

# Guidance for reviewing a research brief (Public contributors)

## Health Technology Assessment Programme

Thank you for agreeing to act as a reviewer for us. As a public contributor you play a significant role when reviewing as you can help us to identify and shape the most important topics for health research. You do not need any expert knowledge to carry out this review.

### Why do we want a public viewpoint?

Research that reflects the needs and views of the public is more likely to produce results that can be used to improve health and social care. We need your knowledge and personal experience as a member of the public, a patient, relative and/or carer to add to the advice we receive from clinicians, researchers and other health professionals.

### What is a research brief?

A research brief describes a potential area of research we are hoping to commission for funding. This topic has already been discussed by one of our advisory panels. The next stage is to gather the views of public contributors who have experience of conditions, therapies and services as a patient, relative, carer or service user. We also ask clinicians, researchers and other health professionals to review the research brief to ensure that the proposed research is what is needed.

All the reviews are brought together and added into the research brief. The research brief is then presented to the group that will make the final decision as to whether the proposed research topic should be advertised to researchers who would apply for funding.

### What do I need to do?

We would like you to read the research brief and answer three questions on the 'Reviewer Comments Form' giving as much detail as you are able.

1. Do you think it is important to fund this research and would the results be helpful for patients and/or carers? Please explain your reasons why.

*With your help we would like to understand what the current public/patient/relative/carer experience is, how that experience would potentially change as a result of the research and whether such a change would be welcomed by public/patient/relative/carers.*

2. The 'Important Outcomes' and 'Other outcomes' sections list the things that we are planning to examine as part of this research. Do you think there is anything important missing or do you have any other comments?

*You may like to think which aspects of the condition/disease/treatment/circumstances may change as a result of the research, and which ones are important to you and should be examined by the research. Please let us know if you think anything else needs to be looked at as part of the research.*

Please turn over.

3. Please provide any other information or comments you think would be helpful, including your personal experiences.

*Use this section to add any views or issues that we should bear in mind in relation to the suggested research. For instance, would you take part in this research? If not, why not? How would you feel? Can you see any benefits or risks if you were a participant in this research?*

### **How should I do it?**

- Make yourself familiar with the Management Information System (MIS) before the deadline to make sure that you're comfortable with submitting the review
- Allow plenty of time to read the research brief and read it several times, if possible, perhaps jotting down your thoughts as you read
- If there is anything in the research brief you don't understand don't worry. People who have reviewed for us before have told us they have used search engines or online medical dictionaries to look up terminology. You may also find INVOLVE's 'jargon buster' helpful: <http://www.invo.org.uk/resource-centre/jargon-buster/>
- While reading the research brief keep in mind, or beside you, the three questions you will be answering
- Keep the public/patient/relative/carer view at the front of your mind. Could this research result in real public/patient/relative or carer benefit?
- You are part of a team of reviewers all with different strengths. You are not expected to know everything about the topic area. However, if you do feel you are unable to comment for any reason please do let us know so that we can identify a replacement for you.
- Remember - every reviewer has a different approach and style to reviewing, we are interested in your views and experiences
- Please only comment on the proposed research; we do not expect comments on the completed or ongoing research that is referenced in the research brief

### **Finally, thank you once again for supporting us.**

If you have any questions please contact the member of programme staff who sent you the original 'invitation to review' email.