

e) Offer reward and recognition by:

- acknowledging contributions and thanking people in person and in print
- considering the value of people's time and offering payment as well as expenses (in cash if possible)
- consider offering other benefits such as training, support with gaining qualifications, attending conferences, co-authorship.

#### 4. Applying good practice in your project

- the good practice points in this leaflet are just a starting point
- good practice needs to be interpreted for different situations
- practice should be evaluated and improved upon continuously
- practice improves with experience; you don't have to be perfect from the start, but you need to be committed to improvement
- some further reading is suggested at the back of this leaflet.

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#### 5. Further reading

INVOLVE Publications downloadable (free) from [www.invo.org.uk](http://www.invo.org.uk):

- 'Involving the public in NHS, public health, and social care research: Briefing Notes for Researchers' (2004)
- 'A guide to reimbursing and paying members of the public who are actively involved in research' (2006)
- 'Public Involvement in Research Commissioning Guide Series' (2006)
- 'Why people get involved in health and social care research: a working paper' (2006)
- 'Involving Marginalised and Vulnerable People in Research: A consultation document' (2004)

We wish to acknowledge:

- Faulkner A. (2005) 'Guidance for Good Practice: Service User Involvement in the UK Mental Health Research Network' Service User Research Group England
- The Learning Difficulties Research Team (2006) 'Let me in I'm a researcher!' Department of Health



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# INVOLVE

Promoting public involvement in NHS, public health and social care research

## Good practice in active public involvement in research

This brief guide is for:

- researchers,
- research commissioners/funders,
- members of Research Ethics Committees, and
- it may also be helpful for members of the public.

The leaflet describes:

1. what we mean by 'active' involvement in research
2. what we mean by 'good practice'
3. basic principles of good practice
4. applying good practice
5. further reading

If you need a copy of this publication in another format, please contact **INVOLVE.**

## 1. What we mean by 'active involvement' in research

Active public involvement in research is different from simply taking part in a research study. For example, it can mean:

- helping researchers to identify and ask the right questions in the right way
- making sure that health and social care research is relevant to patients, people using services and the public
- getting involved in the research process itself, whether designing, managing, undertaking or disseminating research.

## 2. What we mean by good practice

- a) Allow time to plan for active public involvement
- b) Build respect and mutual understanding
- c) Ensure equal access to project activities
- d) Offer continual support to members of the public throughout the research process
- e) Consider methods of reward and recognition.

## 3. Basic principles of good practice for your project

a) From the beginning, plan to:

- involve people with personal experience relevant to your research topic
- involve people as early on in your project as possible
- take into account diversity and equality issues
- involve more than one person in your project
- utilise communities and groups
- allow time to build relationships
- be prepared to negotiate the levels and types of involvement with the groups you want to involve
- offer individuals a choice about how they want to be involved in your project
- plan for sufficient time, and build in resources to support involvement.

b) Aim to build respect by:

- reflecting on the value of everyone's time, knowledge and experience in all project activities
- negotiating 'ground rules' for meetings
- considering diversity and the cultural relevance of your involvement plans to those who should be involved.

c) Ensure equitable access in your project by:

- giving clear, adequate and useable information in good time
- providing plain language summaries of long or complex documents
- using plain language in all communications
- where possible, giving plenty of notice for meetings
- ensuring meetings are inclusive
- ensuring venues are comfortable and accessible for all involved
- adjusting meeting times according to need and allowing time for breaks
- making adjustments for the particular needs of the individuals involved
- ensuring expenses are paid promptly.

d) Support people in your project by:

- offering informal chats and an induction process at the beginning
- offering training/mentoring/guidance for both members of the public and researchers
- establishing networks, and good communication links for those involved
- offering support when involvement ends e.g. closure event, or helping individuals identify their next step.