

A guide to Personal and Public Involvement (PPI)



Virtual Focus Groups

A focus group refers to a 'one off' group interview or discussion where the focus is a particular area of interest. This guide provides information specific to carrying out virtual focus groups.

Consider:

- Who you want to be involved and how you will ask them to take part
- The purpose of the focus group – what do you hope to achieve? Make this clear to participants
- The virtual platform you are going to use
- How you will capture people's contributions. *Some interactive tools available e.g in Zoom: whiteboards and breakout rooms, but be sure you are confident using them.* Practice in advance
- How you will share information with the group, for example:- Screen share or suggest participants have paper and pen with them to hold up short answers to questions asked

In advance of the meeting:

- Ensure you are confident using the platform; practice with colleagues
- Consider confidentiality (e.g. confidentiality agreement, ground rules, notifying people if you intend to record the meeting)
- Check if any individuals have specific requirements to participate
- Prepare discussion points (3-5 points recommended)
- Share guidelines for using your selected platform; encourage participants to practice
- Share log on details and suggest logging on 10-15 minutes early

KEY

Planning

Doing

Reviewing



PPI - Involving you, improving care



Getting started:

- Allow time to welcome each participant as they join, encourage informal conversation, round of introductions, short ice breaker
- Consider a co-facilitator; they can act as note-taker, time keeper and provide technical help
- Aim for 60-90 minutes meeting (avoid on-line fatigue, for longer meetings, build in breaks)
- Encourage involvement, without putting pressure on participants

Tips:

- Smaller on-line groups will be less intimidating and provide more opportunity for all to contribute (4-5 people recommended)
- If necessary, take issues “off-line” in discussion with participants at the end of the session
- Prepare in advance & be creative
- Breakout rooms are an option if dealing with a larger group
- If you need support contact your PPI Team
- Don't forget....evaluation & feedback



Guides to virtual involvement have been developed to complement existing guides available on Engage website:

<http://engage.hscni.net>

Need support?



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