

## Public Involvement Impact Review

# Unlocking Data Project



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## Background

Unlocking Data was set up to inform Public Health and Practice. It was about asking citizens in Kent, Surrey and Sussex their views on using public health data to create solutions to barriers in health policy. By linking (or sharing) data that is collected it could be possible to spot patterns to shape services. This could lead to more efficient service delivery where services are targeted in certain areas exactly when they will be needed. In turn, this would make health data better serve the needs of the population.



## Why we sought public involvement

Through the use of focus groups, we sought to find out what people thought about the use of health and other data to improve services, how to be clear and trustworthy about data use and also to suggest ways the public can be included in decision-making around using data.

Public members were not only participants in this project but had a very active role in shaping its design and roll out through a number of public involvement activities including being a 'critical friend'. This in turn proved to be an enriching experience for those involved.

Training was offered on Conducting Online Focus Groups, which gave me the confidence to lead a few small breakout group sessions, getting feedback from the public enriched this project experience and made being a part of this project so enjoyable.

I was a lay co-applicant on this project, which to be honest gave me a greater sense of purpose and involvement, rather than being a Public Member

I was involved in every stage of this interesting project and throughout the whole received positive feedback from the project lead. It was great to see my contributions used ..... you feel valued, which increases your sense of worth and you strive to assist wherever possible.



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**NIHR** | Applied Research Collaboration  
Kent, Surrey and Sussex

## Involvement Activity

- Steering Group to review public facing documents  
Advertising Flyer  
Public Information Sheet & consent form
- Individual support - explanation of project
- Rehearsal of focus groups and review of content & delivery
- Review of inclusion and accessibility from public perspective
- Training on conducting online focus groups.
- Analysis discussion of focus group themes and quotes
- Dissemination - attended as invited guests

## Outcome

- Language of forms simplified including online accessibility
- Individual public members given support to understand their roles in project.
- Content of focus groups was adapted and order changed to improve flow.
- Public insight on inclusivity.
- Suggested ways of dealing with triggering issues.
- Appropriately trained focus group facilitator
- Including public perspective enabled a more rounded view of focus group findings
- Public members given a sense of achievement and opportunity to take part in the summary video.

## Impact

- Simplified language allowed information to be spread wider with greater accessibility.
- Better understanding of individual Public Members, their lived experiences as well as their personal and professional skills – helps to identify their strengths and learning needs.
- Focus groups were made more accessible following the steering group discussions.
- Public Members were given the skills needed in role of facilitating online focus groups resulting in more inclusive and unbiased groups and improved personal confidence
- A greater depth of research findings analysis achieved through the inclusion of the Public Member's perspective, enhanced by their involvement throughout the project.
- Completing the loop in the research findings and receiving feedback can be a satisfying conclusion for Public Members'.

## Wider learning/sustainable impact

- Essential paperwork can be improved with each fresh pair of eyes.
- Getting to know people on a personal level helps to build confidence, offer appropriate support and promotes ongoing relationships
- Checking understanding at the start of public involvement can ease future misunderstanding as well as build trust.
- Tools developed in this project (ie accessibility checklist) can be used for future projects.
- Offering Public Member training develops their skills and confidence helping to build a community of skilled Public Members to support future projects
- Involving public members in dissemination events helps to show how they have the power to impact research and to feel valued