**Social Care Involvement Group Details**

**University of Hertfordshire**

**Social Care Involvement Group**

The Social Care Involvement Group is for the University of Hertfordshire and will be part of their Social Care Research in Practice Teams (SCRIPT) research study. The involvement group may also have some input to other social care projects the university is working on. The SCRIPT project is about research led by people who work in social care (from local councils) in partnership with research staff from the University of Hertfordshire and people who have experience of using social care services. There will be four of these research teams in the SCRIPT study: three in Norfolk and one in Hertfordshire.

The SCRIPT research teams have decided they would like to research:

* Exploring the lived experiences of older people discharged from hospital to their own homes.
* Exploring the effectiveness of Occupational Therapy reablement services in increasing independence among residents.
* The impact of occupational therapy for people with learning disabilities, their carers, and occupational therapists.
* Exploring people’s attitudes about using technology monitoring systems at home to support independent living.

**Timing:** June 2022 to May 2024 (two years)

**Number of people needed for the Social Care Involvement Group:** about 6

**Number of meetings:** 4 in each project year. The first activity will be a workshop in early July with researchers from the SCRIPT teams. After this the group can decide whether they meet in person or virtually.

**Other meetings and activities:** There may be other activities in the research that you can take part in if you want to.

**Involvement and support costs:** Involvement payments are the NIHR recommended rates, £75 for a half day and £150 for a full day meeting. Reasonable support costs will be met.

**Expenses:** Travel expenses will be refunded.

**Profile of Social Care Involvement Group members:**

We are looking for two people with learning disabilities to take part and about four other people who have experience of using social care services (either directly or for a friend or family member) or who have experience of doing social care research.

* You will need to have an interest in social care research. This project is about research and not about working with services. Your experience of research can be through taking part in research for a social care service or through doing research.
* You may have experience of one of the research topics but this is not essential.
* Members will live in the East of England.
* You will need to be involved for two years.

We are committed to equality, diversity and inclusion. We welcome enquiries from people from diverse and often excluded communities to join this group.

**Role:**

* Share your experiences of research and/or using services in social care with researchers in the project.
* To help the project members to do the research in an accessible way.
* To comment on the research approach and the final reports and other outputs.
* To sometimes represent the Social Care Involvement Group at other meetings.

If you have any questions please contact:

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**More about the SCRIPT project**

Full title: Enhancing research capacity in adult social care in the East of England: testing the feasibility of Research in Practice Teams

**What do we know about research use in social care?**

Over 1 million adults in the UK receive personal and practical care and support from social care. They might need this support because of their age, illness or disability. Social care aims to help people stay independent and achieve a good quality of life. A wide range of practitioners with different qualifications and experience provide social care. The Government wants social care to make more use of research evidence. But there are not enough social care staff with the skills to do research.

**What do we want to find out?**

Our aim is to see if we can use an approach known as ‘Communities of Practice’ to increase research skills in staff in adult social care services. We will do this in two areas in the East of England (Hertfordshire and Norfolk). Communities of practice are small groups of practitioners with a common interest. They have been used in health care to help staff build research skills. We want to see how to make this approach work in social care settings.

**What will we do?**

We are going to work with partners in Adult Social Care at Hertfordshire County Council and Norfolk County Council. Together we will create and test four Communities of Practice that will focus on increasing research skills among social care staff. We are calling these Communities of Practice ‘Research in Practice Teams’. The teams will be created around a topic or an area of interest.

Each Community of Practice will include 5-6 people. This will include practitioners and researchers of different levels of experience. Each team will be led by a social care practitioner (for example a social worker) who will be funded for two and a half days a week. They will undertake a research project. We will also fund other practitioners in the team so they can take time out from front line duties and take part in research related activities and attend meetings. Service users and carers will be actively involved in the research projects undertaken by each Community of Practice. The practitioners will get training and support to help them do the research.

**How will we evaluate the RiPTs?**

We will collect data to see if the RiPTs:

* are a good way of getting researchers and social care practitioners to work together;
* make it more likely that our team members can understand and carry out research;
* lead to research that is relevant to local organisations and service users and carers.

Data will be collected at the beginning, middle and end of the RiPTs. It will include focus groups and interviews, and data on research knowledge and research outputs such as research grants and papers.

**What are the skills and experience of the research team?**

Our project team includes researchers, practitioners in adult social care, and experts by experience. We have extensive experience in providing social care services and doing research with the groups of people that use social care. We also have experience in developing research skills in practitioners. Representatives from Hertfordshire CC and Norfolk CC are co-applicants on this bid. They have helped to develop the research proposal. Our project will have an advisory group. This will involve service users and carers, representatives from social care, and people who are experts in using Communities of Practice. The project team is strongly involved in the East of England Applied Research Collaboration and has its full support.

**Project partners**

* University of Hertfordshire (lead)
* University of East Anglia
* Kings College London
* Hertfordshire County Council
* Norfolk County Council
* East of England Applied Research Collaboration
* Shaping Our Lives

**Timeline**

August 2021 to July 2024 (3 years)

**Further details**

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