

Public Involvement and Engagement Group: NIHR Policy Research Unit in Adult Social Care (ASCRU)

Role description for members

What is ASCRU?

The [Policy Research Unit in Adult Social Care \(ASCRU\)](#) is funded by the [National Institute for Health Research \(NIHR\)](#). It involves the Care Policy and Evaluation Centre at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) in partnership with the Personal Social Research Unit (PSSRU) at the University of Kent and the NIHR Health and Social Care Workforce Research Unit (HSCWRU) at Kings College London. ASCRU has received funding for five years from January 2019 until December 2023.

The term 'adult social care' refers to provision of personal and practical care and support that people may need because of their age, illness, disability or other circumstances. It also includes support for family members or other unpaid carers. Important aims are to help people remain independent, retain their dignity and achieve a better quality of life. Another important aim is to safeguard vulnerable individuals from abuse and neglect.

ASCRU carries out research in England to provide national and local policymakers with the evidence and information they need to make decisions about adult social care. Our research is relevant, high quality and addresses important issues for policymakers, people who use services and carers. The programme of work is decided with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC). ASCRU's website gives more detail about our work at <https://www.ascru.nihr.ac.uk>.

Examples of ASCRU research questions

ASCRU research looks at:

- how the social care system is organised
- what services and support people need
- the different types of care and support that are available
- how well new approaches to providing care work, and what they cost
- how policy changes affect care services
- how many people will need care in the future
- how many people will provide unpaid care.

We find out if services make a difference, offer value for money and are of good quality. We look to see if people have fair access to support and availability of services. ASCRU research explores what is happening now and helps us identify challenges for the future as demand for care increases.

Public Involvement and Engagement Group (PIEG)

Membership and activities

Our PIEG Group has 10 public advisors and we are looking for **two** more people with lived experience of adult social care to join the group. Members of the group plan and develop public involvement in ASCRU, review our public involvement strategy ([link](#)) and advise on individual research projects.

We are looking for people with experience of social care for older people in England. Many of our new research projects starting in Autumn 2021 look at the provision of care for older people.

Public advisors are also involved in other activities such as:

- reviewing research information and materials
- writing and reviewing information for the general public
- attending monthly ASCRU Management Committee meetings

Some of these will involve attending meetings but there will be the option to input online or by teleconference.

Responsibilities

PIEG members:

- regularly attend and participate in group meetings and discussions
- read papers in advance and raise issues for clarification prior to meetings
- sign up to [PIEG terms of reference and Ground Rules](https://www.ascru.nihr.ac.uk/involvement)
<https://www.ascru.nihr.ac.uk/involvement>
- consider ways that public involvement in ASCRU can be developed
- report and record the impact of public involvement in ASCRU
- maintain confidentiality where appropriate
- identify and participate in appropriate training or support
- help support communication about ASCRU's research findings and research programme.

Length of membership

Membership of the group will be until the end of December 2023. Members may withdraw from the role at any time and ASCRU's Public involvement Lead will be available to offer support and discuss any issues around membership.

Location

At the current time we are supporting members to meet online. When we return to face-to-face meetings these will be at the [LSE](#) in central London.

Accessibility for face-to-face meetings

LSE can be reached by a range of public transport including tube, rail and bus or by driving <https://www.lse.ac.uk/lse-information/travelling-to-lse>

We will make the necessary arrangements for PIEG members to participate fully in meetings. Where travelling to meetings is difficult for members, we will discuss alternative arrangements for input (such as teleconference or zoom calling)

Meeting rooms used at LSE are fully wheelchair accessible with accessible toilets throughout public areas. Accessibility information can be found on the LSE website (<http://www.disabledgo.com/organisations/london-school-of-economics/main>).

Time commitment

PIEG meetings take place twice a year and last for approximately three/four hours (usually with a break for lunch). Members will be expected to read meeting papers and provide feedback on draft documents. Papers and documents will be sent for comment by email. Paper copies will be made available if this is preferable.

The time commitment for advising on projects and other activities will be agreed in advance.

Payment

Payment for PIEG meetings and other involvement activities is available for people not working in the public sector and whose time would not otherwise be paid for.

Please be aware that people in receipt of state benefits and allowances are required to declare changes in their circumstances. [The Freephone Benefits Advice Line for involvement https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/payment-guidance-for-members-of-the-public-considering-involvement-in-research/27372](https://www.nihr.ac.uk/documents/payment-guidance-for-members-of-the-public-considering-involvement-in-research/27372) is available to discuss any concerns about the possible impact of accepting payment on your benefits and allowances.

Payment will be made directly into individual bank accounts. Please see our ASCRU payment for involvement guide for rates and further information ([link](#))

Expenses

Reasonable expenses that arise from public involvement activities in ASCRU will be covered. This could include: travel, food and drink, accommodation (where appropriate), carer costs, and personal assistant costs. Detailed information about the process of claiming expenses will be provided.

Training and support

There will be opportunities to discuss and identify any needs for training and ongoing support. Members are offered support with all the practical issues of group membership such as:

- help with claiming expenses
- explanations or a glossary of technical terms when necessary
- papers and documents circulated in advance of group meetings to allow sufficient time to read them.

Declaration of interests

All group members are required to declare if they have any interests that might be in conflict with the work of the group. A conflict of interest does not stop you from being a member of a group. However, it does mean that you cannot take part in any discussions or decisions made on an issue where you have a conflict of interest.

Confidentiality

Group members must not communicate any confidential information that they learn as a result of being a member. However, there may be occasions when members are specifically asked to share information within their own communities or seek the opinions and views of others.

Person Specification

ASCRU's work covers England therefore applications are only sought from people resident in England. The following criteria will be assessed through application and informal zoom discussion.

	Essential	Desirable
Experience	Understanding and lived experience of adult social care services for older people Experience of working in a team, meetings or being on a committee	Experience of public involvement in a research or policy advisory group Connections with health/social care community networks, associations or societies
Skills	Ability to use email, internet and Microsoft Word. Good interpersonal skills	
Knowledge	An interest in social care research	An understanding of research

	<p>An interest in public involvement in social care research</p> <p>Willingness to learn about adult social care policy and research</p>	An understanding of social care policy
Personal qualities	<p>Enthusiasm</p> <p>An approachable manner</p> <p>Ability to work respectfully, value the views of others and express own views in a constructive way.</p>	

Application requirements

If you would like to apply to be a member of PIEG please complete the online application form and diversity-monitoring questionnaire:
https://lse.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8xdDyzi8dSeYi9w.

Please let us know if you require any of these documents in a different format.

The closing date for applications is **09.00 on Wednesday 29 September 2021**.

Selection process

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend an informal zoom meeting on **Friday 15 October 2021**.

If you do not make the final selection process for the PIEG but you would like us to contact you about other involvement opportunities please let us know as part of your application form.

Questions If you have any queries about the role or would like more information, please contact Helen Hayes, h.hayes@lse.ac.uk; 020-7955-6238.