



## **PPI Member Role in the NIHR National Applied Research Collaboration (ARC) Mental Health and Wellbeing Collaboration**

We are seeking four to five members who represent patients, service users, carers and the public, to become part of our NIHR National ARC Mental Health and Wellbeing Collaboration.

### **INTRODUCTION**

In July 2019, the NIHR announced a £135 million investment in 15 new NIHR Applied Research Collaborations (ARCs), to support applied health and social care research. On 1st October 2019, ARCs started to fund and support research that responds to, and meets, the needs of local populations and local health and social care systems. The funding is also to support, facilitate and increase the rate at which research findings are implemented into practice.

The scheme aims to improve outcomes for patients and the public; improve the quality, delivery and efficiency of health and social care services; and increase the sustainability of the health and social care system, both locally and nationally.

The ARCs will tackle several areas of need highlighted by the NIHR Futures of Health report, including: the challenges of an ageing society; multimorbidity; and the increasing demands placed on our health and care system.

The 15 new NIHR ARCs are:

- East of England
- East Midlands
- Greater Manchester
- Kent, Surrey and Sussex
- North East and North Cumbria
- North Thames
- Northwest London
- North West Coast
- Oxford and Thames Valley
- South London
- South West Peninsula
- Wessex
- West
- West Midlands
- Yorkshire and Humber

### **THE NATIONAL ARC MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING COLLABORATION**

The NIHR ARCs are also aiming to deliver national-level impact through significant cross-ARC collaboration, and through the ARCs providing national leadership of themes according to their field of expertise.

The National ARC Mental Health and Wellbeing Collaboration is one of these national themes, being co-led by the ARCs in the East of England and South London. It brings together key stakeholders from all the ARCs, which have mental health research as a key component of their research programme.

The Collaboration has started to define its aims and how they will be achieved. Overall, it is seeking to inform the national mental health agenda, influence decision makers, generate robust evidence in the field of mental health and wellbeing, and make sure findings are implemented so they can make a difference for services, patients and the public. This will be particularly for communities with high health needs, where research has not routinely been focussed in the past. It will work with other national networks and organisations in the mental health landscape to help achieve these aims.

The Collaboration will be closely linked to the emerging Mental Health Implementation Network, which will focus on the implementation of evidence-based solutions for mental health needs into practice. The successful candidates would also be expected to contribute to this work with their views, experience, and ideas.

The Collaboration aims to meet at least twice a year to foster networking between the participating ARCs. It will explore where ARCs have overlaps in their mental health research strategies and activities. Meetings will focus on shared learning and exploring joint working possibilities.

Meetings are currently being held via Zoom, but when it is possible to do so, they will be held in Birmingham or other central ARC locations, which are easily accessible by train.

The Collaboration membership comprises:

- Directors of the co-leading ARCs
- Mental Health Theme Leads and Senior Researchers from ARCs
- Programme Managers from ARCs
- A national PPI representative (*Tina Coldham*)
- PPI lead of one co-leading ARC (*Katherine Cummergen, ARC East of England*)
- 4-5 PPI members representing patients, service users, carers and the public

## **PPI MEMBER ROLE**

The Collaboration is looking to involve patient, carer and public representatives at a national level to help shape its strategic direction and take an active part in deciding how aims will be achieved. We want to ensure that the Collaboration is working in the best interests, and is informed by the priorities of our communities.

We are therefore seeking to recruit four to five members representing the public, patients or carers who have a keen interest in mental health research and would like to take an active part in the strategic planning of the Collaboration.

**Please note:** At present we are meeting online but hoping to move to face to face meetings. Costs for travel (and where necessary accommodation) will be covered by the Collaboration for the lay members. An honorarium will be offered for time spent preparing for and participating in the meetings. The usual rate for attending an advisory committee is £150. This includes preparation and attendance for one day. Refreshments and lunch will be provided at face to face meetings.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of members of the Collaboration and the PPI Members in particular are:

- To actively contribute their views and perspective in discussions
- To read papers and proposals and give a PPI member's perspective on the contents
- To be a 'critical friend' and appropriately challenge proposals and decisions
- To represent and act in the best interests of the wider patient, carer and public community (not only represent their personal experience)
- To attend the meetings of the Collaboration, with email communication used between meetings to conduct business
- To take part in any subsequent meetings or project work that comes out of the main Collaboration meetings
- To comply with Terms of Reference for the Collaboration.

## MEMBER ATTRIBUTES

We are looking for individuals who:

- Understand the importance of applied mental health and social care research
- Are committed to help develop and shape strategic mental health research across the ARCs
- Can bring a national perspective on patient and public priorities for mental health and wellbeing (e.g. is a member of user-led groups or support networks in the mental health landscape)
- Have experience of patient and public involvement (PPI) in research or health care services
- Can understand and evaluate a range of information and evidence, strategy documents
- Have experience and confidence of taking part in group discussions with senior stakeholders
- Have the ability to communicate effectively with a wide range of people and is willing to challenge where appropriate
- Demonstrate strong commitment to equality and diversity

- Understand the need for confidentiality where appropriate
- Are able to participate in formal and informal meetings (either virtual or face-to-face) during the working day
- Can commit to at least two meetings a year, with potential for more (as capacity allows)
- Are willing to commit to a two-year term in this role

### **EXPRESSING AN INTEREST**

As most of the work will be carried out online, we request that you express your interest via email to:

Katherine Cummergen ([Katherine.Cummergen@cpft.nhs.uk](mailto:Katherine.Cummergen@cpft.nhs.uk)) and Tina Coldham (TRColdham@btinternet.com)

### **Please outline the following in your email / letter (maximum 2 sides of A4):**

- why you are interested in this role
- how you feel you meet the person specification
- any previous experience you have had of involvement in health and social care research
- what support and training you feel you may need in the role
- your contact details

Closing date for expressions of interest: **12<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

Date for online individual meetings: **18<sup>th</sup> March 2021**

**Please note: The next NIHR National ARC Mental Health Collaboration meeting date is 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021; 14:00 -15:30.**

### **If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact:**

Katherine Cummergen ([Katherine.cummergen@cpft.nhs.uk](mailto:Katherine.cummergen@cpft.nhs.uk)) OR Tina Coldham (TRColdham@btinternet.com)