NIHR School for Social Care Research
Public and Practice Involvement Group: Payment Policy

The NIHR School for Social Care Research (NIHR SSCR) recognises that supporting public involvement in the School means paying people fairly for their time and making sure that they have support for travel and payment for other reasonable expenses.

NIHR SSCR's payment policy applies to any **public advisor**[1] involved in the School's activities.This includes people who use social and health care services, potential users of care services, carers as well as people from organisations that represent people who use services.

Where NIHR SSCR public advisors are involved in activities within individual research projects, the lead for that research project will manage payment processes through their own institutions.

Key requirements

NIHR SSCR is committed to making sure that:

1. Details of payments for each activity will be shared when advertising public involvement opportunities within the School
2. Payments for NIHR SSCR are processed in a timely manner. Payments will be made within six weeks upon receipt of the completed claim form. We will notify you when your payment has been sent for processing by the finance team.
3. All details provided to NIHR SSCR to manage payments and expense reimbursements will be managed in line with Data Protection requirements.

Who is eligible?

Public advisors who are part of the NIHR SSCR's Public Engagement and Involvement Group (PEI) and Advisory Board (AB) are eligible for payment for their activities. Public advisors involved in NIHR SSCR activities outside of the National PEI Group or AB are also eligible for a payment for their activities.

Payment is made at the NIHR standard rate of £25 per hour.

For National Public Involvement group meetings payment will not exceed £50 per meeting (1 hour meeting attendance plus 1 hour total pre and post meeting work).

Payment can be made via bank transfer; this process is outlined below in the section 'How are payments made'. Alternatively, public advisors can ask for their

[1] For consistency, the term "Public advisors" has been used in this policy. The School uses "service user", "carer" and "people with lived experience" as well, depending on how individuals would like to be referred to.

payments to be made by voucher (this can be either an Amazon voucher or a Love2Shop voucher. The vouchers can be digital vouchers or physical vouchers) if they prefer this to a bank transfer.

Individuals involved in NIHR SSCR who receive a full-time salary from public funds (for example a social care professional) are not eligible for a payment for their activities. Exceptions may be possible (where agreed in advance) if an individual is in full-time employment but can confirm in writing that their paid employment is unrelated to the activity being requested or that they intend to undertake the activity in their free time (such as through taking annual leave or outside your normal working hours).

For further information regarding public involvement payments in relation to employment status, welfare benefits, tax and National Insurance, please refer to the NIHR guidance document linked here.

A Benefits Advice Service is provided by NIHR nationally, and is open to members of the public who are involved in, or considering involvement in research with the NIHR, including the SSCR. To access the free, confidential advice through the Benefits Advice Service please email publicpartnerships@nihr.ac.uk or phone 020 88437117.

What activities are covered?

Public advisors may be involved in a range of tasks. This might include taking part in an online meeting; acting as an external reviewer; taking part in interview or commissioning panels. The payment offered will depend on the type of activity and the amount of work involved.

How are payments made?

Payments for NIHR SSCR will be managed by the University of York. You will be asked to share personal and confidential information (such as name, address and bank details) which will only be seen by individuals involved in setting up the record on the payment system.

When an individual joins NIHR SSCR as a public advisor they will be asked to complete a bank details form. This is a confidential document and will only be used to set the individual up on the University of York's financial system so expenses and payments can be processed as quickly as possible.

NIHR SSCR will keep this form until the end of the School (currently 30th April 2029). If a public advisor leaves NIHR SSCR, their details will be confidentially deleted once all outstanding payments have been made.

When public advisors are invited to contribute to an NIHR SSCR activity or research

project, they will be told in writing the payment that is being offered (see below for a list of payment rates) and the expenses that they can claim.

When an activity (such as a meeting or contribution by email) is completed:

the individual will be contacted by the team at the University of York and asked to:

- Provide a completed expenses form for any expenses with a photograph or scan of their receipts by email

the NIHR SSCR staff member will be requested to:

- Confirm the activity undertaken and payment rate.

NIHR SSCR's administration team will process the payment.

Payments take up to six weeks to process.

Tax and National Insurance

Payments through the University of York for public advisors involved in research units or grants are processed based on guidance from HMRC (EIM71105) on Research volunteers, lay participants and participants which notes that for "lay" people or "users" in research, the amounts paid are unlikely to fall within the definition of "earnings" for PAYE or NI purposes. No employment relationship exists and as such PAYE and NIC would be inappropriate.

Public advisors are responsible for submitting self assessments to HMRC and paying their own tax where appropriate.

Public advisors receiving state benefits

For public advisors receiving state benefits, a payment or expense reimbursement might affect their benefits claim. The NIHR offers guidance in their *Payment for public involvement in health and care research: a guide for members of the public on employment status and tax.*

NIHR SSCR cannot provide expert advice but further guidance and advice can be sought from NIHR as outlined in the Payment guidance for researchers and professionals involving people in research

Rates of payment

Payment for activities will be based on NIHR involve rates). NIHR SSCR will advise which payment rate applies when asking for volunteers for particular activities.

Activity		Payment	Description
Involvement in meetings	National PEI Group meetings	1 hour meeting at £27.50 Pre & Post meeting work (up to and not exceeding 1 hour) - £27.50	This covers preparation and follow up work directly related to the meeting (1 hour at £25) and participation in the meeting PEI (1 hour at £25)
	NIHR SSCR Executive Group meetings	£27.50 per hour	Where a public advisor is invited to join an Executive Group meeting, payment will be £27.50 per hour of meeting and £27.50 for preparation.
Research Proposal Reviews	Review of Research Proposals (As a guideline this represents payment for approximately 3 hours) Please contact Martina Smith at martina.smith@sheffield.ac.uk if you have any support requirements, including reasonable adjustments in the time expectations per review.	£82.50 per review	Review of proposal documents and completion of review form
Career Development Award Proposal Reviews	Review of Career Development Award Proposals (As a guideline this represents payment	£55 per review	Review of proposal documents and completion of review form

	for approximately 2 hours)		
Other tasks	Various	£27.50 per hour	Public involvement in other tasks or activities will be paid at £27.50 per hour

Conference Booking and Attendance

- Please discuss your accommodation and travel needs with Martina Smith or another member of the SSCR team. We will book the accommodation and travel on your behalf. We will ensure that accessibility requirements are met and discuss these with you (for example booking an accessible hotel room).
- **We cannot reimburse accommodation or travel for conference attendance that is booked privately.**

Expenses you can claim for:

NIHR SSCR will:

- Make arrangements for reasonable travel (such as standard train fares for participation at meetings) and expenses directly for each public advisor. This is to follow University of York requirements for travel bookings, and also to avoid public advisors waiting for reimbursement of their expenses
- Arrange taxis if needed in certain circumstances. The University of York policies do not allow use of taxis except in certain circumstances and any required bookings will be made by NIHR SSCR to avoid issues with reimbursement of expenses
- Make arrangements for individuals who are required to accompany a public advisor to a meeting (paid or unpaid carer, a personal assistant or a support worker)
- Make all necessary arrangements to support public advisors with communication and information needs, including providing information in alternative languages and formats where needed
- Ensure refreshments and lunch are available for in-person meetings and accessible for all dietary needs.
- Provide and post out printed copies of documents if an individual prefers this to electronic documents to avoid the cost of printing for a public advisor
- Provide freepost envelopes if any documents need to be posted to the School (including documents that need to be returned for secure shredding), although will try to use email or electronic means as far as possible

Where meetings are taking place remotely, a fixed and maximum amount of £5 per meeting to cover the cost of telephone calls, paper, printing ink and paper, internet

connection and other home sundries.

Any other reasonable expenses will be reimbursed for public advisors. These will be agreed in advance on a case-by-case basis. This could include, for example, care replacement costs.

Further details can be found on the University of York Travel and Expenses Policy which can be found here

Questions and Support

If you have any questions about this payment policy please email Jen Hill, SSCR Programme Manager, at SSCR@york.ac.uk who will be happy to help you or signpost you to support as needed.