



# Theme Public Advisor

## Applied Research Collaboration Kent, Surrey and Sussex

### 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 and 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. Hosted by Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and led by Professor Stephen Peckham at the University of Kent, ARC KSS is a collaboration of organisations working together (including Universities, Clinicians, Service providers, NHS 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 & Sussex.

### 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

### Cross-cutting themes:

1. Co-production
2. Public Health
3. Digital Innovation including - Using NHS patient data for research
4. Health and Social Care Economics

### The Role of Theme Public Advisors:

At ARC KSS, we value the experience and expertise that members of the public can bring to research, and we have a thriving community of public members supporting and contributing to our work. This ensures that it is relevant, representative, and responsive to our local population.



Linked to individual experience and interest, we also have the opportunity for public members to take on an additional role, as a **Theme Public Adviser (TPA)**. Through this role they are directly involved in supporting a particular theme as well as helping with the organisational work (governance) of ARC KSS.

**As a Theme Public Advisor, you will help us meet our aims by:**

- Being an active member of the Public Involvement Network (PIN) – this is a network of all Theme Public Advisors who meet quarterly to share the work of their specific themes. Through these friendly meetings, we aim to support each other, find out what work is going on across the ARC KSS and work together to raise the profile of public involvement in ARC KSS activity.
- Being an active team member of the Theme – this will involve working with your theme and different staff members. You will be invited to join meetings with them, both online and in-person, to bring a public point of view to the overall direction of the work they are doing, including input into the development of individual projects.

We appreciate diverse representation and encourage applications from ethnic minority communities, under 25's, carers, LGBTQ+, people with a disability.

**Theme Public Advisor - Role Specification:**

- To be an active member of the ARC KSS PIN, who meet four times a year, providing feedback on your Theme involvement as well as supporting with the governance (administration) of public involvement across the organisation generally.
- Offer insight and act as a critical friend to the theme by drawing upon your unique and valuable knowledge and experience.
- Attend regular meetings with some or all of the Theme team, including Theme Leads, Implementation Leads, researchers and theme/PCIE Co-ordinators to give a public perspective on theme direction.
- Where appropriate, work with the theme to co-produce and co-design research funding applications, representing the 'public voice'.
- Where appropriate, support and/or attend Theme-related events. For example, the Themes often run Communities of Practice (CoP) or Communities of Experience (CoE), that bring together a diverse group of people all with a common interest relevant to a specific Theme.
- 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



## Theme Public Advisor - Person Specification

- Be aged 18+ and live in Kent, Surrey, or Sussex.
- Have experience and a good understanding of the Health or Social Care sector. For example, you may be
  - Someone who has lived experience of a long term physical or mental health condition.
  - someone who is or has recently received Social Care (or cared for somebody who has),
  - you may have worked in the health or social care sector.

The most important consideration is that you have knowledge of Health or Social Care provision and can represent and bring the 'public' voice.

- 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 to prepare written and verbal feedback. Access to email (preferred, but not essential) and the ability to attend online (and the occasional in-person) meetings. We welcome anyone with relevant experience and will actively work with you if you require additional support with any of these factors.
- Willingness and ability to engage, communicate, and offer opinions, in group settings, with people of different ages, backgrounds, and experiences. This might include professional stakeholders, researchers, and members of the public.
- Demonstrate strong commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Understand the need for confidentiality where appropriate.
- Identify individual training and development needs and participate in activities to help undertake this role.

## We have vacancies for the following Themes:

### Social Care

Social care in England covers the range of services and support that help people with the consequences of age, illness or disability. It includes help such as personal care or practical assistance to allow people to live their lives as comfortably and independently as possible. The Theme aim to undertake research on social care and explore how changes in service provision impacts on service users, their families, carers and others.

They are looking for a member of the public who can offer any/all of the following:

- Knowledge or experience of the social care services in Kent, Surrey, Sussex. Such as



being a service user in your own home or in a care home, a carer for a close friend or family member who is/has been a social care service user.

- Someone who has previously worked in the social care service in the region and can provide a service users perspective gained through your working experience.
- Has connections with both statutory and voluntary providers of social care locally.
- Be prepared to share your view as an active part of the Social Care Theme Advisory Group, which brings together partners from health and care practice and delivery, and academia, to provide advice and guidance on current and future Theme activity, including project development and implementation.

### **Public Health**

A theme that prioritises research to tackle the root causes of ill health in society and reduce inequalities in health and in access to health care. Our work is relevant to all the other themes, so we work with these as well as having our own programme of work. Public health is the responsibility of local authorities, so we work closely with them on how to modify the social, economic and physical environment to maximise physical and mental health.

They are looking for two members of the public who have an understanding or experience of any of the following:

- Have a particular interest in improving the health and wellbeing of the population
- Working in local government or voluntary sector
- Experience of living with or working with people who are particularly exposed to health-damaging environments e.g. low income, low expectations, poor opportunities, poor air quality, joblessness, poor quality work, social isolation etc
- Experience of/or an interest in research relating to how social, economic and physical environment causes ill health.

### **Economics of Health and Social Care**

A cross cutting theme which works to support ARC KSS as an organisation and its individual Themes by offering an economic perspective that focuses on the cost effectiveness of activities. This includes the potential financial cost for the patient and the provider as well as potential savings for public money in terms of service provision and wider gains for the workforce or society as a whole.

They are looking for a member of the public who has an understanding or experience of any of the following:

- The impact of the cost of using health or social care services on a person's health and wellbeing - either as a patient or a carer.
- Has worked in the financial field with an interest in the cost of care to individuals/families/communities.



### Using NHS patient data for research (sub-theme of Digital innovation)

Part of the Digital Innovation cross cutting theme, this is a new Theme of work in ARC-KSS.

NHS-England is funding local and regional NHS bodies to collect and use the health data which is generated in the course of routine patient interactions with the health service. Patient data will be de-identified and housed in secure data safe-havens so that researchers (e.g. those working in universities) can have safe access. These datasets can be used for identifying groups at risk of health inequalities, looking at outcomes of different treatments, developing ways of predicting who is at risk of different diseases, and look at whether different treatments or services are working well and efficiently.

In the ARC-KSS Data Hub, we are working with the NHS to make sure data stays secure and is used for the common good. We are helping researchers to develop the skills to use these datasets effectively. We would like a member of the public, who:

- Has an interest in health inequalities
- Has an interest in data security and privacy
- Has experience of navigating the NHS for any health condition

to join our Data Hub team and join us on discussing data governance, transparency of NHS data systems, and in setting the research agenda for health data science.

See more about what we do at [www.bsms.ac.uk/arcdatahub/](http://www.bsms.ac.uk/arcdatahub/).

### **Support and reimbursement:**

Induction and ongoing support for this role will be provided by the Public & Community, Involvement & Engagement (PCIE) team, along with your specific theme.

Most of our meetings are now held online with occasional in person meetings. We will actively support you with any additional accessibility issues you may have such as limited technology ability, dyslexia, hearing or vision impairment, etc.

This is not an employment role however, there is payment offered for your time taking part in agreed activities including PIN meetings and Theme-related meetings. Travel and/or other expenses incurred as part of your work will also be reimbursed in line with relevant organisational policies and NIHR guidelines.

Please note that the role involves casual hours and we aim to provide information about time commitment and remuneration prior to each activity agreed.

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.



### How to apply:

- We will be holding an **informal information session** by zoom on **Monday 20 November, 4-5pm**. If you would like to join us please email us at [PublicInvolvementARCKSS@spft.nhs.uk](mailto:PublicInvolvementARCKSS@spft.nhs.uk) where we will send you joining details nearer the time.
- For any other information please visit our [website](#), view our [FAQ sheet](#) or email [Pippa Shaw](#) or [Lou Lacey](#).
- If you are interested in applying for the role of a Theme Public Advisor, please return a completed [application form](#) to [PublicInvolvementARCKSS@spft.nhs.uk](mailto:PublicInvolvementARCKSS@spft.nhs.uk)
- Alternatively, written applications can be sent:  
*For attention of: Pippa Shaw, ARC KSS, Grove House, Southview Road, Crowborough, East Sussex, TN6 2HB*
- If you meet the criteria, we may invite you to an informal meeting to discuss your applicability for the role.
- After we have met all applicants, we will contact you to let you know the outcome.

**Closing date: Sunday 26th November 2023 at 5pm.**