



People in Health
West of England

Better involvement • Better research • Better health

Code of conduct for public contributors for People in Health West of England and its core partners

Promoting a strong public voice...

**Bristol Health
Partners**

Clinical Research Network:
West of England

Collaboration for Leadership
in Applied Health Research
and Care West



University of the
West of England



West of England
Academic Health
Science Network

INTRODUCTION

People in Health West of England's (PHWE) and its partners regard as essential the involvement of the public as co-producers in shaping successful outcomes. The success of this relationship relies on both parties having a clear understanding of their roles and expectations. This document aims to ensure the success of this relationship.

This document sets out some of the most important common codes and policies that apply to all individuals registered as a public contributor with PHWE and its core partners. For the purposes of this document, PHWE's core partners are Bristol Health Partners, CLAHRC West, NIHR CRN, and the West of England AHSN. Many of the requirements spelt out here may appear self-evident and common sense. Also no document of this nature will be able to cover all the scenarios that the public contributor may meet. If in doubt, please approach your project lead or the person who has been allocated as your point of contact. The induction that all public contributors will receive when they start their role should go some way to covering the culture and ways of working that we look for from public contributors.

Failure to follow the guidance listed here will be dealt with in an appropriate manner depending on the circumstances.

ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS

Public contributors are expected, at all times:

To deal politely, respectfully and use civilised language and behaviour with all patients, public and employees. Aggressive, abusive, threatening or violent behaviour is not acceptable.

They are expected to follow Respect behaviours at all times which are:

- Treat others as you and they would wish to be treated
- Listen to and support others and make time to do so
- Seek, acknowledge and value others' experience and contribution
- Acknowledge others' beliefs
- Be courteous and considerate to all
- Treat others fairly and equally
- Be honest and trustworthy and act with integrity
- Encourage others to treat all with respect
- Challenge the behaviour of those who do not show respect to others

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

Accountability

Public contributors selected to sit on the People in Health West of England Strategy Group are accountable for their performance through the PHWE structures. They will be offered a regular review with the project lead or named person when they will have the opportunity to discuss any issue of concern. Where a public contributor contravenes any item in the Code of Conduct, this will be raised by the Academic Lead of PHWE or the Team Manager in the first instance and if appropriate a formal warning given. Continued contravention of the spirit and substance of the Code of Conduct will trigger a meeting with the chairs of the Strategy Group who will make a final decision on whether the public contributor should continue in their role. Where either of the chairs contravene the Code of Conduct, this will

be dealt with by an appropriate member of the PHWE Team.

The role of public contributors representing PHWE on the Boards of our partners is dependent on their position in PHWE. Should this be terminated, then their role on the Board terminates and a new PHWE representative identified.

Public contributors appointed directly through PHWE partners will be supported and be accountable through a named project lead or point of contact.

Attendance

The time commitment expected from public contributors should be stated clearly in the role description. If a public contributor is unable to honour this without a good reason, PHWE will discuss this with the individual concerned. It may be necessary to terminate the agreement entered into, so that the role can be filled by someone else.

Acceptance of Gifts

From time to time individuals may be offered small items such as diaries, notepads or calendars that are issued widely by organisations to their customers. Acceptance of such gifts is permissible, providing they are of small value and not of a nature that appears to compromise the impartiality of your relationship with them. All other gifts should be politely but firmly declined.

Communication with the Media

Under no circumstances may any public contributor act as a spokesperson of PHWE or its partners to representatives of the media, without the specific authority of the Academic Lead, Team Manager or the Communications Manager of the relevant partner.

Confidentiality

Public contributors are expected to abide by the protocols of confidentiality as practised by the core partners of PHWE. Unauthorised disclosure of confidential information is likely to lead to the termination of the agreement.

Conflict of Interest

Where a public contributor has an interest that may involve a conflict with the interests of PHWE and its core partners, they should highlight this to their line manager/ mentor.

Data Protection Act

Under the Data Protection Act 1984 all those public contributors who operate computer systems are required to strictly adhere to the legal requirements of confidentiality. In particular this means that information must not be passed on to unauthorised persons and that only personal data that is registered under the Act is processed. If in doubt you should ask your named project lead or point of contact for guidance. Breach of these requirements could result in the termination of the attachment.

Declaration and Registering of Interests

Public contributors must declare any interests of a nature personally beneficial, either directly or indirectly to them, which may affect, or be affected by a contract other than their own attachment contract, which the partner they are associated with has let or is considering letting. They may not use their position to influence the awarding of any contract in which they have any interest, whether direct or indirect. Similarly they must declare any interest, of a nature personally beneficial, either directly or indirectly, to them in any enterprise associated with health care.

An 'Interest' may include one or several of the following:

- Directorships, including non-executive directorships held in private companies or PLCs
- Ownership or part ownership of private companies, businesses or consultancies, likely or possibly seeking to do business with one of our partners
- Majority or controlling shareholdings in organisations likely or possibly seeking to do business with PHWE and its partners.
- A position of authority in a charity or voluntary body in the field of health and social care, including trusteeships
- Professorships or other positions in any further or higher educational institution either in or outside the UK
- Hospitality, travel and accommodation for trips, and meetings at home and abroad
- Payments received from other organisations for work done. This does not apply to employees working through employment agencies, or for payments received for work for Medical Royal Colleges, UKCC, GMC, ENB and similar professional regulatory organisations
- Any connection with a voluntary body contracting for NHS services.

Disclosure of information for Appointment

Public contributors are required to have made full and honest disclosure of information on qualifications, previous employment, medical history and status, criminal record, relationship to any board member of the core partners of PHWE in their application.

Equality and Diversity

The WEAHSN has an Equality & Diversity Strategy & Policy which PHWE use as a framework. All public contributors are required to comply with it at all times.

Expense claims and other payments

All public contributors should receive written confirmation of any payments that will be paid to them. Please see our Payment Guidelines for further details. Sometimes misunderstandings can occur. A member of staff may want you to feel included in the other activities the organisation is running and invite you to attend. Or they might accept your enthusiastic offer to help them out on a particular piece of work. Please do not expect to receive payment for any activity for which you have not received written confirmation that you will be paid and with details of how much.

Harassment and Bullying

Harassment on the grounds of sex, race, marital status, age, colour, nationality, sexual orientation, disablement, ethnic or national origins, religion or creed will also be treated as serious offences.

Health and Safety

It is a duty of everyone to take reasonable care of themselves and others whilst carrying out their duties. All public contributors have the responsibility to ensure that they take constant care in the carrying out of their duties of the health, safety and welfare of themselves and others and that they do nothing to put this at risk.

Under the provisions contained in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, PHWE and its core partners undertake to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the Health, Safety and Welfare at work of all their employees and their public contributors.

Honesty

Public contributors are expected to be honest in all their dealings with PHWE and their partners e.g. making reports and giving information.

Intellectual Property

Intellectual property is the output of creative and innovative human activity that could be used for commercial purposes. It may include written works, images, designs, software, data, plant varieties, industrial processes and inventions.

Where it has been established that PHWE and its core partners own or part own a particular intellectual property, public contributors should declare any private interest that may involve the use of that intellectual property.

Legal Requirements

Public contributors are expected to comply with all the legal requirements covering their duties such as the Equalities Act, Health and Safety etc.

Promoting personal and political causes

Public contributors should not use the PHWE platform to promote their own causes without checking with a member of the team whether this is relevant, appropriate or permissible.

Public contributors may not engage in political campaigning or lobbying at events which they are attending as representative of PHWE or their partners. If in any doubt about the application of this policy, public contributors should discuss this with their named point of contact/ project lead.

Spouse/Partner

If a public contributor is married to or is living with an employee of the organisation they are attached to, the interest of that spouse/partner shall, if known to the public contributor, be also declared.

Working Procedures

A named member of staff who will act as project lead or point of contact for you whilst you fulfill your public contributor role will be expected to ensure that you are informed of all relevant procedures needed to carry out your duties.