

**Dementia Themed Call:  
Considering Conflicts of Interest when working with the  
National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) programmes**

This leaflet is aimed at patients, carers, and members of the wider public who may be involved with work for the Dementia Themed Call. We are very pleased to have your help in this very important area of health and social care research and welcome your involvement with the participating programmes in the NIHR.

Dementia can be a feature in a wide range of diseases and there are a number of patient organisations, interest groups and medical research charities who could be of assistance in developing an application for the Dementia Themed call from their perspectives.

The seven participating research funding programmes are:

<b>Managing commissioning centre</b>	<b>Web address</b>	<b>Programme Title</b>
NIHR Evaluation, Trials and Studies Coordinating Centre (NETSCC)	<a href="http://www.netscc.ac.uk">www.netscc.ac.uk</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efficacy and Mechanism Evaluation (EME)</li> <li>• Health Services Research (HSR)</li> <li>• Health Technology Assessment (HTA)</li> <li>• Public Health Research (PHR)</li> <li>• Service Delivery and Organisation (SDO)</li> </ul>
NIHR Central Commissioning Facility (CCF)	<a href="http://www.ccf.nihr.ac.uk">www.ccf.nihr.ac.uk</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme Grants for Applied Research (PGfAR)</li> <li>• Research for Patient Benefit (RfPB)</li> </ul>

For more reasons why Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) in health and social care research is so important, follow this link to the INVOLVE organisation's website [www.invo.org.uk](http://www.invo.org.uk). For information on opportunities to get actively involved in research see the People in Research Website [www.peopleinresearch.org](http://www.peopleinresearch.org)

**Handling Conflicts of Interest**

We are asking you to consider "conflict of interest" when working with the NIHR programmes, as there are a number of ways in which you may be asked to take part.

- By assisting a research team who may be preparing a proposal for applying for research funding from one of the programmes;
- By taking an active part in assessing proposals for research at the assessment stage as a member of a Board, a Panel or a Committee depending on the structure of the programme;
- As a PPI reviewer giving the important patient and public perspective on research proposals offered to the participating programmes.

For example, a PPI member may be asked to comment on research designs as a member of a relevant patient organisation (for example, Alzheimer's Society Research Network [www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk) or planning including a patient advice leaflet from time to time, or be asked to join a project steering group as a longer term association with the project team.

We do understand that an increasing number of our PPI colleagues have a wide range of involvement activities offered with NIHR institutions, with clinical research studies carried out in academic institutions, and with their local clinical research networks [www.crnc.nihr.ac.uk](http://www.crnc.nihr.ac.uk) and Research Design Services [www.rdinfo.org.uk/rds/Network/Index.asp](http://www.rdinfo.org.uk/rds/Network/Index.asp)

Some of this involvement may be temporary; some may require you to be associated with a particular research project for a length of time.

If you are asked to work with a clinical research team or a research design service PPI unit, or are recruited to research through being a PPI member of DeNDRoN [www.dendron.org.uk](http://www.dendron.org.uk) or a similar topic-specific clinical research network, or directly by a research team, we would ask you to bear in mind this pre-existing involvement when offered other tasks.

If you are asked to review a research application for a funding programme such as Research for Patient Benefit or the Service Delivery and Organisation (SDO) programme, it is important for you and for us to know that you can accept the task without compromising the research team with whom you are involved. For more information and contacts for queries please see the box below.

### **What do you mean by a “conflict of interest”?**

To help you decide what explicitly you need to check with us before reviewing a research project, these are examples from our guidance for research teams and expert assessors in committees about “conflict of interest” issues that may arise when agreeing to review a research proposal:

- The members of the team who create and design the research project and their co-applicants are always considered to be conflicted for reviewing or assessing that project application. For example, your service user group may be planning a submission to an NIHR programme as user-researchers, and your group may be asked to be involved in its design and planning. This would lead to a conflict of interest for all those in that group when the application is being reviewed.
- If you are an active collaborator in a proposed research project through involvement in your regional Research Design Service PPI group, or as a member of a patient organisation taking an active part in the planning, design or dissemination of the project, you are conflicted and should withdraw from reviewing it.
- If you are a member of a research project steering group, for example, or helping to manage a focus group for the project, or actively involved in the dissemination stage then that would also be a conflict of interest.

Any historical collaboration with the research team should be declared and the decision whether or not this represents a significant conflict of interest can be referred to the contacts overleaf:

**Contacts for queries about conflict of interest:**

<b>Managing commissioning centre</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Programme Title</b>
NIHR Evaluation, Trials and Studies Coordinating Centre (NETSCC)	Alison Ford, PPI Manager <a href="mailto:A.R.Ford@soton.ac.uk">A.R.Ford@soton.ac.uk</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efficacy and Mechanism Evaluation (EME)Health Services Research (HSR)</li> <li>• Health Technology Assessment (HTA)</li> <li>• Public Health Research (PHR)</li> <li>• Service Delivery and Organisation (SDO)</li> </ul>
NIHR Central Commissioning Facility (CCF)	Jean Cooper Moran, PPI Manager <a href="mailto:Jean.coopermoran@nihr-ccf.org.uk">Jean.coopermoran@nihr-ccf.org.uk</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme Grants for Applied Research (PGfAR)</li> <li>• Research for Patient Benefit (RfPB)</li> </ul>