

# Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care East of England

## CLAHRC BITE

CLAHRC EoE BITE no 6  
May 2016

A bite-sized summary of CLAHRC research: Residents Research-Active in Care Homes (RReACH)



**“Good practice can encourage the interest of older care-home residents to be actively involved in shaping research”**

### What?

We carried out a systematic literature review to see how older care-home residents had been involved in research. We interviewed older care-home residents and care-home staff from different homes to find out their views on residents being involved in shaping research.

### Who?

We are a collaborative team of older care-home residents, older people from the community, a care-home manager and researchers.

### Why and what did we find?

To find out how best to involve older care-home residents as advisors or partners in research. With appropriate resources and practices, older care-home residents are interested in being Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) members in research. Key issues for active involvement of older care home residents in research were: respecting individual interests; resources to support building of relationships; and flexible and adaptable approach of researchers.

## Recommendations for practice

Researchers and research partners aiming to involve older care-home residents in the research process should:

- Be positive: Some residents would like to work with and advise researchers.
- Be realistic: Research is unlikely to be a priority for most residents and care-homes.
- Be flexible about how to involve residents: Residents may want, or only be able, to be involved in different ways and at different times, so offer a variety of choices about types of involvement.
- Support and respond to residents' needs: Allow extra time to support residents and adapt to residents' preferences and abilities.
- Involve care-home staff: Staff can provide support and reassurance for residents before, during and after involvement. Establishing and maintaining strong links with care-home managers and staff is valuable.
- Recruit effectively through networks: Using area-manager networks of large care-home organisations or health services to contact managers, can be key to recruiting residents to work together with researchers.
- Plan for involvement costs: Research budgets must include all costs of residents' involvement; staff members' paid time to provide support; extra researcher time to maintain relationships; and any specialist transport needs.
- Acknowledge the residents' contributions: Properly highlight and thank residents for their involvement. This recognises their contribution(s), demonstrates courtesy and makes it more likely people will want to be involved further.
- Persevere: Research gains from residents being involved over time; giving it more focus and relevance.

## References

Backhouse, T., Kenkmann, A., Lane, K., Penhale, B., Poland, F. and Killelt, A. Older care-home residents as collaborators or advisors in research: a systematic review. *Age and Ageing*. 2016; 45 (3): 337-345. doi: 10.1093/ageing/afv201

## What is NIHR CLAHRC East of England?

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care (CLAHRC) East of England is a five year programme of applied health and social care research which focuses on the needs of people with complex problems, often vulnerable, when multiple agencies are involved in their care: young people, frail older people, those with dementia, learning disabilities, acquired brain injuries or mental ill health.

The CLAHRC East of England collaboration encompasses some thirty-six organisations, with research hubs in the Universities of Cambridge, Hertfordshire and East Anglia working closely with individuals and organisations involved in the whole care pathway.

Service users and carers are at the heart of what we do, in parallel with an ambitious public health research programme. Co-production and collaboration at all stages of the research process are fundamental to making a positive impact through applied health research.

For more information:

Website: <http://www.clahrc-eoe.nihr.ac.uk/2014/03/understanding-ppi-in-older-peoples-research/>

Contact: Dr Anne Killelt, Lead Researcher at [a.killelt@uea.ac.uk](mailto:a.killelt@uea.ac.uk)

*Disclaimer: The research was funded by the National Institute for Health Research. The views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the NHS, the NIHR or the Department of Health.*

CLAHRC EoE is hosted by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust

Funded by  
  
National Institute for  
Health Research