

Key Messages

- Embedding public involvement activity within tobacco related research can help to address underlying inequalities and perceptions of stigma towards smokers.
- Involvement can take place in a broad variety of ways, at all stages across the research cycle.
- Collating evidence of public involvement activity and it's impact is valuable in strengthening future partnership working.

Background

- Public involvement refers to working **'with'** or **'alongside'** members of the public rather than 'to', 'about' or 'for' them.¹
- Public involvement in tobacco research may be particularly beneficial to ensure processes and outcomes are responsive to underlying inequities and perceptions of smoking-related stigma,^{2,3} which ultimately may help to increase the effectiveness of tobacco dependency services.
- We aim to consider the impact of public involvement within the context of a **national evaluation of NHS-funded Tobacco Dependence services.**(see Fig 1. below).



Figure 1. Evaluating the implementation and impact of NHS-funded Tobacco Dependence support services.: Overview of project work packages.

Method

- Impact of public involvement will be assessed via
 - evidence of an ongoing dialogue between researchers and the public
 - how this dialogue has changed the project.

The research team keep a written log of all public involvement activity and changes arising from this activity.

This will be discussed and reflected upon with public partners.

This log, and the views of public partners, will also be incorporated into a report for NENC ARC's Dialogue and Change Award.

Preliminary Findings

Written and verbal public input on the initial research proposal.

Changes included:

- Refinement of research proposal and language used
- Expansion of public involvement plans inc. establishing a project specific Public Advisory Group (PAG).

Public input on ethical documents, development of participant recruitment and data usage approaches.

Changes included:

- Increased accessibility of patient facing documents and a data transparency poster
- Development of a recruitment flyer.

Regular PAG meetings; interpretation of qualitative data.

Changes included:

- Identification of relevant themes from a public perspective (e.g. smoking stigma, staff hesitancy and staff culture).
- Development of plans for a data analysis workshop with public partners.

Co-developed dissemination plans; outputs co-authored/ co-presented with public partners.

- **Changes included:** Additional funding towards the development of infographics
- Accessible project outputs



Interpretation

- Although the project is ongoing, our preliminary findings demonstrate a variety of ways in which public partners can contribute and add value to tobacco research, across the research cycle.
- Public involvement has been invaluable in ensuring our project, and it's outcomes, reflect the priorities and experiences of service users.
- Sharing and reflecting on genuine public involvement practice in this way can inform future partnership working within the context of tobacco dependence treatment and beyond.



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