

Modernising Medical Microbiology Patient & Public Involvement, Engagement and Participation (PPIEP) Strategy 2020 to 2024

(Note: this unified strategy covers all the projects and programmes run through the group, listed at the end of the Overview section below.)

Overview

As part of the Nuffield Department of Medicine, Modernising Medical Microbiology (MMM) is a research group in the John Radcliffe Hospital that aims to transform how we investigate and manage infections, to improve patient care in Oxfordshire (<http://modmedmicro.nsms.ox.ac.uk/>). The group is one of the largest working in infectious diseases research in the UK.

The group will modernise the way we analyse infections by:

- Bringing cutting-edge scientific techniques to clinical care,
- Transforming the way we study the treatment of patients with infections,
- Using large databases of hospital electronic information, to identify trends in how infections are behaving, and ways patient care can be improved.
- Developing and using techniques such as genetic analysis of bacteria and viruses to better understand how infections spread, how to treat them, and how to prevent them in the future
- Continuing to study how bacteria become resistant to antibiotics, and more difficult to treat, and how to prevent this.

The MMM Group recognise that patients and community members bring particular insights based on their personal experiences as users of the health service. Involving these people in how research is designed, run and managed will further improve its quality and relevance, as well as make sure its results are shared as widely as possible. Furthermore, as our research is publically funded, it is important to raise awareness of the work we do. Involvement, engagement and participation are therefore encouraged, and opportunities to develop these activities are undertaken wherever practical to do so.

The group's work encompasses a plethora of projects and is or has been funded by:

- the National Institutes of Health Research, particularly through a Health Protection Research Unit in Antimicrobial Resistance and Healthcare Associated Infections and the Oxford Biomedical Research Centre Infection Theme
- Wellcome Trust
- Research Councils UK, specifically the Medical Research Council, Natural Environment Research Council and Economic and Social Research Council
- Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

Strategy

Our Strategy was developed in consultation by MMM staff and key patient / public representatives. Our vision is to involve the public in every level of our research activities, from how they are first thought about, to how they are planned, run, and the results shared with the world. We also aim to use existing and new ways to communicate the results of our research to a wider audience, especially key public health messages which arise from our work. Finally, we will ensure we evaluate all public involvement and engagement activities and measure impact to feedback to all stakeholders and continually work to improve the quality of our research.

Definitions

The definitions of public engagement and involvement used by our group are adopted from National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) INVOLVE (<http://www.invo.org.uk/>).

Involvement: When research is done *with* the public and not *to* them.

Engagement: To provide information and knowledge about our research to the public.

Participation: Where members of the public give consent and take part in a trial or study.

Aims

We want to create opportunities for patients and lay members to interact, engage and contribute to the research that MMM performs. This is to:

- Improve the quality of the research we do
- Ensure our research questions align with the wider public priorities
- Disseminate the outcomes of publically funded research with individuals who may find this information relevant, useful or interesting
- Ensure that we are transparent about the research we do, so that it is clear what is being done and why
- Inspire adults and children and promote careers in research and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)
- Explore novel means of communicating healthcare research with the wider public to reach groups who would usually have fewer opportunities for engagement

This will be done by:

- Continuing to ensure strategic input from patients and the public
- Improving the communication networks and publicity around activities
- Expanding the diversity of the patient/public group to ensure a wider view of experiences are being reflected.

Projects and Activities

These will be achieved through a series of activities, examples summarised below:

Standing Activity	Engage / Involve	Target Audience
PPIEP Steering Committee meetings	Involve	Lay representatives
Developing public facing materials	Involve	General public
School visits	Engage	Children
Museum talks	Engage	General public / children and families
University open days	Engage	Students
Newsletters	Engage	General public

Further activities will be discussed, developed and agreed at the regular PPIEP Steering Committee meetings.

Any studies involving participation of members of the public will have specific PPIEP activities, particularly around review of objectives and methods, and any patient-facing materials.

Resources

The PPIEP leads for the MMM group are Professor Sarah Walker, Katherine Fletcher (Project Manager Lead for PPIEP) and Carla Wright (PPIEP Coordinator).

Training

There are various training options open for research staff and PPIEP representatives that will be offered. These are supported by the Oxford NIHR Biomedical Research Centre.

Support for researchers and members of the public

Members of the public will be offered reimbursement for time spent reviewing materials, attending meetings etc and for relevant expenses, following INVOLVE guidelines. Members of the public may choose not to receive reimbursement or expenses, or to donate these to a charity of their choice.

Researchers will be offered “on-the-job” support from other group members, particularly through pairing at PPIEP events.

Partnerships and Collaborations

MMM will be working with the following partners and collaborators in the planning and delivery of our PPIEP strategy:

- Public Health England, who are key partners in the Health Protection Research Unit
- The Oxford Biomedical Research Centre, who have a dedicated PPIEP Lead and group of lay representatives across the entire range of human health
- Local organisations who have expertise in working with disadvantaged groups

Since 2010, internationally renowned artist Anna Dumitriu has been our Artist in Residence. As part of her residency with Modernising Medical Microbiology she shadows our researchers and develops artworks, exhibitions and events that explore the research we do and its impact on the treatment of infectious diseases and the care of patients. She has subsequently gained independent funding from a number of research and arts organisations to continue her work with MMM, publicising our work to a wider audience internationally, and contributing to our own PPIE activities (<http://modmedmicro.nsms.ox.ac.uk/art/>).

Leadership and Governance

Key roles & Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
MMM Group Leads	Overall responsibility for delivering the PPIEP strategy and for supporting the Project Manager lead for PPIEP and the PPIEP Coordinator. Professor Sarah Walker is the Group Lead with overall responsibility for PPIE.
PPIEP Steering Committee members (lay representatives and MMM representatives)	Responsible for contributing to MMM PPIEP events, including framing research questions, reviewing grant applications, lay summaries, patient-facing material (with commitment depending on individuals’ time and interests). Responsible for communicating their work with the MMM Project Manager PPIEP lead.

Role	Responsibilities
PPIEP Lead (lay representative)	First point of contact for lay members. Responsible for leading and contributing to the PPIEP strategy and contributing to Steering Committee meetings.
Project Manager lead for PPIE	Responsible for coordinating with project leads, research members and public members to organise and deliver the PPIEP strategy
PPIEP Coordinator	Organise PPIEP activities, including the MMM PPIEP Committee meetings. First point of contact for patient/service user representatives or any members of the public wishing to become involved with our research.
MMM researchers and members	Responsible for contributing to PPIEP activities organised by MMM, and identifying engagement opportunities within their own professional networks.

As part of our overall strategy we have included a requirement in job descriptions for all research staff to participate in PPIEP activities. This is reflected in all job descriptions, is monitored throughout the year and is part of annual performance development review.

All funders have an expectation that we conduct PPIEP activities throughout the length of the project.

Evaluation and Governance

All PPIEP activities will be evaluated by the researcher who is leading the event. This involves providing a summary to the Project Manager Lead for PPIEP and completing a short evaluation. Where possible, gaining feedback and measuring the impact of activities from the community and public will also be sought at these events.