

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 peoples 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, code of conduct, 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 in details and suggest logging in 10-15 minutes early.
- Ask participants to change their on screen ID to their first name and surname.

KEY

Planning

Doing

Reviewing

<http://engage.hscni.net>



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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 notetaker, time keeper and provide technical help.
- Aim for a 60-90 minutes meeting (avoids on-line fatigue and for longer meetings build in breaks).
- Encourage involvement, without putting pressure on participants.
- Ask members to use the “raise hand” icon to express an opinion or feed into the conversation.
- Ask participants to place their audio setting on mute when not speaking.
- Offer the use of the online chat box function if participants do not feel comfortable speaking in groups.
- Inform the group at the start of planned comfort breaks.

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” for discussion with participants at the end of the session.
- Prepare in advance and be creative.
- Breakout rooms are an option if dealing with a larger group.
- Use screen share option to display your presentation etc. After working through your presentation, turn off screen share function and return to the main screen again.
- If you need support contact your PPI Team.
- Don’t forget... evaluation, feedback and reflect back on your Involvement learning experience.

For more information on Involvement, Co-Production and Partnership Working
please visit the Engage website <http://engage.hscni.net>

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