

Public Involvement & Community Engagement Remuneration Policy

April 2023

This policy is consistent with the NIHR National Guidance on Remuneration (2022) & is consistent with all aspects of that guidance.

Introduction

There is a long-standing commitment to ensure that there is reward and recognition for public involvement in health and care research and most funders (NIHR, HRA etc.) now expect the costs of remuneration to be built into research proposals. Remuneration for involvement means financial recognition for a public contributors' time, skills and expertise. In addition, all out of pocket expenses should be covered. The NIHR has developed national guidance on Payment for Public Involvement in Health and Care Research (August 2022) see Appendices.

The ARC NENC Public Involvement & Community Engagement (PICE) Strategy is consistent with this national guidance and will ensure that public contributors & small community organisations that are engaged in activities on behalf of the ARC are fully reimbursed for expenses and remunerated for their time and expertise. This document covers the costs of PICE activities across the ARC centrally and not at an individual Research Theme level or those funded through the Open Funding Call or other ARC Funding streams. These costs are expected to be met elsewhere, although should be consistent with the National NIHR guidance.

The ARC NENC is hosted by Cumbria Northumberland Tyne & Wear NHS Foundation Trust. Payments will therefore be made by the CNTW Finance Department.

Remuneration for activities

There are many types of public involvement activities, and public contributors can be involved in all stages of the research cycle. There is no 'one size fits all' approach to public involvement, nor indeed payment. Consequently, a flexible approach to payment is required and tailored support is needed to meet specific circumstances. Involvement in research activities is NOT employment.

The NIHR guidance offers suggested amounts for different activities (involvement in research steering groups, PPI groups, reading/reviewing documents, taking part in workshops, seminars or training, and being a co-applicant). Each institution (University, NHS Trust etc.) has its own policies and procedures for remuneration as well as their own payment amounts. This document sets out the policy & process within the ARC NENC.

Payment for time will be offered when ARC NENC have identified specific activities where public advisers might make a contribution from their expertise and experience and have been **directly invited** by the ARC to get involved in its work. Where public contributors attend meetings, training etc. in their own right i.e. they are not directly representing the ARC they will not receive payment for their time. Under some circumstances (agreed in advance) their expenses will be reimbursed. The researchers or PICE leads will clarify if an activity/group/opportunity is paid or not prior to the public contributor committing to the activity.

There are a variety of ways that public contributors and community organisations can be recognised and rewarded for their contribution.

These may include:

- Reimbursing expenses at cost (see below). The ARC will arrange travel/accommodation etc. on behalf of public contributors so that they are not out of pocket if they are significant amounts
- Payments direct into an authorised personal bank account via BACS
- Shopping vouchers
- In-kind support (offering training, skills sharing etc.)
- Certificates and references
- Access to facilities such as a library or spaces
- Access to training opportunities
- Honorary appointment
- Payment to a VCSE organisation that has facilitated public involvement
- Individuals signing up as sessional workers/volunteers

Expenses

In addition to offering payment for involvement, out of pocket expenses will also be covered. This includes:

- Travel costs (public transport @ standard rate) or petrol (@ 31p per mile *current CNTW mileage rate) + parking costs
- Taxis where the circumstances justify the costs (if agreed in advance)
- Subsistence (meals, snacks) where this is not already provided
- Accommodation (where necessary and agreed in advance)
- Alternative carer or child-care costs (evidence of costs will be required)
- Accompanying carer (evidence of costs will be required)
- Personal assistants and support workers (evidence of costs will be required)
- Remote/homeworking costs (£5 per meeting for remote meetings or postage/printing etc.)

*Wherever possible travel arrangements and accommodation will be made by the PICE Team and will be paid for to ensure that individual public contributors are not out of pocket.

Conditions of Payment

Payment will be made for participation in public involvement and community engagement (PICE) activities using the following criteria:

- Individual members of the public participating in their own right
- Small Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations can claim for their participation

- Individuals who engage in PICE activities on behalf of an organisation, or in a paid capacity or VCSE organisations that already have a remit for public involvement and community engagement in health and social care research, are **not** able to claim as this is considered to constitute double-funding

Suggested tariffs

The [NIHR](#) sets out the following tariffs for remuneration, which can be used as a guide/benchmark:

- £12.50 - For involvement in a task or activity such as reading and commenting on an abstract, which equates to less than half an hour. For example, reviewing papers for the development of Alerts.
- £25 - For involvement in a task or activity requiring little or no preparation and which equates to approximately one hour of activity or less. For example, participating in a focus group to provide feedback on a proposal.
- £50 - For involvement in a task or activity likely to require some preparation and which equates to approximately two hours of activity. For example, a teleconference with related papers to read or review a few short documents.
- £75 - For involvement in a task or activity where preparation is required and which equates to approximately half a day's activity. For example, participating in a meeting to interview a small number of candidates who have applied to join a committee or panel, participating in a focus group, or delivering training.
- £150 - For involvement in all-day meetings. For example, attending a committee or panel meeting as an observer prior to becoming an active public member of a committee/panel.
- £300 - For involvement in all-day meetings that require substantial preparation. For example, when chairing or co-chairing a meeting or when carrying out other discretionary work, which requires additional responsibilities.

Implications for tax and welfare benefits

It is important to note that both HMRC and DWP may consider **any** payment (including shopping vouchers) as 'income' and this may have a consequence for anyone who is a taxpayer and/or welfare benefits claimant. It is really important that public contributors are made aware of any implications and will need to determine their own circumstances. The ARC will make clear to public contributors that they are responsible for notifying the HMRC or Job Centre Plus. The ARC (CNTW) will not deduct income tax or national insurance at source and will expect individuals to declare the amounts that they receive as remuneration.

The ARC NENC team are not able to offer expert advice about this issue, but can support public contributors in the process of getting advice e.g. the NIHR website and CAB link mentioned below.

The ARC NENC team can provide a letter that public contributors can show to the Jobcentre Plus to explain their service-user involvement in PICE involvement. [Welfare Benefits Jobcentre Letter | NIHR](#)

Different types of involvement

Whether or not an activity will be considered as ‘employment for tax purposes’ is summarised below.

Activity	Employment Status (of the public contributor)	Tax Liability (for the organisation)
Attending open public meetings which don't require prior preparation For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drop-in sessions • Open days • Seminars • Conferences (not presenting) 	Not employee/worker; unlikely to have a formal contract	No obligation to deduct tax at source
Presenting at a conference representing an organisation/research team and talking about the experience of being involved	Not employee/worker; unlikely to have a formal contract	No obligation to deduct tax at source
Remote document review. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding applications • Research materials • Plain English summary 	Not employee/worker; unlikely to have a formal contract	No obligation to deduct tax at source
One-off and focused time-limited research development activities/projects/initiatives typically completed within a few months. Sometimes include preparation and remote working between meetings. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting to inform research priorities • Discuss funding applications 	Not employee/worker; unlikely to have a formal contract	No obligation to deduct tax at source

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide public perspective to research plans • Participate in focus groups • Help with an engagement or dissemination event 		
<p>Ongoing involvement in a research project or in organisational governance, providing independent advice over a period of time. Likely to include preparation and remote work between meetings. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public contributor on research project • Public contributor on study steering committee/trial management group • Public contributor on organisation steering group/or governance group 	<p>In most cases this would not count as employment because this can be classed as providing independent advice. Depends on: Length of involvement Level of partnership/power sharing/control (*see CEST Tool)</p>	<p>Might need to deduct tax at source if employee for tax purposes</p>
<p>Being a full and equal member of the research project, organisation team potentially carrying out research. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public co-applicant on research project • User-led research • Co-researcher 	<p>Might need contract of employment depending on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person's role within the research project • Who controls the work • Host institution policy 	<p>Tax deducted at source through payroll if employee for tax purposes</p>

* [ESM11060 - Check Employment Status For Tax: Control - HMRC internal manual - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Income tax and employment status

Determining the employment status of public contributors helps determine the most appropriate method of payment and makes clear what tax implications may arise for the organisation. Public contributors as individuals are responsible for their own tax affairs and ensuring that they are paying the appropriate level of tax. Understanding tax and employment status related to payment for public involvement can be challenging and

confusing. A decision needs to be made on each occasion about the possible tax implications.

(See Flowchart in Appendix 1)

- Define and detail the exact activities that public contributors are expected to undertake
- Is payment offered for the activity/activities?
 - If payment is offered, discuss roles and agree the activities / expectations. This forms the basis for a verbal or written contract.
 - If payment is not offered, volunteer role: payment arrangement for out of pocket expenses to be set up.
- Is there any doubt about whether the public contributor is an employee for tax purposes?
 - If yes, both the organisation and the public contributor to use the Check Employment Status Tool (*CEST) to determine the agreed public contributor's employment status for tax.
 - If no, payment method for reimbursement at agreed rates to be set up
- Save a copy of the output of the determination from completing the CEST
- Payment method for reimbursement at agreed rates to be set up

Welfare benefits

It is important to be aware that benefits can be affected if payment for involvement is made. There are strict limits on the amount of money that people receiving welfare benefits can earn. Where people are receiving state benefits, they are required to notify Jobcentre Plus of any paid or voluntary activity. They may also need permission to undertake any paid activity. The Department for Work and Pensions regulations refer to public involvement as 'service user involvement', and it is advisable to use this term when corresponding or discussing payment for public involvement with welfare benefits authorities

NIHR does provide a service to provide public contributors who are in receipt of welfare benefits with free confidential advice on the impact that being paid for public involvement activities might have on their benefits. For more information on how to access this service, please contact the NIHR Centre for Engagement and Dissemination ced@nihr.ac.uk or call 020 88437117.

Reward and recognition for children and young people

Children and young people involved in research should receive appropriate reward and recognition for their contributions at the same suggested NIHR rates. This demonstrates the value that you place on their time, commitment and expertise when involved in your research activities. Many of the things to consider when involving adults also apply when involving children and young people.

Claims process

Claiming for time and expenses to undertake ARC NENC activities should be made on the Claim Form, (see Appendix B). This should be submitted to the ARC PICE Manager or ARC PICE Research Fellow for approval. The claim form will then be forwarded to the ARC Chief

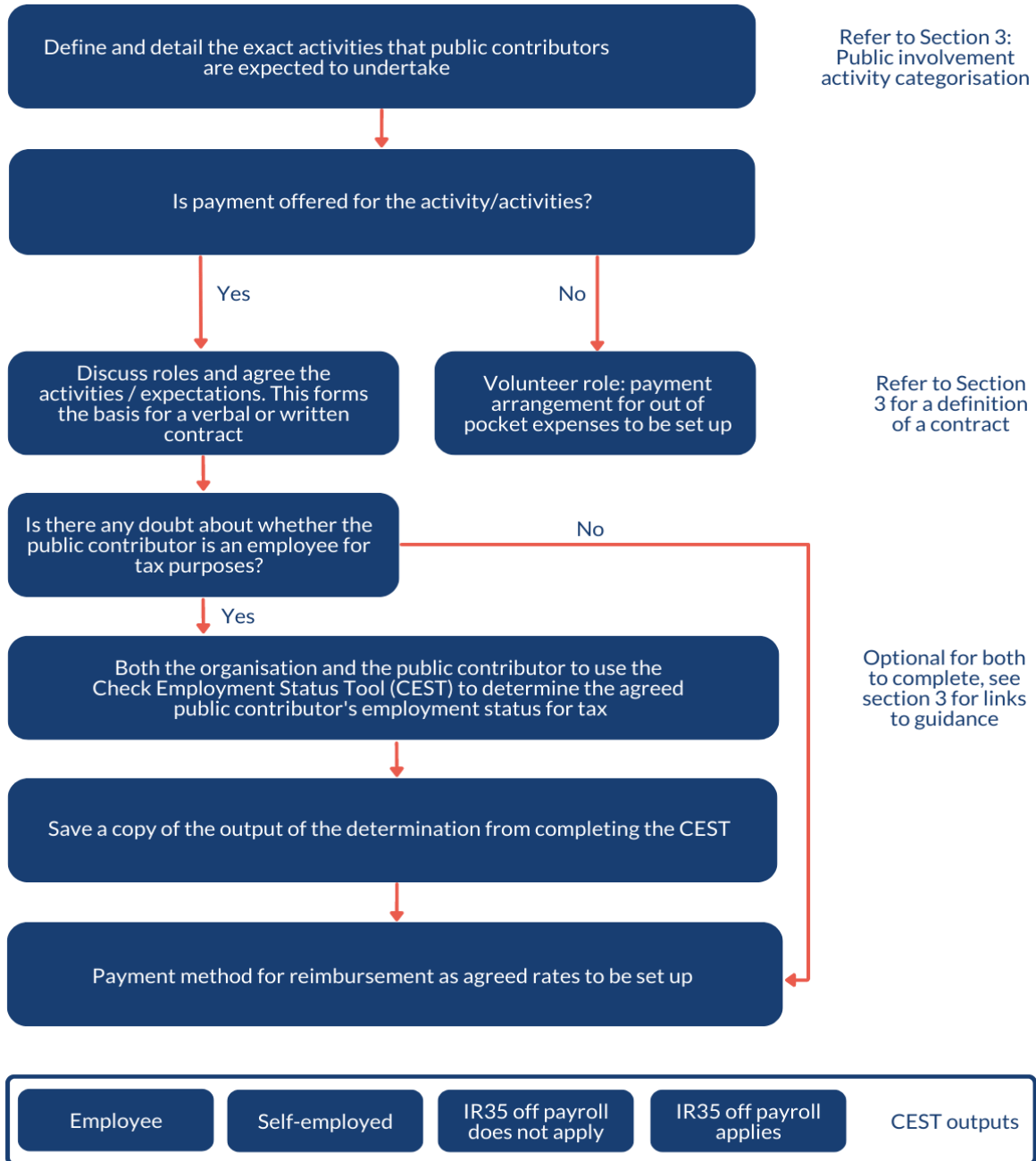
Operating Officer for authorisation. All claims will be submitted to CNTW Finance Team at the end of each week in the Expenses Spreadsheet and will be processed as quickly as possible. CNTW endeavour to make payments within 14 working days of receipt of the weekly spreadsheet. Payment is made directly via BACS into a registered UK bank account.

Payment via shopping voucher (if agreed in advance) will be made by the PICE Manager/PICE Research Fellow. Information (serial numbers/dates) etc. are recorded by the ARC PA.

Complaints

In the first instance and disagreement or issues should be raised with the PICE Manager/PICE Research Fellow or the individual who is processing the claim. If there are any issues that cannot be resolved they should be raised with the ARC Chief operating Officer.

Appendix 1 - Decisions Flowchart



APPENDIX B

ARC Claim Form



Claim for Public Involvement & Community Engagement Expenses

Title: Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr: _____ Full Name: _____

Home Address: _____

(i) Bank Name: _____

(ii) Bank Sort Code: _____

(iii) Bank Account Number: _____

(iv.) Name on the Account: _____

Payment will be made direct to your Bank Account.

*Please note that we will endeavour to ensure payment within 28 days of receipt of this claim form.

DATE: _____ **Description of activity:** (e.g. attendance at meeting, preparing documents, presentation etc.) _____

DATE: _____ **EXPENSES:** (travel, parking, child care, personal assistant etc.) _____

Please provide scanned copies of any tickets or receipts where applicable and possible

Gross amount payable: £ _____

I confirm that the above is an accurate record of the work undertaken. I certify that to the best of my knowledge, the information provided is complete and correct. I further certify that I have not omitted or withheld any information which may be relevant.

I understand that that it is my responsibility to notify the Jobcentre/DWP or HMRC of any payments I am receiving.

Signature of Claimant: _____ **Date:** _____

FOR COMPLETION BY ARC MANAGER

I confirm that I have examined the above claim and that it is correct.

Financial Code: _____

Signature of ARC Authorising Officer: _____

Date: _____

Please print name: _____

Contact details: _____

FOR COMPLETION BY CNTW FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Authorised by: _____ **Date:** _____

Please print name: _____ **Co**

Appendix C

Further Information

The NIHR has developed national guidance on Payment for Public Involvement in Health and Care Research (August 2022).

[Payment guidance for researchers and professionals | NIHR](#)

There is also guidance for members of the public considering involvement in health and care research (July 2022)

[Payment guidance for members of the public considering involvement in research | NIHR](#)

There is also guidance to help organisations (universities NHS Trusts etc.) decide on the most appropriate remuneration approach (April 2023) including issues around employment status & the impact on tax or welfare benefits.

[Payment for Public Involvement in Health and Care Research: A guide for organisations on determining the most appropriate payment approach | NIHR](#)

HM Revenue and Customs circular EIM71105 is available through the search facility. Type in EIM71105.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs>

HM Revenue and Customs information about the need to complete a tax return is available from: www.hmrc.gov.uk/sa/need-tax-return.htm

Direct.gov The Direct.gov website has all sorts of easy to use information on just about anything that concerns government and statutory services, including information about taxes (including personal income tax allowances) and state benefits. See www.direct.gov.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

Use the [Citizens Advice Bureau website](#) to find your local CAB and for other useful information. If you do not have internet access, call or by telephoning 0800 144 8848 (for England) or 0800 702 2020 (for Wales).

Disability Rights UK

Helpful online source of information and advice on benefits. You can also obtain copies of their factsheets and publications by contacting [Disability Rights UK](#) on 0330 995 0400 (this is not an advice line).

Benefits Advice Centre

Contact the NIHR Centre for Engagement and Dissemination at ced@nihr.ac.uk.