensure PPI is adequately planned and budgeted for.



# Strategic direction

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It is important that the FHLS provides leadership for PPI in all health and social care research.

We will ensure that the strategic direction for PPI within the FHLS is evidence-based and aligned with the aims, roles and responsibilities of its research partners (Figure 2).

It will also acknowledge and build upon existing good practice and expertise through the establishment of effective and reciprocal working relationships with key stakeholders.

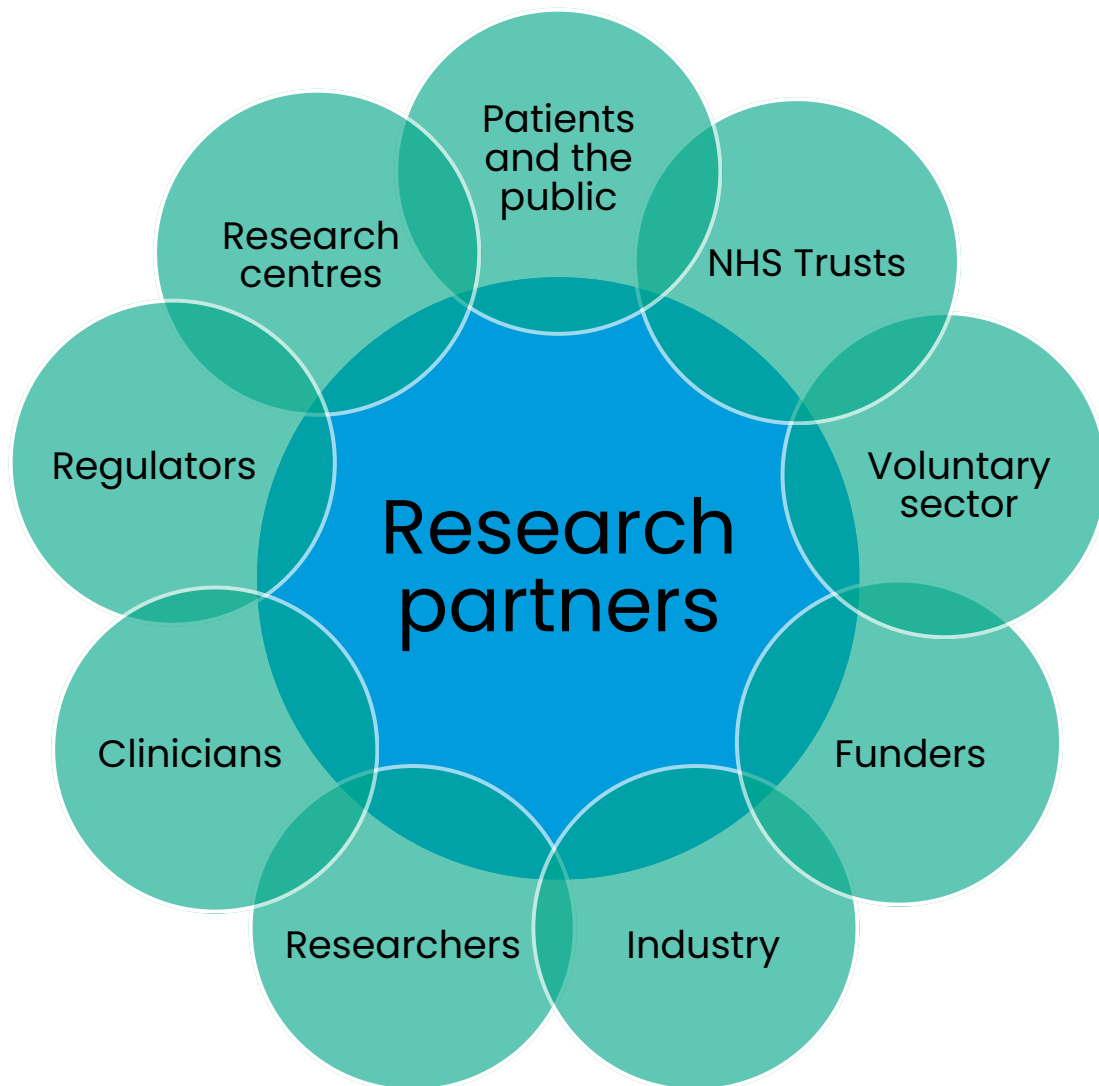


Figure 2: FHLS research partners

# Our objectives

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## Our objectives for the next 3 years will be:

- Form a committee that has responsibility for overseeing the PPI strategy. This committee will include PPI leads (from each of the institutes and departments) and patients and the public within the FHLS to ensure diverse perspectives.
- Represent the FHLS on local and national PPI steering groups.
- Liaise with local and national PPI stakeholders to disseminate and share best practice.
- Establish mechanisms for the monitoring and evaluation of central support for PPI using the UK PI (Public Involvement) standards as a guiding framework.
- Establish processes to capture learning and adopt a culture of improvement that increases the impact of PPI.
- Adopt an organisational mindset of being happy to engage with critiques, learning from mistakes, and constantly thinking about how to improve PPI practice.
- Explore partnerships with external organisations and community groups to enhance the reach and impact of FHLS PPI activities.
- Regularly evaluate the impact of the PPI strategy and adjust based on feedback.
- Support Research Excellence Framework (REF) activities to demonstrate the culture of PPI in environment statements and PPI in impact case studies and REF submissions.
- Create an impact assessment framework to demonstrate the 'valued' involvement, impact and change of PPI.



# Monitoring progress

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We will assess our progress towards achieving these objectives through:

- Monitoring engagement with our online PPI guidance and resources.
- Regularly reviewing feedback of PPI plans submitted as part of research and research fellowship applications.
- The number of people accessing training (online and face-to-face).
- Establish mechanisms for the monitoring and evaluation of central support for PPI using the UK Public Involvement Standards as a guiding framework.
- Feedback from researchers accessing support from the FHLS team.

## Contact

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If you are interested in patient and public involvement, please contact:

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