

Constitution for the Advisory Group to the Institute of Mental Health

This *Constitution* expresses the principles, systems and guidance that shapes the nature and extent of governance for Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) in Institute of Mental Health (IMH).

A constitution replaces the more common working documents for committees (often set out as Terms of Reference) as it is the aim of the PPI Advisory Group to reflect on and foster best practice in Involvement at IMH and impact on expectations of relationships within all groups belonging to IMH. The operating methods of the group such as meeting schedules, membership is set out in Annex A. The groups to which this oversight pertains are set out in Annex B and organisation of IMH set out in Annex C.

Principles of the Advisory Group

- **PPI is a core activity within research**

Support, respect and help develop the recognition that lived-experience enhances all research activities in all stages.

- **Ethics, confidentiality, and governance**

Maintain and encourage the highest standards of ethical practice including consent and confidentiality. Adhere to good governance principles of partner organisations. Not to condone poor practice but persistently seek the most appropriate root for remediation if issues are perceived.

- **Freedom of expression**

The freedom of the Advisory Group or an individual in the group to articulate their opinions and ideas without fear of censorship or withdrawal of opportunity. The responsibility to express these opinions and ideas as respectfully as possible for the benefit of group members and IMH community and research participants.

- **Freedom to be wrong**

The Advisory Group endorses Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust's Just and Restorative Culture work in that that mistakes can be made, that all parties must be involved in the remediation process.

- **Expectation to carry out activity to which we committed**

If a member of the group agrees to carry out an activity or action, we hope this can be completed. If it isn't possible then we would hope this would be communicated to the relevant person as quickly as possible. If there is a lack of clarity about how something is most appropriately carried out, the Public Involvement Coordinator will support and act as the contact point. If the IMH or its staff makes a commitment to the Advisory Group to progress, action or carry out an activity, it should be carried out and if that is not possible it should be clearly communicated as soon as possible to the Advisory Group.

- **Expectation to recompense and reimburse**

The Advisory Group encourages IMH to maintain and develop guiding principles on recompense and re-imbursement for all PPI activity. The Advisory Group regard it as part of their duty to review and comment on this policy and its impact on those volunteering within research groups and projects as well as other PPI activity.

- **Commitment to minimising environmental impact of research**

The Advisory Group considers that good practice in PPI includes attention to sustainable practice in research, for example considering minimising use of non-renewable resources and considering sustainable means of communications. Where possible 'green' and sustainability plans will connect to existing policy and teams at Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and / or University of Nottingham to tie them to the lead organisations of the IMH.

[Purpose of the Advisory Group](#)

The purpose of the Advisory Group is to support and assist in the development of the best principles of public and patient involvement, in all the activities of IMH. This includes championing the research undertaken within IMH audience. Some of the areas of influence and actions arising from this purpose include:

- **Supporting celebration of success and high-quality practice**

- **Right to information and opportunities**

Information about activities within the Institute shared as proactively as possible with the Advisory Group information also being available upon request when specific projects, activity or themes of research are of interest. Responsibility that if members see opportunities or information from the Institute in other places to share back to the IMH so they can improve communication with the Advisory Group.

- **Standard setting**

To work with the IMH to establish a minimum set of standards for Patient and Public Involvement within the Institute of Mental Health and its partners. To meet, interpret in an IMH context and aim to exceed standards from NIHR.

- **Strategic activity within IMH**

Advise and contribute on strategic direction and operational action to help the IMH establish consistent, meaningful PPI across the whole range of its activities. To continue to review, advise, challenge, and contribute to the writing of policies (where appropriate), objectives, plans and progress in relation to Public Involvement

- **Champion Best Practice**

Identify, share, and promote good practice in Public Involvement

- **Reviewing and monitoring**

Monitor, review and challenge the Institute's performance in relation to PPI including:

- highlighting barriers to and opportunities for improvement
- contributing to and advising on systems within IMH to monitor development of and adherence to national, local and IMH Standards for PPI
- contributing to and advising upon systems developed to measure impact of PPI on research within IMH

Relationships, roles and reporting of the Advisory Group

- **Communications**

Members of the Advisory Group are encouraged to interact with the Institute at times that suit the members and on topics that are of interest to the members. In this contact the members of the Advisory Group can expect responses from the Public Involvement Coordinator within 5 working days. There will also be meetings held (both virtually and face to face) and communications sent by email.

- **Scope**

IMH and its partner organisations have many PPI activities and groups. This Advisory Group has oversight but not responsibility for these activities, which include:

- Supporting role of PPI Coordinator within Advisory Group

- Advisory Group responsibility for advising Public Involvement Coordinator job description and role
- Signposting to appropriate support and providing peer contact for PPI volunteers during formal complaints procedures where non-staff members, study participants or others engaging with IMH within PPI parameters are involved
- Supporting and exposing issues around principles of accessibility specifically but not limited to:
 - People excluded by their lack of role or affiliation
 - Identifying when organisational issues exclude
 - Commenting on systems and practices that exclude, for example IT systems and infrastructure
- Limits of responsibility discussed and reviewed
- Where priorities are identified co-operating on setting timetables for change

Review of Constitution and Membership

Advisory Group members can expect to serve a minimum of two years, renewable by consent twice only (maximum membership 6 years). If possible, no more than two members to be replaced at one time to assist continuity.

As an Institute we acknowledge that change in wellness and health can occur and we, as organisers of the Advisory Group commit to supporting positive pauses and warm returns. If a member feels they wish to pause their membership, then the Institute will support this decision with no impact to the membership. The Institute will find ways to enable the Advisory Group member to remain and feel connected but able to pause attendance and involvement. This will include a contact schedule and return, when comfortable in a way that is mutually agreed, realistic for the member and positive for their experience as part of the Advisory Group.

The Advisory Group will review this Constitution at regular intervals, not less than every two years or as appropriate or requested.

Last review date: October 2021

Annex A: Operation of Advisory Group

- **Chair, Stewardship and Administrative Support**

The Advisory Group meetings will be supported by administrators from the IMH core team. The administrators may change between the team to manage capacity and availability for minuting. The meetings will be Chaired by the Public Involvement Coordinator and Co-Chaired by a member of the Advisory Group. The co-chair role will be for no less than 6 meetings and no more than 12 meetings to allow for this opportunity and experience to be shared across the whole membership.

- **Membership**

The Advisory Group membership comprises of public individuals, self-representing their experiences and knowledge to support the principles and purpose of the Advisory Group.

Members will be registered as Volunteers within Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust to offer support, governance, and training in their activities with the Advisory Group.

The membership seeks to represent experience and knowledge that will impact, drive, and challenge the activities of the IMH and as such as wider opportunity as possible to represent experience will be sought.

The membership term for the Advisory Group will be two years. The first membership of the Advisory Group will hold a longer tenure period due to being present through initial starting process of the Advisory Group and the Covid19 health pandemic and associated closure of the IMH.

A stand-alone recruitment process for new Advisory Group membership will be available to ensure clarity, intentions, involvement, and process.

- **Frequency and type of meetings**

The Advisory Group will meet monthly using virtual platforms for the period of 2021. Meetings will continue monthly in 2022. The platform and location of meetings will be reviewed collaboratively using national and local guidance and preferences to decide future meeting arrangements.

- **Reimbursement**

The Advisory Group membership are reimbursed for attending group meetings and activities resulting from the Advisory Group action plan. Reimbursements, time, and energy consumed for meetings and activities should be agreed in advance to support expectation and respect time available to be involved. Reimbursements will be in line with IMH reimbursement guidance available through the IMH public facing website.

- **Support**

All members of the Advisory Group are registered on the Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust volunteer portal. As part of this registration, they are subject to and supported by the Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust Volunteer policy. This includes but is not limited to:

- Access to the Nottinghamshire Healthcare Volunteer staff for advice and guidance
- Processes outlined within the volunteer policy to follow problems and opportunities
- An offer of volunteer training, education and learning packages

- **Access**

This includes such issues as Library access, physical access within the IMH building and access to Information Communications and Technology to be resolved before annual review 2022

Annex B: Structure of IMH

The Institute of Mental Health seeks to help transform understanding and treatment of mental illness and is a partnership between Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and The University of Nottingham. The Institute was formed in 2006 and hosts eight centres of excellence, alongside other key areas of mental health research.

The eight centres are:

- Centre for ADHD and neurodevelopmental disorders across the lifespan (CANDAL)
- Centre for Dementia
- Centre for Health and Justice
- Centre for Mental Health and Human Rights
- Centre for Mood Disorders
- Centre for Social Futures
- Centre for Translational Neuroimaging
- MindTech

The Institute also provides a research support and consultancy service both to colleagues and to external customers. We can help you with all aspects of applying for research grants, administering research grants, service evaluation and bespoke consultancy work tailored to your specific needs. The Institute has three core areas as part of its cohesive structure, and these are:

- The Institute Board
 - Highest level of the partnership organisations are represented and it is co-chaired by organisation representatives
- The Strategic Development Committee
 - Heads of research areas across the Institute and led by the IMH Director
- The Institute Leadership Team

- operational heads from the Institute driving process and the success of operational activities across the Institute

Annex C: Organisation of IMH

Key roles and role holders from across the Institute of Mental Health:

Core Team:	
Director:	Martin Orrell
(acting) Associate Director	Sarah Stokes
Head of Communications	Lou Rudkin
Public Involvement Coordinator	Kate Horton
Business and Operations Manager:	Kathryn Bryan
Research Grants and Contracts Officer:	Ginette Taylor
Head of within Centres of Research:	
Centre for ADHD and neurodevelopmental disorders across the lifespan (CANDAL)	Maddie Groom
Centre for Dementia	Tom Dening
Centre for Health and Justice	Eddie Kane
Centre for Mental Health and Human Rights	Peter Bartlett
Centre for Mood Disorders	Richard Morriss
Centre for Social Futures	Paul Crawford
Centre for Translational Neuroimaging	Peter Liddle
MindTech	Chris Hollis
Other areas of research within the Institute	
Co-Lead of the Nottingham Multiple Sclerosis Research Group	Roshan Das Nair
Professor of Mental Health Recovery and Social Inclusion	Mike Slade
Lead of the Managed Innovation Network (MIN) in Gender Diversity and Wellbeing at the Institute of Mental Health	Jon Arcelus