

Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) Guidance

PPI Guidance 4: Raising difficult issues – guidance for contributors and staff

This guidance has been developed by PPI leads from the Oxford PPI Staff Group and PPI contributors from one or more of these [PPI groups](#)¹. It is piloted with researchers².

Any changes to the original document are those of the users and not necessarily those of the Oxford PPI leads group. Original versions of Researcher PPI guidance and templates are available on the Oxford BRC website or from one of the [PPI staff leads](#).

Occasionally, difficult issues can arise in PPI work. If this should happen, it is important to support everyone involved, and resolve issues as soon as possible. We also want to ensure we learn from such occasions, to improve how we do things.

1. Concerns of difficult situations when working with staff – guidance for contributors

Occasionally, difficult situations arise for contributors when working with PPI leads and researchers. If this should happen, this guidance is to ensure that you are supported.

The types of things that might happen are:

- You do not have enough information about the project to make an informed choice about your involvement, or the involvement offer changes after you have agreed to something.
- You are given a task to complete but with a short deadline.
- You are given the opportunity to take part during a meeting but do not feel you have been supported to be involved.
- You are not encouraged by the meeting Chair to make a contribution.
- You have not been asked about, or provided with, adaptations or reasonable adjustments (for example large print documents) to support your involvement.
- It has not been explained what payment/expenses to expect, or you have not been paid as expected.
- A member of staff or another PPI contributor does not listen respectfully to your view.
- A meeting is cancelled at short notice.
- A staff member does not respond to emails or give you the information you need to take part in a project.

¹ The group meets quarterly and includes leads from the [local NIHR organisations](#) and departments of the Oxford University Medical Sciences Division. One or more PPI contributors from these [PPI groups](#) have also reviewed.

² This document is being piloted (December 2023-April 2024) with researchers. Any suggestions for improvements should be sent to Rachel.taylor@ouh.nhs.uk.

If you have any issues like the above, or something else which makes you uncomfortable, please raise it with any staff member you are working with that you feel comfortable with. This can be by email or phone, or if you would feel more comfortable, you could first contact Rachel Taylor (see details at end of this document).

If you have a concern that cannot be resolved by the PPI lead (rachel.taylor@ouh.nhs.uk), then you can contact Jennifer.Anderson@ouh.nhs.uk (Head of BRC Operations (OBRC)).

2. Concerns or difficult situations when working with PPI contributors – guidance for staff

Occasionally there is a concern or difficult issue when working in partnership with PPI contributors e.g.

- Carer costs, travel or accommodation expenses are higher than the policy. (See Oxford BRC payment policy).
- An activity is not completed to a satisfactory standard and / or it seems that the PPI contributor has not spent the appropriate amount of time on the activity
- Regular late arrival or not contributing to meetings.
- Group dynamics that you feel uncomfortable about.
- There is something else you are concerned about and would like advice.

Please follow this guidance:

- Remember to maintain friendly and open communication throughout.
- Ask how the contributor is and how they are finding their PPI activities – do they have any concerns?
- Revisit with the contributor the initial request to ensure that there is clarity on what is being asked.
- If appropriate, provide a deadline for the completed work and if explain that if the next deadline is missed, there will be no extensions.
- Explain that for payment to be made, the work needs to be completed to a satisfactory standard **or** that appropriate time and/or effort has been spent.
- Ask the contributor if they are able to do it and if they need any support to complete it (e.g. give the information verbally rather than in written format).
- If unsatisfactory work is repeated another time or other changes are not made ask the contributor if they would rather not be asked to do this type of activity.

Contacts:

Rachel Taylor Rachel.Taylor@ouh.nhs.uk – Oxford BRC Public and Community Involvement, Engagement and Participation Lead

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Please add relevant logo and
keep/take off the NIHR OBRC logo
as appropriate

November 2023, Oxford PPI Staff Group. Contact: Rachel.Taylor@ouh.nhs.uk