

**Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust  
Clinical Research & Innovation Office**

# **Patient & Public Involvement Newsletter - COVID-19 edition**

We hope that everyone has been keeping well in these unusual times. Things have of course changed with research at the moment, and we wanted to provide you all with an update about research and COVID-19 and direct you to suitable sources of information that you may find interesting.

Contents

**Events - page 3**

**COVID-19 & Research - page 4**

**Public Involvement during COVID-19 - page 5**

**Health Research Authority - Public Involvement for COVID-19 - page 6**

**Public Involvement Opportunity - page 7**

**Contact details - page 8**

## Events

Today is International Clinical Trials Day!

International Clinical Trials Day is held each year on 20th May and commemorates the date when the first controlled clinical trial was conducted in 1747. Since then, research has played a vital role in improving healthcare for everyone. Now more than ever clinical research is crucial, as it will help us understand more about COVID-19, and progress the development of potential treatments and effective vaccines in the future.

Developing drugs and vaccines usually takes a number of years, but now, internationally and nationally, funding bodies, researchers and regulatory authorities are working tirelessly together to accomplish this process much quicker for COVID-19 research. However, there are still challenges ahead, such as if a suitable vaccine is identified, how quickly can it be mass-produced for the global population. Researchers and healthcare professionals from The University of Sheffield and Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust are working together at the forefront of this urgent research.

We are asking members of the public to submit their questions about COVID-19 research for our panel of experts by Wednesday 10th June 2020, and they will try and answer as many as they can during the event. To submit your questions please complete this online form.

If you would like to hear more about how Sheffield is at the centre of this important work you are invited to join a live discussion with experts from The University of Sheffield and Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust about research into COVID-19 on **Wednesday 24th June 2020 at 6pm**.

The live discussion will be hosted by Sheffield Culture Hub, a collaboration between the University of Sheffield, Sheffield City Council and Our Favourite Places, launched to host arts and cultural events online, as well as other activities from around the city to support the cultural and creative sectors during the coronavirus lockdown.

## COVID-19 & Research

We all have lots of questions around COVID-19, and people can be particularly interested in finding out what research is being done around COVID-19 and how it may impact on other research that is taking place.

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) has published information on COVID-19 research for patients and the public on the Be Part of Research website.

It is vital that the information we find and read about COVID-19 is factual and evidence based. We recommend a new website by UK Research & Innovation (UKRI) that the NIHR is supporting called Coronavirus: the science explained. This lays out the evidence and the facts about the virus, the disease, the epidemic and its control. The articles are written by researchers and science writers.

You can keep up to date with news from Sheffield Teaching Hospitals (STH) about COVID-19 by visiting their website <https://www.sth.nhs.uk/news/news>.

Information about COVID-19 research at Sheffield Teaching Hospitals can be found on our website here: <https://www.sheffieldclinicalresearch.org/covid-19-research>

## Public Involvement during COVID-19

Locally at STH, as soon as government guidance about social distancing emerged, we cancelled face to face public involvement meetings. Things, of course, then changed quite rapidly; as always, you have all adapted to the changing situation and many panels are still very much “business as usual” just without the face to face meetings, and instead conducting reviews of research remotely. We know some of you are also trialing using “Zoom”, the video conferencing service, for your remote meetings. We look forward to hearing how you get on with this; so please do let us know.

We are really grateful for how responsive you have been with requests from researchers who have been submitting fast-tracked grant applications for COVID-19 research; they have found your insight and the efficiency with which you have conducted reviews invaluable, so thank you! We will, as always, do our best to ensure that you receive feedback about your involvement; however, at this time, we are being more flexible with our timescales for following up with researchers at this time given the urgency of the situation with applying for funding for COVID-19 research and the speed with which trials need to start.

Sheffield Teaching Hospitals are focusing on COVID-19 research and it's really important we involve the public in this. We would like to form a virtual group which relates specifically to COVID-19 research. Anyone who has experience of COVID-19 either personally or through a close friend or family member is welcome to be involved, or if you have a particular interest in this area of research but no direct experience please still get in contact. Due to the uncertainty of how long the current pandemic will last, we have no time limit on how long this virtual group will be in existence for, it may be a few months or could be years. There is no requirement to join the group for the entire period

and members will be welcome to choose which studies they are interested in reviewing; we will just let you know as and when opportunities arise. The work would be done via email, with a potential for virtual meetings to be carried out via teleconferencing. Access to email is an essential requirement to be involved though. If you have any questions, or would like to be involved, please email [eve.dawber2@nhs.net](mailto:eve.dawber2@nhs.net).

Do you have any comments you would like to share with us about being involved with COVID-19 research? Do get in touch with us!

Health Research Authority - Public Involvement for  
COVID-19

Last month, the Health Research Authority (HRA) conducted a workshop to look at the barriers to carrying out meaningful patient and public involvement in COVID-19 research. Research is being designed and set up very quickly in order to understand more about COVID-19 and effective treatments for it; but it still remains vitally important that researchers involve relevant people and especially those who seem to be disproportionately affected by the virus.

You can read a blog about the workshop here: <https://www.hra.nhs.uk/about-us/news-updates/involving-public-covid-19-research-guest-blog-bec-hanley-and-maryrose-tarpey/>

To find out more about what the HRA are doing please see their website here: <https://www.hra.nhs.uk/about-us/news-updates/public-involvement-covid-19-research/>

PRIEST PPI Advert

There is an opportunity for members of the public to get involved in a research project led by Sheffield Teaching Hospitals and the University of Sheffield.

Please see the advert below from the trial team:

**A study looking into the triage of COVID-19 patients**

We are seeking Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) members who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and recovered, and preferably those who attended A&E with their symptoms or interacted with the ambulance service, and were admitted to hospital.

You will be asked to provide feedback and provide your personal view of your COVID-19 experience. You will join meetings, likely online, every few months with other members of the study team and PPI members, to discuss the progress and implications of the study. There is financial reimbursement for your time attending meetings and reading/commenting on documents.

For more information, please follow the below links:

Study website: <https://bit.ly/353rBaQ>

Study press release: <https://bit.ly/3cEJgrP>

Please send your expressions of interest with a few sentences on why you are interested and if applicable previous experience to [priest-study@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:priest-study@sheffield.ac.uk) and mark in the subject line of the email "Expression of interest".

Contact details

[www.sheffieldclinicalresearch.org](http://www.sheffieldclinicalresearch.org)

[sth.getinvolved@nhs.net](mailto:sth.getinvolved@nhs.net)

Lucy Wasinski: [lucy.wasinski@nhs.net](mailto:lucy.wasinski@nhs.net)

Dan Lawrence: [daniel.lawrence12@nhs.net](mailto:daniel.lawrence12@nhs.net)

Eve Dawber: [eve.dawber2@nhs.net](mailto:eve.dawber2@nhs.net)

Clinical Research & Innovation Office  
D Floor  
Royal Hallamshire Hospital  
Glossop Road  
Sheffield  
S10 2JF