



Details for the role of:

## **Children and Young People's (CYP) Mental Health Public Advisor for the Starting Well Theme**

at the Applied Research Collaboration, Kent, Surrey, Sussex

*(including membership of the Public Involvement Network)*

### **Background:**

The [National Institute for Health & Care Research \(NIHR\)](#) is the nation's largest funder of health and care research and provides the people, facilities and technology that enables research to thrive.

The NIHR [Applied Research Collaboration, Kent Surrey Sussex \(ARC KSS\)](#) is one of 15 ARCs across England, part of a £135 million investment by the NIHR to improve the health and care of patients and the public. Led by Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and Professor Stephen Peckham at the University of Kent, ARC KSS is a collaboration of organisations working together (including Universities, Clinicians, Service providers -NHS & Vol, Commissioners, Communities, People, Voluntary organisations) to carry out applied research. The aim of this research is to solve problems and ultimately improve the quality of life of people receiving health and social care services, living in this region. Most importantly these organisations work together to make sure the research findings are used (or implemented) to make a difference in practice.

Our research is focused within four core themes and four cross-cutting themes which reflect the needs that are specific to the region of Kent, Surrey, and Sussex.

At the ARC KSS we value the experience and expertise that the public can bring to research, which can ensure that our work is relevant, representative, and responsive to our local population.

#### **ARC KSS Core research themes:**

1. Social Care
2. Starting well: Children and Young People's Mental Health
3. Primary and Community Health Services
4. Living Well with Dementia

#### **ARC KSS Cross-cutting themes:**

1. Co-production
2. Public Health
3. Digital Innovation
4. Health and Social Care Economics



## The Role of Theme Public Advisors:

We have a community of public members who support our work, but our Theme Public Advisors take on an additional role of helping with the organisational work (governance) of ARC KSS. There are two Public Advisors per Theme. As a Theme Public Advisor, you will help us meet our aims by:

- **Being a member of the Public Involvement Network (PIN)** – a network of 16 Theme Public Advisors who meet to share what they have been doing with their themes. Through these friendly meetings we support each other, find out what work is going on across the ARC KSS, and work together to raise the profile of Public and Community Involvement and Engagement. There is opportunity to feed into the oversight structures of ARC KSS including the executive committee and the Board.
- **Being a member of the Theme Teams** – this will involve working closely with your theme and the staff members within the team. You will be invited to join meetings with them to bring a public point of view to the overall direction of the Theme and the work they are doing.

### **We are recruiting for a Public Advisor for the Starting Well: Children and Young People's Mental Health theme.**

The Starting Well Theme focuses its research on Early detection and intervention of mental health problems in children and young people. The theme works to enable and enrich approaches in research, evaluation and intervention, development and implementation.

The Starting Well sub-themes include:

- Severe mental health problems in adolescence and neurodivergence
- School based mental health
- Parenting
- Seldom heard groups of young people and communities

We are looking for a young person with an interest in applied health and social care research, and knowledge or experience of local mental health or community services. We appreciate diverse representation and encourage applications from young people from ethnic minority and LGBTQIAP+ communities, young carers, neurodivergent young people, young people with a disability, and care experienced young people.

More information can be found on our website: [Starting Well: Children's Mental Health | ARC KSS \(nihr.ac.uk\)](https://www.nihr.ac.uk/about/starting-well-childrens-mental-health/)



### **Support and reimbursement:**

Induction and ongoing support for this role will be provided by the Public and Community, Involvement and Engagement (PCIE) team, along with the Starting Well Theme.

This is not an employment role however, there is payment offered for your time involved. You will be reimbursed for your time taking part in PIN meetings, research meetings and support, travel expenses, and/or other expenses incurred as part of your work. Payment will be in line with the ARC KSS' host organisation's Service User and Career Payment Policy and the NIHR Guidelines.

Please note that the role involves casual hours and we provide a brief account of potential meetings and opportunities in the role description, but this may vary. You need to be aware that as this is an official payment system it may affect any benefits you might be receiving, we can discuss this with individually.

### **Role Specification:**

- To be an active member of the ARC KSS PIN, who meet four times a year, and to feedback to the ARC KSS PCIE team.
- Act as a critical friend to the theme by drawing upon your unique and valuable knowledge and experience.
- Attend meetings with theme leads, researchers, and implementation leads, offering your insight on research and theme developments, including: bi-monthly catch-ups with theme researchers, bi-monthly theme research meetings, and quarterly theme governance/admin meetings.
- Where appropriate, work with the theme to co-produce and co-design research enabling effective implementation of findings into health and social care practice.
- Where appropriate, support and/or attend theme related events, such as communities of practice.
- Where appropriate, support the recruitment processes of new staff and/or assessment of applications for research funding.
- Use your networks and knowledge to provide a link between the theme and the broader community.
- Work with the PCIE officer to act as a link between the Starting Well theme and the newly formed Youth Research Partnerships in Kent, Surrey, and Sussex.



## Person Specification:

- Be aged 18-25 and live in Kent, Surrey, or Sussex.
- Able to operate as a member of a team.
- Understand the broader range of patient and public perspectives beyond their own experience with an ability to be objective.
- Willingness and ability to read documents and papers and prepare feedback (support is available to assist with this).
- Willingness and ability to engage with people of different ages, backgrounds, and experiences including professional stakeholders, researchers, and members of the public, and an ability to offer your critical opinion.
- Demonstrate strong commitment to equality and diversity.
- Understand the need for confidentiality where appropriate.
- Access to email (preferred, but not essential) and ability to attend online meetings.
- Identify individual training and development needs and participate in activities to help undertake this role.
- Knowledge or experience of local community organisations that support children and young people.

## How to apply:

- Ensure you read the role and person specification.
- If you are interested in becoming a Public Advisor please send an email with a completed application form to: [PublicInvolvementARCKSS@spft.nhs.uk](mailto:PublicInvolvementARCKSS@spft.nhs.uk)
- Written applications can be sent to: *For attention of: Louise Lacey, ARC KSS, Grove House, Southview Road, Crowborough, East Sussex, TN6 2HB*
- If you would like more information before you apply, please contact Lou Lacey at: [PublicInvolvementARCKSS@spft.nhs.uk](mailto:PublicInvolvementARCKSS@spft.nhs.uk) or on 0300 373 6598.
- More information can be found on our website: <https://arc-kss.nihr.ac.uk/public-and-community-involvement/getting-involved>
- If you meet the criteria, we will ask to meet you for an informal meeting to discuss your applicability for the role.