



UNIVERSITY
of HULL

Institute for Clinical &
Applied Health Research

Strategy for public involvement in health and care research January 2026 – December 2028

1 Executive summary

This document sets out the Public Involvement Strategy for the Institute for Clinical and Applied Health Research (ICAHR) at the University of Hull. The strategy has been developed in collaboration with researchers, and members of our public involvement network, Involve Hull.

2 Introduction and background

2.1 Institute for Clinical and Applied Health Research (ICAHR)

ICAHR was launched in March 2019 to bring together experts from the University of Hull's Faculty of Health Sciences and Hull York Medical School. We are a hub for collaborative health research in the fields of medicine, nursing, midwifery, sport and exercise science, psychology, social sciences, and social work.

We carry out clinical research into the causes of human illness, and how it can be prevented, treated, or managed. We also carry out applied research so that we can solve real world health problems and create direct benefits for patients.

Our work has a focus on these topic areas:

- Addiction and mental health
- Cancer
- Living with long term conditions
- Palliative and end of life care
- Primary care
- Social care

You can find out more about our research on [our website here](#). We also collaborate with researchers in the [Centre for Biomedicine](#) and the [Clinical Sciences Centre](#), who specialise in these conditions:

- Blood vessel conditions and coronary artery disease
- Cancer
- Diabetes
- Respiratory conditions

2.2 Involve Hull

Involve Hull is our public involvement network for people with personal experience of living with long term health conditions and using health and care services. Established in 2019 to support a cancer research programme, Involve Hull has expanded to include people with other interests and experiences, enabling them to get involved in the full range of health and care research at the University of Hull. The network includes members from Hull and the Humber area, as well as across the UK.

3 Our values and vision

3.1 Our values

Our commitment to public involvement springs from our values as a university.

We are inclusive

- We believe that everyone counts, and this includes the people who are the focus of our research. We welcome and encourage people from all walks of life to get involved in research.

We are empowering

- We work in a respectful and collaborative way that enables people to share their knowledge and experiences, and have a meaningful voice in our research.

We are progressive

- We involve people to make sure our research benefits communities, while embracing new ideas and approaches. We carry out our research in an open, transparent, and ethical way that drives lasting positive change.

3.2 Our vision for public involvement

We want to involve patients, carers, families and local communities as active partners in our healthcare research, so that together we can make a positive difference to health and wellbeing in our region and beyond.

4 What is public involvement and what is its purpose?

This means research that is carried out with or by members of the public, rather than to, about or for them. Patients, carers, and members of the public work in partnership with researchers to help shape:

- what research gets done
- how it's carried out
- and how the results are shared and applied in practice.

(see the [National Institute for Health and Care Research definition](#), accessed April 2026)

The purpose of involving patients, carers and the wider public is to make sure that our research focuses on what really matters to people with personal experience of health conditions and services. We want our research to meet the needs of our communities and address the inequalities that exist in health outcomes and access to services and treatments for different social groups across our region.

Public involvement helps us to:

- improve the quality of our research
- hear the voices of those who are often under-represented in or excluded from research, and
- learn from each other and value different kinds of knowledge.

We want our work to be relevant and important to the public and carried out in ways that are sensitive and acceptable. We want to create clear and meaningful research

materials and share our findings with the wider public in ways that make sense to them. Public involvement can help us to do all of these things more effectively.

5 Aim and objectives

This strategy describes how we will embed active public involvement throughout the research process, from the early development of research ideas to the dissemination of research findings. We want patients, carers and users of health and care services to have a voice in shaping our research from the earliest stage. This will include all types of research, from PhD studies, to fellowships, to grant funded research projects and programmes, across all of the research groups, centres and clusters within our research institute. We want this to become a simple and universal part of the way that we do research in Health Sciences at the University of Hull.

Our objectives are set within the framework of the UK Standards for Public Involvement. The standards cover: inclusive opportunities; working together; support and learning; communication; impact; and governance. You can find more information about the standards on [this website](#).

5.1 Inclusive opportunities

We will ensure that opportunities for involvement are accessible and meaningful to the people and groups that are affected by our research and who we need to involve. We will be proactive and flexible in our approach and aim to work with the right people for each research project. We will not simply work with people that we already know just because this is easier to do. Our network and our advisory groups will offer safe, welcoming spaces for everyone. We will take practical steps to address the barriers people face to getting involved in research, reaching out to community groups and networks to help us do so. As part of this commitment, we will:

- reimburse people's expenses
- offer fees to thank people for their research activities with us
- take into account people's other commitments (for example, work or caring) when arranging group meetings
- offer alternative ways to contribute, for example by email, telephone or one to one meetings
- write and speak about our research in everyday language
- offer information in Easy Read on request
- work with local community groups to involve those who prefer to meet in person

5.2 Working together

We will work together in a collaborative and open way, respecting the contribution that patients, carers and users of services bring to research. We will take time to build relationships within our network and between researchers and public contributors, so that people feel safe to share their experiences and views, and do not feel that we are simply extracting information from them. This approach will underpin how we manage Involve Hull, as well as how we undertake public involvement in individual projects. We will challenge each other where we feel there is a tick box approach to public

involvement, and we will encourage the development of ongoing dialogue and working relationships between researchers and public contributors. This is a shared responsibility.

5.3 Support and learning

We will approach public involvement as a process of mutual learning in the development of better research. The Public Involvement Coordinator will act as a clear point of contact for support, advice and information, both for public contributors and researchers, across research projects. This will include supporting people to raise concerns and helping to resolve issues. We will make sure that support and learning is tailored to the needs of each individual, so that they feel encouraged to contribute, and confident to speak and ask questions in group settings. We will use diverse methods to support researchers and public contributors, and help them learn, and our approach will be informed by continuous feedback and reflection.

For members of Involve Hull we will:

- provide a members' handbook and a range of learning guides to new members of Involve Hull
- provide clear information about our payment policy and process
- offer regular learning opportunities, including events for new members and those with specific roles in research studies
- offer a regular programme of social events and talks to bring people together and encourage peer support
- review membership of the network once a year
- share a regular newsletter

For researchers we will:

- offer one to one advice and guidance about planning, costing and undertaking public involvement
- provide a resource library on MS Teams including policies, templates and examples of good practice
- provide training sessions, especially for postgraduate research students and early career researchers
- offer opportunities to present to Involve Hull events
- support access to Involve Hull to promote involvement opportunities
- offer a competitive funding scheme for pre-award public involvement in developing research grant applications

5.4 Communication

We will use everyday language and accessible formats to communicate with the public, when we are involving them as public contributors, encouraging them to take part in research as participants, and explaining the findings of our research. We will share feedback about the changes or decisions made in response to ideas and comments from public contributors. When we involve communities whose first language is not English, we will offer interpreting support and translate written information into

community languages. We will make it our responsibility to improve public understanding and engagement with research. If involving the public is difficult, we will reflect on our approach and our communication and change our practice.

5.5 Impact

We will develop simple ways for public contributors to share feedback about their experiences of being involved in our research, both as members of Involve Hull, and in individual projects. Alongside this we will expect all researchers to evaluate their public involvement, including both positive and challenging aspects, and reflect on its contribution to their development as researchers and to knowledge exchange. We will periodically collate and assess this evidence and share our learning in different ways for academic and public audiences. This will include the use of creative methods, personal stories, and case studies of involvement in specific projects. When projects end, we will make sure that we celebrate our work and the contribution made by public contributors. We will involve public contributors in sharing our findings, influencing policy and making a real-world impact, and keep them updated about next steps in the research journey.

5.6 Governance

We will establish clear accountability and resources for public involvement within our research institute and work towards placing this on a sustainable basis. We will include public representatives on steering groups and study management groups for research projects and programmes.

6 Delivering our objectives

The following principles will guide the way we work and deliver our objectives:

- We will respect the experience, knowledge, and opinions of others, regardless of their role, status or background
- We will approach public involvement as a dialogue where researchers and public contributors share knowledge and expertise
- We will work collaboratively with people from diverse backgrounds
- We will communicate clearly and openly, using a range of methods and channels
- We will build trust in our working relationships by saying what we mean and doing what we say
- We will be proactive, creative, questioning, and constructive
- We will learn by doing and reflecting on our practice
- We will aspire to progress from consulting the public to working in partnership with them

We have a fund for pre-award public involvement in developing research grant applications, available to researchers in the wider Faculty of Health Sciences. This awards small grants throughout the year through a competitive process.

Public involvement in PhD studies is funded for those with University or other scholarships.

Post-award public involvement is funded directly from research grants.

We work in partnership with colleagues across the University, the Medical School, and Hull University Teaching Hospitals, as well as Humber and North Yorkshire Cancer Alliance, the Integrated Care Board, voluntary sector and community groups, and health charities.

7 Action plan 2026 - 2028

	UK Standard	Activity	Deadline
	2026		
1	Inclusive opportunities	Expand the membership of Involve Hull to support research led by the Centre for Biomedicine	December 2026
2	Working together	Work with the Research Lead, Centre for Biomedicine to implement a plan for public involvement in biomedical research	December 2026
		Hold two research priority setting sessions for biomedical research (collaborative sessions for researchers to present and discuss new research ideas and prioritise which to take forward)	December 2026
3		Hold an annual conversation with members about Involve Hull and its future development and ways of working	Starting in 2026
4		Assess options and costs for developing an online engagement platform for Involve Hull	December 2026
5	Support and learning	Set up a Community of Practice for researchers to reflect and share learning about public involvement	Established and meeting regularly by December 2026
6		Explore whether to offer certificates of involvement in completed projects to public contributors	Decision by December 2026
7	Communications	Create case studies of public involvement in projects and personal stories of individual public contributors for publication on the Involve Hull webpage and through other channels	Starting in 2026

	2027		
1	Inclusive opportunities	Review the focus and membership of Involve Hull and work towards including representation from communities aligned to the research interests of ICAHR	December 2027
2	Working together	Involve public contributors in the dissemination of research findings and outputs	In routine practice by December 2027
3		If agreed, procure and set up the online engagement platform for Involve Hull	December 2027
4	Communications	Share an accessible summary of their contribution with public contributors at the end of every project, along with the research findings and any outputs	In routine practice by December 2027
5		Explore if it is practical to set up a podcast and if the University would host this on the University website	December 2027
6	Impact	When a new project starts, ask public contributors what they want the impact of their involvement to be, as part of the process of welcoming people to the project	In routine practice by December 2027
7		At the end of a project, hold a closing meeting with public contributors about their experiences of being involved, what went well, what was challenging, and what could be done differently	In routine practice by December 2027

	2028		
1	Working together	Hold celebration events to mark the end of projects and the role of public contributors	In routine practice by December 2028
2		Generate suggested topics for student research projects through discussion with Involve Hull	December 2028
3		If agreed, set up two pilot project groups on the online engagement platform to test this as a way of working with public contributors in grant funded studies	December 2028
4	Support and learning	Through the Community of Practice, hold events to share learning about the use of different methods for public involvement, e.g. co-production, co-design, arts-based methods etc	At least one per year by December 2028
5		Through the Community of Practice, reflect and share learning about research inclusion and how public involvement can support this	December 2028
6		Explore if it is possible to develop a paid for CPD course in public involvement	December 2028

8 Accountability and reporting

The Patient and Public Involvement Coordinator is responsible for delivering, monitoring, and reporting on the strategy in collaboration with colleagues on the ICAHR Patient and Public Involvement Group. The Patient and Public Involvement Coordinator reports to the ICAHR Academic Lead for PPI / FHS Associate Dean for Research. Progress is reported annually in respect of the action plan.

Responsibility for delivering, monitoring, and reporting on public involvement in research programmes, projects and PhD clusters is devolved to the principal investigator, PPI lead, supervisors, or other member of the research team.

9 Further information

For more information about this strategy, please contact:

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Information about our patient and public involvement network Involve Hull is available on [our website](#).