

**NIHR CLAHRC North West Coast
A strategy for stakeholder engagement
Version 4 17th March 2014**

Our vision for engagement

The NIHR CLAHRC NWC is a partnership between the NHS, local government, universities and the people of the NW coast. Our aim is to co-produce high quality, applied research designed to decrease health inequalities and improve the health of the population of the NW coast. To achieve this aim we will extend our reach with existing Partners and develop new partnerships with industry and the voluntary sector. Partners will be actively engaged in co-producing all aspects of our work. We will also communicate with the wider health community across the NW coast region informing diverse stakeholders about our work and opportunities for engagement.

Principles for engagement

We will ensure that:

- CLAHRC NWC engagement processes are transparent and inclusive
- Different forms of expertise and knowledge are valued including in particular the expertise brought by members of the public
- Partners make a real difference to our:
 - Research and evaluation activities
 - Outputs and how these are disseminated
 - Capacity building and knowledge exchange activities
- CLAHRC NWC staff and all our Partners have opportunities to develop the skills and competencies needed to engage effectively with each other
- Resources and networks of the CLAHRC NWC and the NW Coast Academic Health Sciences Network are co-ordinated to maximise complementarity and synergies
- The experience and impacts of engagement are evaluated and lessons are acted upon

Engagement objectives:

In the first two years the overarching engagement objectives of CLAHRC NWC will be to:

- Recruit representatives of our Partners and members of the public to:
 - Strategic management and oversight structures
 - Programme and project management structures
 - Co-production of applied research activities
- Establish and support
 - A Public Reference Panel to oversee our Public Engagement Policy and a cadre of Public Engagement Champions
 - An NHS and Local Authority Partners Panel comprising of engagement leads from all our partners to advise on and facilitate engagement across CLAHRC NWC.
 - Mechanisms to engage industry and the voluntary sector with the work of the CLAHRC NWC

- Engage Partners in the development and implementation of a programme of capacity building for applied research and implementation
- Support a wider programme of engagement activities and communication to inform people about our work and disseminate learning.

In the medium term we will maintain and refresh engagement processes, structures and networks seeking further opportunities to engage across the health, social and life-sciences economy in the NW coast region.

How we will engage

We will establish and maintain diverse routes for engagement including:

Membership of CLAHRC NWC Steering Board and Management Team

NHS, Local Authorities and academic Partners and public volunteers will have formal positions on the CLAHRC NWC Steering Board and the CLAHRC NWC Management Team.

CLAHRC NWC Public Reference Panel

Strategic oversight of our public engagement policy will be the responsibility of a Public Reference Panel (PRP) comprising public volunteers engaged across the CLAHRC NWC. Once established the PRP will review the remit but it is likely to include:

- Advising on all aspects of the work of the CLAHRC NWC
- Monitoring our performance in delivering public engagement and supporting public volunteers into leadership roles.
- Electing and supporting public members of the CLAHRC NWC Steering Board, Management Team and other strategic structures
- Advising on recruitment of public volunteers to CLAHRC NWC activities.
- Identifying potential questions for evidence reviews, applied research or implementation activities
- Overseeing the development and implementation of the CLAHRC NWC Public Engagement Champions Programme.

CLAHRC NWC NHS and Local Authority Partners Panel

NHS and LA Partners will be asked to identify an Engagement Lead to join a CLAHRC NWC Partners Panel. CLAHRC NWC Partners Engagement Leads will:

- Negotiate and monitoring the use of Partners matched funding
- Advise the CLAHRC NWC Steering Board and Management Team on a strategy for engaging with their sector
- Provide a route into Partner organisations for communication and dissemination about the work of CLAHRC NWC
- Be a point of contact for staff in their organisation interested in linking to the CLAHRC NWC with potential ideas for applied research and/or implementation activities.
- Act a point of contact within their organisation for CLAHRC NWC staff to identify people who might be interested in specific pieces of work.

Engagement in programmes and specific pieces of work

The teams managing our Themes will include representatives from relevant Partner organisations. They will also recruit public volunteers or develop alternative ways of actively engaging the public in the management of their Themes.

All our applied research projects and other activities will be co-produced by academics, relevant representatives from Partner organisations and public volunteers.

Wider engagement network

We will communicate with the health community, including the public, across the NW coast area through diverse means. A communication strategy will be developed and we will establish an *Engage with CLAHRC NWC* network supported through our website and social media.

Drawing on public volunteers involved in our work we will establish and support a cadre of *CLAHRC NWC Public Engagement Champions* who will disseminate information about the CLAHRC NWC, helping to attract new public volunteers.

Engaging with industry

The CLAHRC NWC will work with its Partners, including the NWC Academic Health Sciences Network, to develop a strategy for industry engagement. We will seek industry representatives to join our Steering Board and Theme management teams will seek opportunities to engage industry in their programmes. We will include industry engagement as a standard item on CLAHRC NWC Steering Board and Management Team agendas and ensure that industry engagement is an explicit focus of our communication and dissemination strategies.

Engaging NIHR Funded Infrastructure

We will work closely with the new NIHR Research Infrastructure during and after the transition to the new structures. The Director of the LCRN will be a member of the CLAHRC NWC Steering Board and direct links will also be established with Themes.

Evaluating our engagement strategy

We will evaluate the impact of our Engagement Strategy, explore opportunities for collaborating with other CLAHRCs on this evaluation and ensure we learn from the findings.