

Respiratory Infections Health Protection Research Unit Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement Strategy: 2020-2025

The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Health Protection Research Units (HPRUs) are environments where world class health protection research can thrive. Here, we are focused on priority areas which have the greatest impact on public health protection. This involves providing high quality research evidence to inform decision-making by public health professionals, policy makers and those involved in operational delivery and service users.

We are committed to increasing the capacity and capability to conduct high-quality, multi-disciplinary health protection research and facilitating knowledge exchange across universities, the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and other relevant sectors. There are four other HPRUs hosted by Imperial College (IC), each focused on different key research areas:

- [Healthcare Associated Infections and Antimicrobial Resistance](#)
- [Modelling and Health Economics](#)
- [Environmental Exposures and Health](#)
- [Chemical and Radiation Threats and Hazards](#)

Together, we are committed to the [UK Standards for Public Involvement](#), which is reflected in our dedication to provide inclusive opportunities and support, produce accessible and relevant communications, promote collaboration and learning, and systematically collect and share the impact of public involvement, engagement and participation in our research. We value transparency and accountability and have embedded public (and community) representation in our research governance. IC has access to extensive public involvement and engagement resources in order to implement this strategy including the [VOICE portal](#), our community contacts, the [Imperial Young People's Advisory Network](#) and established mailing lists.

IC HPRUs work collectively to ensure inclusive and impactful public involvement, engagement and participation in their research. IC HPRUs meet regularly to discuss best patient and public involvement and engagement (PPIE) practices, evaluation tools, PPIE integration in research and PPIE informing policy.

Introduction to the HPRU in Respiratory Infections

The NIHR HPRU in Respiratory Infections (2020-2025) is focused around 4 themes:

	Theme title	IC Theme Lead	UKHSA Theme Lead
1	Respiratory Surveillance and Analytics	Neil Ferguson	Jamie Lopez-Bernal
2	Vaccines	Wendy Barclay	Catherine Thompson
3	Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)	Peter Openshaw	Maria Zambon
4	Mycobacteria	Leonid Chindelevitch	Esther Robinson

Our mission is to support the UKHSA in creating a centre-of-excellence to design, conduct and share internationally leading multidisciplinary health protection research. Our goal is to protect and improve the public's health through better application of cost-effective public health interventions. A

fundamental element of this mission is to clearly communicate our research to the public and actively involve the public in the strategic direction of our HPRU. This ensures that the patient and public voice can directly impact our research strategies, projects and function; and maintains the accountability and relevance of our research themes.

PPIE definitions

NIHR defines **public involvement** in research as research being carried out ‘with’ or ‘by’ members of the public rather than ‘to’, ‘about’ or ‘for’ them. Examples of public and patient involvement activity include working with researchers to develop or comment on research materials, providing advice as members of a project steering group, and undertaking elements of research e.g., conducting interviews with participants.

NIHR defines **public engagement** as where information and knowledge about research is provided and disseminated. Examples of public engagement activity include disseminating the findings of a study to research participants, colleagues or members of the public, raising awareness of research through media such as television programmes, newspapers and social media and open days at research centres where members of the public are invited to find out about research.

Our PPIE vision

General public involvement (including patients, carers and individuals who have lived experience of exclusion from healthcare) in the design, execution and management of research can help improve its quality, relevance and wider dissemination of its results. Historically, the HPRU in Respiratory Infections has conducted an extensive PPIE programme, which has been recognised within IC and NIHR as an exemplar of good practice (see our [case studies](#) in the Imperial Patient Experience Research Centre).

Therefore, we strive to continue creating a strong PPIE programme which involves events that engage individuals of all ages and backgrounds (but particularly from underprivileged communities and the ‘seldom heard’). We aim to embed PPIE across all research themes of the HPRU to ensure that our research is meaningful, transparent and relevant to the public. Additionally, we are committed to upholding ethical principles in all our PPIE events and encourage the public to advocate for research, and implementation of research outcomes in healthcare.

To help us achieve this vision, we have eight aims for our 2020-2025 PPIE strategy:

1. Effectively integrate PPIE into all HPRU research themes
2. Create a wide network of PPIE partners
3. Host and/or participate in PPIE events that are centred around actively listening to ‘seldom heard’, disadvantaged communities to feedback into UKHSA policy development, NHS health service planning and the future direction of HPRU respiratory research
4. Host and/or participate in PPIE events which inspire, educate and directly involve young individuals in scientific research
5. Create an inclusive, transparent, respectful and engaging environment in our PPIE events which we continuously evaluate and improve
6. Consider PPIE at the core of governance
7. Adequately train all HPRU-associated staff in PPIE
8. Promote and engage the general public in HPRU’s research using media and online platforms

Our PPIE strategy

The PPIE activities and key performance indicators (KPIs) which will help us achieve our vision are outlined in Table 2. Our yearly progress towards our KPIs are also listed below in Table 3:

Table 2: PPIE aims, activities and key performance indicators (KPIs)		
Aim	Activity	KPI
Effectively integrate PPIE into all HPRU research themes	Encourage and support all research themes to include PPIE as a major part of their planning processes and maintain a record of ongoing PPIE activities and opportunities	Create ongoing list of PPIE opportunities for all research themes and share with funders in annual reporting
Create a wide network of PPIE partners	Collaborate on PPIE events internally with other HPRUs	At least 1 internal collaboration every year
	Collaborate on PPIE events with external partners	At least 1 external collaboration every year
Host and/or participate in PPIE events that are centred around actively listening to ‘seldom heard’, disadvantaged communities to feedback into UKHSA policy development, NHS health service planning and the future direction of HPRU respiratory research	Leverage the expertise of our PPIE collaborators to directly inform healthcare provision & practices for underserved communities and ensure our research is relevant to the community	Meet with our PPIE collaborators every year and discuss the future direction of HPRU research with them
Host and/or participate in PPIE events which inspire, educate and directly involve young individuals in scientific research	Organise and/or participate in events which are aimed at young individuals	Participate in at least 1 event which is aimed at younger individuals every year
Create an inclusive, transparent, respectful and engaging environment for our PPIE practices which we continuously evaluate and improve	Generate clear, concise, accessible and jargon-free PPIE material in which the public feel comfortable engaging with	Ensure at least 2 people review all PPIE documentation prior to distributing to verify accessibility
	Continually evaluate and improve PPIE events	Include evaluation surveys at the end of PPIE events and discuss these internally after collection
Consider PPIE at the core of governance	Maintain lay representation on the HPRU Independent Scientific Advisory Board (ISAB) to enable the public perspective to inform HPRU strategy and future direction	Ensure at least 1 PPIE/lay representative attends the annual ISAB meeting
Adequately train all HPRU-associated staff in PPIE	Ensure PPIE is detailed in all job descriptions	Reference PPIE involvement in all job descriptions
	Encourage staff to participate in PPIE events as and when they are available	Discuss PPIE involvement during annual appraisals & maintain clear communication of PPIE opportunities throughout the year
	Raise awareness of training opportunities via Imperial Engagement Academy and the Volunteer network	Distribute new PPIE opportunities to the team via email as and when they are available
Promote and engage the general public in HPRU’s research using media and online platforms	Regular social media usage to showcase our latest updates in our research	Average at least 1 tweet on the @HPRURespiratory account every month
	Regularly showcase our research outputs in broadcast and/or newsprint	Make contributions to the media at least twice a year

Table 3: Annual progress against key performance indicators (KPIs)					
KPI	Year 1: 2020-2021	Year 2: 2021-2022	Year 3: 2022-2023	Year 4: 2023-2024	Year 5: 2024-2025
Create ongoing list of PPIE opportunities for all research themes and share with funders in annual reporting	Met – annually reported to NIHR	Met – annually reported to NIHR	Met – annually reported to NIHR	Met – annually reported to NIHR	
At least 1 internal collaboration every year	GERF festival cancelled due to COVID-19	Met (Invention Rooms Workshop, GERF & Patient Experience Research Centre Workshop)	Met (Invention Rooms Workshop & GERF)	Met (GERF & Anti-Microbial Awareness Week workshop)	
At least 1 external collaboration every year	Met (Bikeworks CIC & Science Museum Group)	Met (Science Museum Group Workshop & UKRI Workshop)	Met (Science Museum Group Gallery & UKHSA Workshop)	Met (Science Museum Group exhibit planning)	
Meet with our PPIE collaborators every year and discuss the future direction of HPRU research with them	Met (Event at Bromley-By-Bow Centre , Doctors of the World Panel)	Met (Event at Bromley-By-Bow Centre)	Met (Doctors of the World Panel)	Met (Workshop with UKHSA , Doctors of the World and Bromley-By-Bow Centre)	
Participate in at least 1 event which is aimed at younger individuals every year	GERF festival cancelled due to COVID-19	Met (Invention Rooms Workshop & GERF)	Met (Invention Rooms Workshop/Packs, GERF & Secondary School Talk)	Met (GERF & Anti-Microbial Awareness Week workshop)	
Ensure at least 2 people review all PPIE documentation prior to distributing to verify accessibility	Met	Met	Met	Met	
Include evaluation surveys at the end of PPIE events and discuss these internally after collection	Met	Met	Met	Met	
Ensure at least 1 PPIE/lay representative attends the annual ISAB meeting	HPRU ISAB meetings cancelled due to pandemic response	HPRU ISAB meetings cancelled due to pandemic response	Met	Met	
Reference PPIE involvement in all job descriptions	Met	Met	Met	Met	
Discuss PPIE involvement during annual appraisals & maintain clear communication of PPIE opportunities throughout the year	Met	Met	Met	Met	
Distribute new PPIE opportunities to the team via email as and when they are available	Met	Met	Met	Met	
Average at least 1 tweet on the @HPRURespiratory account every month	HPRU activities redeployed for pandemic response	Met	Met	Met	
Make contributions to the media at least twice a year	Met	Met	Met	Met	

Abbreviations: ISAB - Independent Scientific Advisory Board; GERF - Great Exhibition Road Festival