

Volunteer Role Outline

Patient Research Ambassador (PRA) – Clinical Research Network North Thames

About the NIHR Clinical Research Network

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) is funded through the Department of Health to improve the health and wealth of the nation through research. The NIHR Clinical Research Network (CRN) is its research delivery arm, providing funding and resources (for example, research nurses) for research so that researchers and clinicians can gather the robust evidence needed to improve treatments for NHS patients. The CRN also helps researchers and clinicians ensure their research is relevant, by encouraging patient and public involvement at every stage. The NIHR CRN covers the whole of England and is divided into 15 local networks, each covering a separate geographical area. These local networks support and champion clinical research in the NHS at every level.

CRN North Thames supports clinical research from within 23 Trusts and over 800 GP practices situated across North East London, Essex, Hertfordshire, Harlow, Southend and Luton.

Background

Patient Research Ambassadors (PRAs), will help improve how local people find out about and participate in clinical research and also help to increase awareness of the importance of supporting clinical research. PRAs are patients, carers or members of the public with a passion for research who want to help other patients to have better choices about participating and getting involved in research. They are in the best position to suggest improvements so that patients have more opportunities and choices about participating in research studies as part of their NHS care.

Activities a PRA could be involved in:

- Be a point of contact for patients, patient groups, researchers and staff at their local Trust or GP practice
- Contribute to staff and patients' education about patient participation and involvement in research
- Help raise staff and patients' awareness of the research taking place and look at ways to make it easier for patients to access research
- Advise and recommend areas of improvement to patient engagement, involvement and participation in research within their local Trust or GP practice
- Help to organise and run research events, forums and public stands at their local Trust
- Actively promote the benefits of and encourage people to sign up to Join Dementia Research
- Help to collect information about patients' experience of taking part in research and help to implement lessons learned from patients' feedback
- Help to develop or review promotional materials about research including material on the North Thames CRN website
- Meet other PRAs across region on a regular basis to share learning and develop the role.

How much time will it involve?

This will vary according to individual activities. We envisage PRAs will contribute around two hours or three hours a month (although this is flexible) and to support us for one year initially with possible extension(s) for another year and beyond.

Rewards of becoming a Patient Research Ambassador

- An opportunity to influence the way in which patients and the public participate in research and to share best practice and research information with others
- Use existing knowledge and experience for the benefit of others
- The chance to develop new skills
- The chance to learn more about research and the work their local Trust and other research organisations are doing
- An opportunity to meet other like minded people with an interest in research and to make new friends.

We are looking for people who ideally have:

- Experience of taking part in clinical research
- Passion and enthusiasm for supporting clinical research
- The ability to work and communicate effectively and appropriately as part of a team
- The ability to use relevant personal experience and knowledge of services and research to help towards improving the work of their local Trust
- The ability to understand the broader range of patient / public perspectives beyond their own personal experience and to use that within the role
- An understanding of, and commitment to, confidentiality
- The ability to travel within the North Thames region

How will you be supported

- Local training and support to help you carry out your responsibilities
- Network support groups with other PRAs in the network and
- Support from the Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement Manager for CRN North Thames

Expenses

We will reimburse travel costs.

Interested in receiving further information?

If you are interested in receiving regular newsletters and updates about future opportunities locally and nationally and are happy to be put in touch with your local network patient and public involvement and engagement lead, then please complete this interest form below.

<https://www.nihr.ac.uk/patients-and-public/how-to-join-in/patient-research-ambassadors/>

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