

BRAIN LINK Building better brain research

Case Study



**BRAIN
LINK**



Building better brain research

Background

The Wellcome Centre for Integrative Neuroimaging (WIN) studies the brain, with the aim of understanding disease mechanisms and treatment.

The **Brain Link** project connects people with lived experience of the conditions we study with researchers, ensuring our research becomes more relevant to society.

What we did

- We worked with a group of older adults to shape a strategic patient programme focused on engaging patients and the public in research.
- Activities include training for researchers and **Brain Link**, an ongoing project that connects research groups with members of the public.
- Research groups give short presentations at open days, where members of the public speak with researchers. Visitors can then sign up to become an associate of a group.
- We have run one online research open day and plan to run these sessions regularly throughout the year online and in person, including in North Oxfordshire, to grow and diversify the number of patients, carers and members of the public involved in shaping our research.

What difference did it make

- PPI training is now an integral part of the WIN's training schedule, giving researchers the opportunity to learn about its benefits and practice.
- **Brain Link** has connected three research groups with three members of the public. They will meet two to three times a year to discuss research processes, research updates and the direction of research proposals.
- Visitors to the open day reported feeling more included in our research, with 85% of respondents reporting they felt they could influence our research through **Brain Link**.