

ARC West Midlands Standards Workshop Reflections on Public Involvement

VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS

NOV/DEC/JAN 20-21

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ARC WM REFLECTIONS ON PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT – STANDARDS WORKSHOP

KEY INFORMATION

Date	30 November 2020, 10:30 – 12:30 (Inclusive Opportunities and Governance) 10 December 2020, 14:30 – 16:00 (Support and Learning and Impact) 14 January 2021, 10:00 – 11:30 (Working Together and Communications)
Venue	All sessions took place on the virtual platform, Zoom.
Attendees	ARC WM PPI/E Lead, Magdalena Skrybant ARC WM Programme Administrator, Philip Simmons Session 1: 13 ARC WM Public Contributors Session 2: 11 ARC WM Public Contributors Session 3: 15 ARC WM Public Contributors
Other Information	The Appendix to this document includes a list of acronyms and links to key documents that were used throughout the workshops.

Building on successes of hosting ‘Standards’ workshops in our previous centre, CLAHRC WM, ARC WM committed to holding an annual ‘Standards’ workshop. The Standards workshop would use the [NIHR UK Standards for Involvement](#) as a framework to reflect on ways of involving people from our local communities in the activities of ARC WM.

This workshop was due to take place in September 2020, towards the end of ARC WM’s first year. Due to the challenges associated with COVID-19, and increased time taken to welcome and induct new public contributors to ARC WM, the meetings were delayed for three months. This enabled public contributors in ARC WM time to get to know more about ARC WM and develop better relations as a group.

Previous workshops held in CLAHRC WM had been one-day events, hosted in a location selected by public contributors. Due to restrictions of COVID19, workshops were held on the virtual platform, Zoom. In response to feedback from contributors, the workshop was divided into 3 separate sessions: each session would focus on two Standards.



WHY DID WE CHOOSE TO USE THE NIHR UK STANDARDS FOR INVOLVEMENT?



The NIHR UK Standards for Public Involvement are designed to improve the quality and consistency of public involvement in research. The six Standards were developed over three years by a four-nation partnership (England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland) and tested by over forty individuals, groups and organisations during a year-long pilot. NIHR CLAHRC WM was one of the organisations registered as a ‘freestyler’ and one of our host institutions, Keele University, was registered as one of ten ‘test-bed’ sites.

The Standards are six ‘values based’ areas that provide a description of what ‘good’ public involvement looks like. Each Standard has reflective questions that are designed to support self-reflection and learning on public involvement plans and actions. Further information about the NIHR UK Standards for Involvement can be accessed [here](#).

FORMAT FOR THE WORKSHOPS

18 public contributors were recruited to NIHR ARC WM in March 2020. All contributors were invited to be involved in the Standards for Involvement workshop. Each session lasted 1.5h and two standards were discussed at each session. The first session was 2h – the first ½ hour provided an overview of the NIHR UK Standards for Involvement.

Numbers of contributors attending the workshops are listed below:

NIHR Standards for Involvement Workshop	Date	# Contributors
Workshop 1: Inclusive Opportunities and Governance	30 th November 2020	13 contributors
Workshop 2: Support and Learning and Impact	10 th December 2020	11 contributors
Workshop 3: Working Together and Communications	14 th January 2021	15 contributors

Prior to each workshop, contributors were sent the Standards to be discussed with notes from discussion from the CLAHRC WM Standards Workshop (July 2019) and recommendations from CLAHRC WM contributors for ARC WM for each Standard.

Magdalena Skrybant facilitated all three workshops, ensuring each person had opportunity to contribute to discussions. Each meeting was recorded to ensure accurate capture of discussions, which were written-up by the ARC WM Programme Administrator, Philip Simmons. These notes were checked for accuracy by Magdalena Skrybant and circulated to public contributors for further reflections and comments.

For each Standard, we considered the Standard description, our commitment to the Standard from the CLAHRC WM ‘Looking Back-Looking Forwards’ Standards for Involvement Workshop (held July 2019), and reflected on future ways of working. The full report from the Standards Workshop, held at the end of CLAHRC WM, is published on the ARC WM website.

The discussions focussed on the following:

- Whether ARC WM was delivering its commitment from CLAHRC WM;
- Areas where there is good practice in relation to public involvement in ARC WM;
- Areas where there is room for growth and improvement;
- Suggestions for how ARC WM can move forward as a community to push the boundaries of each Standard.

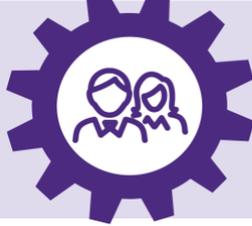
It is important to note that whilst each workshop focussed on two Standards, there was overlap with other Standards through discussions. Also, due to time restraints, not all aspects of each Standard were covered. Magdalena Skrybant allowed discussion to flow, and this report collates discussions under each Standard.

Following the meetings, clear actions from the discussions were identified to help ensure that ARC WM continues on its journey to further embed public involvement throughout all its activities. Outcomes from discussions also fed into the development of ARC WM’s PPI/E Strategy, which was being co-developed with a group of public contributors in its first year.

Updates on progress on incorporating public contributors’ suggestions would be reported at ARC WM Programme Management Committee meetings (which take place every 6 weeks) and communicated to public

contributors through ARC WM Public Advisory Committee meetings, which take place every 3 months. Updates would also be communicated to contributors through newsletters and updates in the ARC WM Newsblog.

INCLUSIVE OPPORTUNITIES



INCLUSIVE OPPORTUNITIES

Offer public involvement opportunities that are accessible and that reach people and groups according to research needs

Research to be informed by a diversity of public experience and insight, so that it leads to treatments and services which reflect these needs

COMMITMENT TO THE 'INCLUSIVE OPPORTUNITIES' STANDARD IN ARC WM

(IO-1) ARC WM will use Public Involvement and Lay Accountability in Research (PILAR), a network of organisations involving people in research in the West Midlands, to promote opportunities to over 200 patient groups, charities and organisations.

(IO-2) ARC WM will have an open recruitment process to recruit people to ARC WM. Opportunities will be promoted widely to encourage involvement from our diverse communities.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CLAHRC WM

(IO-3) Opportunities for Involvement within a particular Theme should be extended to all Public Advisors.

(IO-4) The 'Opportunities for Involvement' template should continue to be used.

(IO-5) Researchers from Themes across ARC WM should be invited to discuss research projects with PPI Advisors at Advisory Committee meetings for input.

(IO-6) Venues should continue to be accessible, with consideration given to local transport links and accessibility of venues.

(IO-7) Consideration should be given to more flexible methods of providing input, e.g. telephone/skype.

(IO-8) There should be wider opportunities for involvement that suit people who have limited time/additional commitments.

(IO-9) Innovative methods of involving people from under-represented communities should be encouraged.

ARC WM STANDARDS WORKSHOP REFLECTIONS

IO-1 - Promoting opportunities for involvement through PILAR and commitment to Involving diverse communities in ARC WM research

- Public contributors agreed that it was important that ARC WM engages and involves diverse communities across the West Midlands. In particular, it was considered important to target communities underrepresented in research.
- There was discussion around the scope for everyone within ARC WM to be an ambassador and to engage people in their local communities about research. This could be geographical communities, cultural communities or communities bringing people with similar interests together.
- The contributors discussed how they are linked with and are connected to a range of communities and networks. It was considered important to map these connections: In addition to helping understand where we already have links to groups/communities, it would also be helpful in identifying any gaps.

IO-2 - ARC WM should have an open recruitment process

- ARC WM recruited 18 public contributors to its Public Contributor Advisory Group. This had been through an open and transparent recruitment process, which involved completing an application form and attending an informal interview (either telephone or face-to-face). Support was offered in completing the application form, if requested, and questions to be discussed in the informal interviews were sent to contributors in advance. ARC WM contributors felt that this process was 'robust, well-organised, very clear and inclusive'.
- In future recruitment rounds, public contributors felt it would be important to share recruitment strategies. Public contributors could then suggest different groups/communities that opportunities could be shared with.

iO-4 - Use of Opportunities for Involvement Template

- Public contributors liked the 'Opportunities for Involvement' template, which was co-designed with public contributors in CLAHRC WM. It was felt that this provided clear, transparent information about the opportunity for involvement, expectations for the contributor, and skills/experiences required. It was highlighted that language used in advertising opportunities for involvement should be clear, accessible and 'jargon free'. Use of acronyms should also be avoided.
- The 'Opportunities for Involvement' template should include information about where the opportunity is being advertised. This would enable contributors to identify other networks for advertising/promoting the opportunity.
- The 'Opportunity for Involvement' template should also highlight how contributors will be selected for the opportunity if there is a high level of interest.

IO-6 - Choice of venue

- Choice of venue is important: it needs to be accessible. The Murray Learning Centre (University of Birmingham campus) is easily accessible both via public and private transport and is easy to find so is good for the ARC WM Public Advisory Committee meetings. This was suggested as a good venue for future face-to-face meetings.
- Many venues also provide accessibility information. Accessibility maps, where available, should be circulated to all public contributors as standard when sending information about an event.
- Larger rooms should be booked for meetings, wherever possible, given the size of the group. There was feedback from contributors that some meetings were 'cramped' and this was not conducive to meetings.

IO-6 - More flexible methods of providing input (e.g. telephone/skype)

- Contributors agreed that through the pandemic they had learnt new skills in using virtual platforms (e.g. Microsoft Teams/Zoom). Support that had been provided through ARC WM had been useful.
- There was a discussion about offering a contribution towards mobile/broadband/telephone for each virtual meeting: this aligns to NIHR practices. It was agreed this was a good suggestion and would ensure opportunities for involvement are inclusive. (£5.00 per meeting was suggested).
- Many contributors commented that after lockdown, many would still prefer to have the option of joining meetings virtually. This would be accommodated.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS FROM ARC WM STANDARDS WORKSHOP

IO - 1	Review the innovative ways of connecting with groups underrepresented in research. This might include going out to communities (e.g. Hospitals, libraries, supermarkets and day care centres).
IO-1	The 'Opportunities for Involvement' template that is sent to researchers should explain where the original project idea came from and if any organisations have been sent any opportunity for involvement: this would enable other organisations/group to be identified that may be involved in the project.
IO-6	Ensure that meeting venues are accessible and include rooms large enough to ensure that the rooms are comfortable.
IO-6	Review possible £5 data access payment given to each contributor per meeting where these are held virtually.

WORKING TOGETHER



WORKING TOGETHER

Work together in a way that values all contributions, and that builds and sustains mutually respectful and productive relationships

Public involvement in research is better when people work together towards a common purpose, and different perspectives are respected

COMMITMENT TO THE 'WORKING TOGETHER' STANDARD IN ARC WM

(WT-1) Three to five public contributors with clearly-defined roles will be embedded in each Theme. They will help ensure meaningful public involvement throughout the research cycle for each project.

(WT-2) Public contributors will be reimbursed for their time/expenses and recognised for their contributions (e.g. as co-applicants, co-authors).

(WT-3) ARC WM will undertake an annual review of PPI in alignment with NIHR Standards for Involvement.

(WT-4) The ARC WM Director will attend at least one PPI Advisory Committee annually.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CLAHRC WM

(WT-5) ARC WM should continue to offer more innovative/creative methods for involving the public.

(WT-6) Advisory Committee meetings should continue. Dates for meetings should be planned well in advance.

(WT-7) ARC WM should develop more effective mechanisms for receiving feedback from Public Advisors on PPI and providing feedback to Advisors. Templates could be used to ensure consistency of approach.

(WT-8) Each Theme should undertake an annual review of PPI.

(WT-9) ARC WM Managers should attend at least one ARC WM Advisory Committee meeting annually.

(WT-10) There should be clear and transparent mechanisms for payment of honoraria and expenses for public contributors.

(WT-11) ARC WM should maximise opportunities to link with existing PPI structures in Higher Education Institutions and NHS Services.

ARC WM STANDARDS WORKSHOP REFLECTIONS

WT-1 - Recruitment and Selection Process of Public Contributors to ARC WM Themes

- 18 Contributors were recruited to join ARC WM Public Involvement Advisory Group. Public contributors were aligned to Themes according to interests/lived experiences.
- In the workshop, the group discussed terminology. There was consensus that ‘public contributor’ was an appropriate term to use.
- There was clarity on the role and expectations for an ARC WM contributor.
- Relationships were considered to be an important bedrock of public involvement. Relations are important between contributors and researchers and also between contributors. It was considered very important to set aside time to developing these relations within the ARC WM community. Contributors highlighted that they should be ‘approachable’ so researchers feel they can come to them asking for advice/guidance about involvement in their research project.
- There was discussion about the benefits of providing profiles of public contributors and sharing these to help develop relations within the ARC WM community. Some contributors would like to contribute a profile and would be happy for this to be shared, but it was underlined that this was not a compulsory exercise.

WT-1 - Embedding public contributors in each Theme

- Some Themes were further advanced in embedding public contributors than others. This was attributed to delays in setting-up and establishing public involvement in ARC WM due to COVID-19 and challenges of remote working. It was noted, however, that *all* Themes had been involving public contributors in projects within the Themes.
- Public contributors stated they would benefit from an overview of the Themes and key projects within each Theme. This had already been provided within some Themes, but it was felt that it would be beneficial for all ARC WM contributors to have information about all Themes.
- Contributors provided feedback that the ARC WM website was difficult to navigate in places. In particular, with so many people involved in ARC WM, it was difficult to find people. Contributors felt that the layout could be more ‘user-friendly’.
- Whilst contributors are aligned to Themes based on their lived-experiences and interests, researchers would value hearing about projects in other Themes. A suggestion was put forward to invite a researcher from a Theme to discuss a project with contributors at each meeting.

WT-1 - Embedding public involvement throughout the research cycle in each project

- Questions were raised regarding the development of research ideas. For some projects, the ‘genesis’ or creation of research ideas was not always clear. It is important for ARC WM to have a clear and strong narrative on how projects are selected and taken forward. The James Lind Alliance Priority Setting Partnerships were highlighted as examples of how public contributors shape research priorities. It was noted that some projects originate from the service, which itself responds to patients’ needs/priorities, whilst other projects are responses to commissioned calls from research funders. Some projects build on previous projects from CLAHRC WM whilst others were shaped during development of the ARC WM application.
- It was suggested that the ‘Opportunities for Involvement’ template includes a section with information about where the original project idea came from and which organisations (if any) have been involved to date. The template should also include information about other patient/public

contributors that might be involved in the project and ARC WM's public contributors could add further suggestions if relevant.

- There was a feeling that there was currently no formal process for PPI-generated research ideas to be raised and reviewed. It was advised that any and all ideas are encouraged to be passed on to the Theme leads and/or Magdalena.
- Some contributors questioned whether there was a formal process for recording public involvement plans for each project. Magdalena reflected that some projects have more formal plans for public involvement than others but she would discuss this with researchers/Theme Leads.

WT-3 – Recognising public involvement contributions through honoraria and acknowledgement in reports/publications

- Public contributors are offered honoraria for their contributions. The amount of honoraria offered for each opportunity is transparent on the 'Opportunities for Involvement' template (£20.00 per hour unless otherwise specified). Estimated lengths of time for activities are specified on the template for opportunities.
- Public contributors reflected that their contributions were acknowledged in reports/papers where relevant. Some contributors had been co-authors on publications.

WT-4 – Meeting the ARC WM Director

- ARC WM contributors met the ARC WM Director, Richard Lilford, in November 2019. Contributors also met members of the ARC WM Central Team, including the Programme Managers, Paul Bird and Anne-Marie Brennan. Contributors found this to a positive experience and were encouraged by the enthusiasm and support for public contributors and felt that their perspectives would be used to guide and direct ARC WM.
- Public contributors welcomed opportunities to hear about the broader context of ARC WM. This was considered helpful in 'sharpening the focus' of how the group works.

WT-6 - Advisory Group meetings

- COVID-19 has made it more difficult to come together as a group, especially as meetings has been virtual instead of face-to-face.
- Whilst it was challenging at the beginning, most contributors were now familiar with using digital platforms for meetings, including for those that dial into meetings. Contributors valued support that had been provided to learn how to use the platforms. There was general consensus that Zoom was the most 'user-friendly' platform, particularly as it offered an opportunity to dial in.
- There was agreement that when opportunities are available, the group should dedicate time to getting to know each other in person in initial meetings.

WT-7 - Effective mechanisms for providing feedback to researchers and researchers providing feedback to contributors.

- Contributors agreed that meaningful conversations need to be had at the start of projects as to what type of feedback is needed from contributors and how this could be provided.
- Contributors would like to know if the feedback given to researchers is the 'correct' type of feedback that they need; this could be used by the group to help develop their feedback skills.
- Some researchers provided helpful feedback to contributors on the impact of their involvement, but this was not always consistent. In CLAHRC WM, Magdalena Skrybant had developed a template for

<p>providing feedback to contributors with public contributors/researchers. Contributors agreed to review the template and add suggestions for further questions/sections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a discussion on the importance of constructive feedback. Contributors agreed that a workshop on providing constructive feedback would be helpful.
<p>WT-9 - ARC WM Management Team to attend one Public Involvement Advisory Committee meeting annually</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anne-Marie Brennan and Paul Bird, ARC WM Managers, attended a meeting with ARC WM Contributors in November 2020. There was agreement that this was helpful. In particular, contributors provided positive feedback on Paul Bird’s presentation on how NIHR ARC WM fits into the broader NIHR infrastructure.
<p>WT-10 - Payment of Public Contributors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was considered important that contributors are not ‘employees’ of a particular institution. This helps ensure their status as an independent group and maintains their impartiality. This helps to ensure that the groups can continue to offer ‘critical friendship’. Some organisations have contributors as ‘employees’ – as an employee, it is more difficult to maintain a critical distance.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS FROM THE ARC WM STANDARDS WORKSHOP

WT-1	Ensure that ‘Public Contributor’ is used when referring to public contributors in ARC WM.
WT-1	Undertake an exercise to map the groups and networks ARC WM public contributors are linked to.
WT-1	Public contributors to complete profiles if they would like. This would help develop relations between ARC WM and public contributors.
WT-1	Ensure public contributors are embedded within the governance of each Theme. Best practices of involving contributors within each Theme should be shared.
WT-1	Explore how researchers in ARC WM plan and record public involvement throughout projects. Examples of best practice to be shared.
WT-1	Invite researchers to share research with contributors at future Public Involvement Advisory Group meetings.
WT-1	Ensure that public contributors receive regular updates/communications about research in each Theme. This should be in an accessible format. This could be communicated through the ARC WM Newsblog, newsletters and also through Public Contributor Advisory Committee meetings.
WT-7	Circulate feedback template form developed in CLAHRC WM for researchers to provide feedback to contributors for further comment/suggestions. This could be used to ensure researchers provide feedback on their contributions.
WT-7	Explore the idea of hosting a seminar feedback (for researchers and public contributors).

SUPPORT AND LEARNING



SUPPORT AND LEARNING

Offer and promote support and learning opportunities that build confidence and skills for public involvement in research.

Remove practical and social barriers that stop members of the public and research professionals from making the most of public involvement in research.

COMMITMENT TO THE 'SUPPORT AND LEARNING' STANDARD IN ARC WM

(SL-1) Public contributors will be offered an induction, incorporating a Learning Needs Analysis.

(SL-2) ARC-WM will fund, deliver and signpost public contributors to relevant learning opportunities/resources, including those promoted through the NIHR INVOLVE Learning and Development platform.

(SL-3) Researchers will benefit from formal training on Public Involvement and can attend informal 'drop-in' clinics delivered by regional NIHR PPI Leads and public contributors.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CLAHRC WM

(SL-4) The Induction to ARC WM should be two half-days, several months apart. The induction should include a handbook, with key information for PPI Advisors.

(SL-5) There should be more regular opportunities for Public Advisors to develop skills. These could be 'tacked on' to existing meetings (e.g. Advisory Committee meetings).

(SL-6) Learning/Development opportunities should include a mix of research skills (e.g. Quantitative Research methods) and soft skills (e.g. Assertiveness training).

(SL-7) ARC WM should report examples of good practice and share these examples so both PPI Advisors and researchers can learn from these experiences.

(SL-8) There should be opportunities for less-experienced PPI Advisors to 'buddy' up with more experienced Advisors.

(SL-9) More experienced PPI Advisors should have opportunities to support less-experienced Advisors if this is something that interests them.

ARC WM STANDARDS WORKSHOP REFLECTIONS

SL-1 and SL-4 – Offering an induction to ARC WM Public Contributors

- The face-to-face ½ day induction, which was planned for April 2020, was postponed: COVID19. Lockdown restrictions throughout 2020 have prevented a face-to-face induction. Instead, ARC WM public contributors had opportunities to meet each other informally and learn more about ARC WM in September/October 2020 through meetings on the virtual platform, Zoom. A short presentation introduced contributors to ARC WM, its Themes, and some key projects.
- Contributors valued opportunities to get to know each other in these induction meetings through activities, such as 'ice-breakers'. It was noted that not all contributors enjoyed ice-breaker-style activities.
- ARC WM Contributors met the ARC WM Director and members of the Central Management team in November 2020. This was found to be a useful meeting.
- ARC WM contributors discussed that they would appreciate further information about how NIHR ARC WM fits into the local/regional health and social care landscape.
- Whilst ARC WM contributors felt they had a good understanding of ARC WM, contributors also stated that they would benefit from an overview of all the Themes, key projects within each Theme, and how the Themes fit into ARC WM and the national ARC infrastructure. It was noted that this work was in progress (see also [Working Together-1](#))

SL-2 – Signposting to opportunities for ARC WM public contributors to develop skills

- ARC WM signposts public contributors to resources available online. This includes courses available on platforms, such as 'FutureLearn'.
- CLAHRC WM had developed 'Method Matters'. These were short articles, published in the CLAHRC WM Newsblog, which explained topics such as 'absolute risk versus relative risk', 'regression to the mean' and 'causation versus correlation'. These were considered to be useful and contributors liked the 'bite-size' format.
- ARC WM public contributors felt that it was important not to 'reinvent the wheel'. It was felt that there was a wealth of information already available on platforms such as YouTube, particularly in areas such as research methods.
- ARC WM public contributors would welcome signposting to some resources to help them in their roles. If there are any 'gaps' identified, these could be addressed, drawing on expertise in ARC WM and organisations linked to ARC WM.

SL-3 – Training and support for researchers

- In addition to support provided by Magdalena Skrybant and Sophie Staniszewska, ARC WM PPI/E Leads, ARC WM researchers are able to attend drop-in sessions, which run twice monthly, and receive any information about an aspect of involving and engaging the public in research. The drop-in sessions are run in conjunction with leads from other NIHR Centres/Higher Education Institutions linked to ARC WM. ARC WM also hosts 'co-production' drop-in sessions, available on request, where researchers and contributors can explore approaches to co-producing their research. ARC WM contributors felt that this was a good level of support.
- ARC WM contributors felt it was important to provide information/support to researchers early on in their careers on how public involvement can add value to research. Magdalena described the range of teaching programmes where training is delivered (e.g. MSc Clinical Trials, MSc Public Health, PPI Workshops). Contributors felt that training should also be also offered to undergraduate students. MS noted that this may be taking place already but by another NIHR Centre.
- ARC WM contributors felt that all early-career researchers should be invited to receive training on Public Involvement in Research.

SL5 and SL6 - Regular opportunities for contributors to develop skills

- There was appetite amongst ARC WM Contributors to learn more about research methods. Many said they would benefit from a 'handbook' with short, bite-size explanations of key concepts/glossary of key terms. Short seminars (perhaps recorded) would also be welcomed and these would be a valuable resource.
- ARC WM contributors also expressed a willingness to develop additional skills, which could help them in their roles as public contributors. This would include topics such as 'presentation skills', 'assertiveness skills', 'chairing skills'.
- Consideration should be given to support contributors that don't have access to the internet. It is important that content is made available in formats other than online.

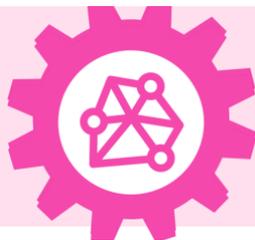
SL8 and SL9 – Opportunities for a buddy system

- ARC WM contributors felt that it would be a good idea to offer a buddy system for those that wanted it. This would help contributors learn more about public involvement, particularly for those that would like to learn from contributors that have more experience.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS FROM ARC WM STANDARDS WORKSHOP

SL-1	Once lockdown restrictions permit, hold a face-to-face induction for ARC WM contributors, which will enable them to meet each other and the wider team. This should include an overview of each of the Themes and information about how ARC WM fits into the broader health and social care landscape.
SL-1	Provide information for ARC WM contributors on how the Themes contribute to the ARC WM as a whole and link with national ARC Priority areas.
SL-2	Scope resources available online to support people who want to learn more about research methods. Contributors could be signposted to these resources.
SL-2	Explore with researchers in the Research Methods theme further 'Method Matters' that can be published in the Newsblog.
SL-3	Ensure that all researchers (and potential researchers) are offered training on public involvement in research as part of their training programme. This includes students on medical courses in our host institutions and early career researchers in ARC WM.
SL-5&6	MS to scope out resources already available on research methods. MS to identify gaps in provision and scope out a programme of topics that ARC WM contributors (and public contributors outside ARC WM) could benefit from.
SL-5&6	MS to scope out resources already available on soft skills through our Higher Education Institutions. MS to identify gaps in provision and scope out a programme of topics that ARC WM contributors (and public contributors outside ARC WM) could benefit from.
SL-8&9	MS would scope out buddy systems already used in Public Involvement and identify contributors that would be willing to be part of the initiative.

COMMUNICATIONS



COMMUNICATIONS

Use plain language for well-timed and relevant communications, as part of involvement plans and activities

Communicate with a wider audience about public involvement and research, using a broad range of approaches that are accessible and appealing

COMMITMENT TO THE 'COMMUNICATIONS' STANDARD IN ARC WM

(C-1) In addition to using traditional communication methods (e.g. websites, social media, and attending events) ARC-WM will use innovative methods to engage audiences with research. Successful CLAHRC-WM examples include 'Shout Out for Youth Mental Health', an event co-designed with young people and sharing research through dance, poetry and art.

(C-2) We will also draw on expertise from Keele's LINK Group (Lay Involvement in Knowledge Mobilisation) to develop ways of partnering public contributors to implement research evidence.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CLAHRC WM

(C-3) ARC WM's website should be developed with input from public contributors. Content should be reviewed regularly. In particular, lay summaries of research projects should be provided on the website.

(C-4) The ARC WM Newsblog (published monthly) should include a regular PPI feature. Public Advisors should be encouraged to contribute content.

(C-5) Short, lay summaries of governance meetings should be provided for ARC WM Advisors.

(C-6) PPI newsletters should be provided for Public Advisors. These should include opportunities to engage with, participate in and get involved in research in addition to providing updates on ARC WM PPI activities.

ARC WM STANDARDS WORKSHOP REFLECTIONS

C1 – Providing different/innovative ways of engaging with communities with ARC WM research

- The group acknowledged challenges of developing innovative ways of communicating about research during COVID19. Whilst there have been attempts to make online experiences more engaging/dynamic, it was acknowledged that this could potentially exclude people who weren't able to access online content.
- ARC WM contributors noted the range of local networks and groups ARC WM had access to. When sharing information about research projects, and when engaging audiences, it was considered important to 'tap into' these networks wherever relevant.
- There was a discussion about hosting regular, informal drop-in sessions, initially via a virtual platform, to share research with wider communities. Potentially, these could also be held face-to-face with opportunities to join virtually. Contributors felt that in principle this was a good idea but they would need to know more about what the session content would be. The potential of offering sessions in different languages was also discussed – this was considered to be an 'interesting' concept but contributors expressed caution that it may be perceived as patronising.

C-3 - Accessibility of the ARC WM Website

- Although it was acknowledged that ARC WM is in its first year, some of the content on the website was considered to be too technical. It was also considered that some parts of the website were difficult to navigate.
- There was a suggestion that some Universities may have software to highlight aspects of the website that are not accessible. Public contributors also expressed an interest in being involved in developing the website.

C-4 - ARC WM Newsblog

- ARC WM contributors received the ARC WM Newsblog. This is posted to contributors who are unable to receive the Newsblog via email.
- Most Newsblogs include an item relating to public involvement in research. This was welcomed by public contributors.

C-5 - Providing short, lay summaries of meetings for Public Contributors

- When providing written communications (not limited to summaries of meetings), public contributors agreed it was important to use language that is accessible and 'jargon-free'. Use of acronyms should be avoided or an acronym list should be provided.

C-6 - ARC WM Public Contributor Newsletter

- Contributors discussed the value of a regular PPI/E newsletter to keep them informed of latest news and opportunities for involvement.
- Magdalena Skrybant requested feedback on the format of the newsletter for public contributors. Contributors requested more information about activities in other NIHR organisations. Contributors

agreed to share examples from other organisations that would ensure future communications meet contributors’ needs.

- Contributors agreed that a regular newsletter would be a good way to keep contributors in the loop about research in the Themes and key discussions in ARC WM governance.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS FROM ARC WM STANDARDS WORKSHOP

C-1	Continue to explore different ways of involving/engaging audiences with ARC WM research. This should include approaches in the virtual environment and consideration of how to involve/engage people that do not have access to the internet.
C-3	Establish a group of contributors to review the content of the ARC WM website and suggest ways to improving the content and accessibility of the website.
C-3	Explore whether Universities have access to software to review accessibility of the ARC WM website for people with different communication/language needs.
C-5	Ensure all materials (documents, website etc.) are in Plain English and jargon/acronym free.
C-6	Public contributors to send Magdalena Skrybant examples of newsletters that could help shape the future design/content of ARC WM Public Contributor newsletters.

IMPACT



IMPACT

Seek improvement by identifying and sharing the difference that public involvement makes to research

Understand the changes, benefits and learning gained from the insights and experiences of patients, carers and the public

COMMITMENT TO THE ‘IMPACT’ STANDARD IN ARC WM

(I-1) Involvement activities will be reported using [GRIPP2](#), the international guidance for reporting involvement. Staniszewska, a co-applicant on the ARC WM bid, was instrumental in developing this guidance.

(I-2) We will report the impact of contributions in four key areas: reach (diversity of people involved); relevance (how research meets priorities of local communities); refinement (how involvement shaped research design/delivery) and relationships (how we develop partnerships with public contributors).

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CLAHRC WM

(I-3) All researchers in ARC WM should use GRIPP2 to report Public Involvement.

(I-4) The aim of involvement should be clear and explicit at the start of research projects.

(I-5) There should be mechanisms within each research project to reflect on public involvement and ongoing dialogue between researchers and Public Contributors on how public involvement could be improved.

(I-6) Examples of how public involvement has impact on research projects should be shared through ARC WM channels of communication (e.g. Newsblog).

(I-7) Examples of what ‘works’ and ‘what doesn’t work’ in PPI should be captured and reported by ARC WM.

ARC WM STANDARDS WORKSHOP REFLECTIONS

I-1 and I-3 Using GRIPP2 to report Public Involvement

- ARC WM Public Contributors felt it was important to use GRIPP2 to report public involvement in research. Further guidance should be available on how to use GRIPP2, which might include examples of best practice.

I-5 - Effective mechanisms for reflecting on public involvement and capturing where public contributions have made a difference.

- Contributors agreed that conversations need to be had at the start of projects as to how to reflect on and capture the impact of public involvement.
- CLAHRC WM, Magdalena Skrybant had developed a template for providing feedback to contributors with public contributors/researchers. Contributors agreed to review the template and add further questions/sections to be added.

I-6 Sharing examples of impact of public involvement in projects

- Public contributors shared examples of how they had reflected on their involvement in projects and where their contributions had impact.
- Public contributors felt that examples of impact of public involvement were not shared as widely as they could be in ARC WM.
- Public Contributors felt that Programme Management Committee meetings would be a good place to share examples where public contributors had impact on particular projects/work in Themes.
- It was felt that examples of public contributors having impact on projects could be published in the ARC WM Newsblog or made available on the ARC WM website.

I-7 Capturing examples of 'what works' and 'what doesn't work' should be captured and reported by NIHR ARC WM

- ARC WM public contributors discussed the annual report on Public Involvement, which is submitted to the NIHR as part of the formal reporting process. ARC WM emphasised that this should be meaningful and purposeful.
- ARC WM public contributors wanted to be part of the process of writing the annual report in the future.
- ARC WM public contributors requested further information on how annual reports, in particular the PPI/E section, are used by NIHR.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS FROM ARC WM STANDARDS WORKSHOP

I-1& I-3	MS to circulate 'Top Tips' on using GRIPP2 guidance and look into additional training/support on GRIPP2.
I-6	Ensure that Themes highlight the PPI contribution and impact on projects during their update in ARC WM Programme Management Committee meetings.
I-3	Provide examples of how public contributors have shaped projects in case-studies, which can be showcased in the ARC WM Newsblog.
I-5	M Skrybant to share template for providing feedback to contributors after an activity with contributors for further comment/refinement. This could be used as a reminder to help encourage reflection on public involvement.
I-7	M Skrybant to involve public contributors in writing future annual reports of PPI/E in ARC WM. These reports should include reflections from ARC WM contributors on their involvement.
I-7	M Skrybant to request feedback from NIHR on how the annual reports are used by NIHR in their processes.

GOVERNANCE



GOVERNANCE

Involve the public in research management, regulation, leadership and decision making

Public involvement in research governance can help research be more transparent and gain public trust

COMMITMENT TO THE 'GOVERNANCE' STANDARD IN ARC WM

(G-1) Public contributors will meet quarterly as an Advisory Committee that will develop a Terms of Reference and elect a Chair and representatives onto the ARC WM Programme Management and ARC WM Executive Steering Committees.

(G-2) ARC-WM's Director will attend the Public Involvement Advisory Committee at least once annually.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CLAHRC WM

(G-3) There will be clear role descriptions for PPI Advisors on governance structures, outlining key expectations and responsibilities.

(G-4) The Advisory Committee should develop a Code of Conduct that all Advisors will adhere to.

(G-5) ARC WM's PPI Lead will work with Theme Leads and PPI Advisors to ensure that public contributors are used more effectively in Theme meetings.

(G-6) ARC WM will offer training/support for people elected to represent PPI Advisors on ARC WM governance structures (e.g. Chairing meetings, assertiveness training).

(G-7) There will be more opportunities for people to be involved in governance of ARC WM. Posts could be offered on a rotational basis and there should be opportunities for less-experienced advisors to 'buddy' with more experienced advisors on Committees.

ARC WM STANDARDS WORKSHOP REFLECTIONS

G-1 – ARC WM Public Contributor Advisory Committee to develop its own Terms of Reference, elect a Chair and elect representatives onto ARC WM Programme Management Committees

- It was noted that there were already Terms and Conditions for the Advisory Committee from CLAHRC WM and these should be used as a starting point. There was consensus that we should not 'reinvent the wheel'.
- There was agreement that election of a Chair for the Advisory Committee should be delayed until the group had opportunity to meet face-to-face and get to know each other more.
- 4 ARC WM Public Contributors had come forward to represent the ARC WM Public Contributors on the ARC WM Programme Management Committee (2 contributors) and ARC WM Executive Steering Committee (2 contributors). These had already attended meetings.

G-4 – ARC WM Public Contributor Advisory Committee to develop its own Code of Conduct

- It was noted that there was already a Code of Conduct for the Advisory Committee from CLAHRC WM and this should be used as a starting point. There was consensus that we should not 'reinvent the wheel'.

G-5 - Embedding public contributors in ARC WM Themes

- Public contributors were more embedded in some Themes than others (see also [Working Together-1](#)). It was a priority to ensure public contributors are embedded in the governance of all ARC WM Themes.

G-6 Offer training to people on governance committees

- Two contributors, which represent ARC WM on governance committees, reported that they felt supported on the governance committees. They reported that it was helpful to receive documents in advance with notes about what the documents contain and that the Chair of the Committee was supportive of public contributors and public involvement.
- ARC WM public contributors observed that whilst there was a dedicated PPI/E section in ARC WM governance committee meetings, this was often later down the agenda. It was proposed that PPI/E is moved further up the agenda to ensure that there was sufficient time to discuss the item during meetings.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS FROM ARC WM STANDARDS WORKSHOP

G-1	Use the previous CLAHRC Terms of Reference/Code of Conduct to create new Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct for ARC WM.
G-1	Once the group had got to know each other more, elect a Chair for the ARC WM Public Contributor Advisory Committee.
G-5	Ensure public contributors are embedded within the governance of each Theme. Best practices of involving contributors within each Theme should be shared.
G-6	Ensure that, prior to meetings, all public contributors attending meetings have the documents and that support is offered prior to the meeting. This will help ensure that public contributors are enabled to have influence in meetings.
G-6	PPI/E item to be moved further up the agenda for governance meetings to ensure that there is sufficient time to discuss PPI/E.

APPENDIX

LIST OF ACRONYMS

List of Acronyms	
ARC WM	Applied Research Collaboration West Midlands
CLAHRC WM	Collaborations for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care
GRIPP2	Guidance for Reporting Involvement of Patients and the Public 2
LINK	Lay Involvement in Knowledge Mobilisation
NIHR	National Institute of Health Research
PILAR	Public involvement and Lay Accountability in Research
PMC	Program Management Committee
PPI	Patient and Public Involvement

KEY DOCUMENTS

Documents referred to in the Report
NIHR Standards for Involvement https://sites.google.com/nih.ac.uk/pi-standards/standards
GRIPP2 https://www.bmj.com/content/358/bmj.j3453
ARC WM Newsblog http://arc-wm.nih.ac.uk/news-events/blog/