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Communication: a practical resource

available online at www.kingsimprovementscience.org November 2017

KING'S HEALTH PARTNERS

This practical resource was created in 2017, primarily for improvement and implementation researchers who are carrying out projects that aim to improve health services, or change practice in line with research results. The resource may also be useful to health and social care professionals, patients, service users and others who are involved in improvement or implementation projects. The contents of the resource may not be as relevant for improvement and implementation researchers who are developing theories, carrying out systematic reviews or observing change.

Sometimes, a communication method may be used to introduce change: researchers might make a film for health professionals, or create a website containing educational material, for example. We hope the information contained in the Communication methods part of this resource will be helpful in those circumstances.

There is some repetition in the resource because we want each section be useful on its own. This means if you want to find out about one particular communication method, you don't have to read the whole resource.

King's Improvement Science believes that good, effective communication is an integral part of improvement and implementation work in the NHS. This resource was written by Inside Out, a group of freelance communication professionals who supported the work of the King's Improvement Science team from 2013 to 2017. They worked with KIS fellows Abigail Easter, Zarnie Khadjesari, Euan Sadler and Alexandra Ziemann to identify what improvement and implementation researchers need to know about communication to aid their work. The KIS fellows are funded by Guy's and St Thomas' Charity and the Maudsley Charity.

NB: if any of the links within the document do not open straightaway, please copy them into your browser.

You can also access this resource online at www.kingsimprovementscience.org

Thank you to all the potential users and communication professionals who commented on this resource during its development.

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Why you should communicate well and how to do that: introduction

Communication is an integral part of improvement and implementation work

If you want to make improvements or introduce change within health services, you need to tell people about your plans and involve them in what you are doing. Effective communication is an essential ingredient of projects that seek to do this.

This resource encourages you to think about communication from the very start, and to build communication and proposed actions into your project plan.

It encourages you to think about the people with whom you need to communicate to help you carry out your project and effect change.

And it encourages you to communicate well – by using language that other people will understand, and by choosing appropriate communication methods.

Take advice from communication professionals

Enlist the help of communication specialists, if possible. Find out at the beginning of your project whether your employer or funder employs a communication officer or team. Some big research/improvement programmes employ dedicated communication professionals, as do large funders. The NHS trust or healthcare organisation where you are making – or studying – an improvement will probably have a communication officer or a communication team.

Introduce yourself to communication officers and tell them about your project. Ask if they are willing to give you advice about different communication methods, presentation, and the likely cost of communication activities.

They may also be able to help you undertake some communication activities.

Find out about, and take advice from, your target audience/s

There is no 'right' way of communicating with different groups of people. Furthermore, the methods that are best now may change – for example, the best way of talking to GPs may be different next year, as may the social media channel most used by researchers. When planning your communication methods, the best thing to do is to spend time checking demographics and talking to representatives of your target audience/s – the group/s of people with whom you want to communicate.

Budget and resources

Think about how you will pay for communication activities – and who will carry them out – when you first put project plans in place. If you think about communication when you are planning a project, you can build the cost of any activities into your budget and funding proposals.

Some communication activities are demanding in terms of both money and time (creating and keeping a website updated, for example, or writing a regular blog), so your choice of activity may be influenced by your budget and the time you have available to complete your project. The information about different communication methods in this resource includes an indication of cost and time needed.

Evaluate your communication activity to inform your current work and plans for your next project

Think about how you can work out whether each communication activity you use has succeeded, or partially succeeded, and allow time to do this. If you set up a website, for example, monitor visitor numbers, how often people are visiting, and which are the most popular pages (see Websites). Get feedback: ask members of your target audience/s what they think. Ask communication professionals for their views too. When anyone contacts you, always ask how they heard about your work.

You will need to use different evaluation methods for different activities, and it is a good idea to do this during the project, rather than at the end.

Then, if you launch an activity that doesn't seem to be working, you can stop doing it and go back to the drawing board. Try to work out why it has been unsuccessful. Is it because the method you have used is not suitable for the target audience? Or because the content of the material you have produced isn't clear to readers? Or because you haven't distributed printed material to enough places? Or attracted enough followers on social media? Decide whether to try again or change your activity to something that may be more successful.

Keep a note of what has worked well, and what didn't work, so you can use some of the more successful activities in your next project.

Communication versus engagement

There are many different definitions of engagement used in research. We think 'engagement' is a term used to describe the act of generating interest among people you want to be involved in, or know about, your project, for any reason. You may want to engage people as advisors, as participants, as collaborators, as funders, or because they can influence a policy that will help make change happen.

Good communication is an essential part of engagement. Think about the people you want to engage, why you want to engage them, and what you want them to do. Then create a plan that describes the communication methods you are going to use to reach those groups.

You may find the website of the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement helpful: www.publicengagement.ac.uk. The Centre aims to 'help inspire universities to engage with the public' and its website contains resources that can help you plan and evaluate engagement activities.

Social marketing

Social marketing is a technique used to encourage people to change their behaviour permanently to benefit both them and society (for example, encouraging people to stop smoking benefits their health and benefits society by reducing healthcare costs and incidences of secondary smoking). Social marketing techniques are used in health campaigns and implementation work and include the use of communication activities as well as traditional marketing methods.

Find out more about social marketing at the website of the National Social Marketing Centre, www.thensmc.com. The website contains information and access to training courses about social marketing. The National Social Marketing Centre (NSMC) was launched in 2007 and was originally set up by the Department of Health following a report from the National Consumer Council (*It's Our Health!*) that discussed links between social marketing and positive changes in behaviour. In 2012, the NSMC became a community interest company.

10 top tips

1. Plan ahead: **think about communication at the beginning of the project,** not at the end as an afterthought.

2. Identify your target audience/s – people with whom you need to speak to make your project happen, and achieve your goals.

3. Ask members of your target audience/s for advice. What is the best way to get a message to them? Ask them too about your communication plans throughout your project, and amend your plans if necessary.

4. Take advice from communication professionals.

5. Write and implement a communication plan – describe what you want to achieve and how you are going to achieve it. Consult the plan throughout your project.

6. Think carefully about the time and money you will need to invest to use a communication method effectively.

7. Include money in the budget to support your planned communication activities.

8. Use plain English and avoid jargon and acronyms. When writing or speaking about your work, describe what you are doing in a simple and concise fashion.

9. Check your writing and make sure there are no spelling or grammatical mistakes, and that your style is consistent.

10. Evaluate the communication work you do as you are doing it. Change your plans if an activity is not working. Evaluation will also help you know what works well in what circumstances and inform plans for your next project.

How to create a communication plan

At the very beginning of your project, write a communication plan

Start planning communication activities early on, rather than leaving them to the last minute when they are likely to be half-hearted and less effective. Include a section about communication in your project plan or research protocol. Cost your plans properly and, if possible, include the costs in your funding application.

In addition to the overall plan, you may want to write 'mini communication plans' for different aspects of your project – to publicise positions on an advisory committee, for example, or to promote a website address, or to encourage people to attend an event.

First of all, write a short summary about your project and what you hope to achieve

Keep it simple, use plain English, and answer these questions:

- What do you want to improve or implement – what are you doing/trying to achieve?
- Why do you want to do this/why is it worth doing?
- Who will benefit?
- How are you going to do the research/carry out the project?
- Where are you going to do it?
- Who is involved (including your funder)?
- When will the project start and when will it finish?

A short summary will be useful in many different situations – for example, you can use it as a basis for a press release, website description or leaflet. When you have written it, you can adjust it slightly for different purposes or different media. Make sure you update your summary regularly throughout the project.

With whom do you need to communicate and why do you need to speak to them?

Think about the people with whom you need to speak at different stages of your project to help make it happen.

- With whom do you need to speak to ultimately make the improvement/change/implement evidence? For example, policy makers, patients and service users, their families and friends, health professionals, other NHS staff, other researchers, managers, funders, professional bodies.

- With whom do you need to speak to set up and carry out your project? For example, service users, patients, health professionals, other NHS staff, funders, other researchers, other experts working in the same area, professional bodies.

- With whom do you need to speak at the end of your project? For example, potential funders to help you carry out further research, colleagues and policy makers elsewhere to tell them about your results, future collaborators to help spread your improvement to other parts of the NHS.

Think about:

- who will be interested in your project, why they will be interested, and why you want them to be interested?
- which groups you want to know about your project, even if they are not interested?
- who gains from your project?
- who will be affected negatively?
- who is doing similar work?
- who has been involved so far?
- who can help you lay foundations for future work?

When you have answered all these questions, you will have a list of groups of people you will need to communicate with during your project, sometimes at a particular time, and sometimes for a particular purpose. These are your target audiences.

NB: see Questions – What's the difference between a communication plan and stakeholder analysis?

What do you need to say and when are you going to say it?

Keep thinking about why you want to communicate with each group of people you identify and work out what you want to say to them, and when you want to say it.

For example, if you want to recruit health professionals to come to workshops to discuss a particular problem and help formulate a solution, you will need to initially tell them about your project, why you are doing it and what you hope to achieve. You will then need to invite them to the workshops and tell them how you would like them to contribute. Later on, you will want to tell them about the proposed solution and your plans for implementing it.

There will be different 'whos', 'whys' and 'whats' at different stages of the project.

If you think about your audiences and plan your messages from the very beginning, you will find it becomes much easier to successfully communicate with people, which means your project will be more inclusive and potentially more effective.

How you are going to say it?

The 'how' is the most difficult part and will depend on your budget, how much time you have, and what expertise is available to help you.

The Communication methods part of this resource includes information about many different methods you might consider using.

If you have a small project team and limited time and money, it's wise not to be too ambitious.

Think about your target audience/s and choose the most appropriate methods to communicate with them. Do nurses have time to read leaflets? Will GPs visit a website? Do the patients and service users you want to reach use Twitter? Be realistic and if possible, take advice from both members of your target audience/s and from communication professionals before you choose which methods to use. Remember too that modes of communication popular with different groups change over time.

Work out a schedule

Allow enough time to carry out the communication activities you choose.

If you work with other people (communication professionals, colleagues, patients and service users, for example) set a schedule for each of your activities, with realistic deadlines. Remember that if you are working as a team, each person will set aside time to undertake the elements of the activity they are responsible for, so if you miss your deadline, that may have adverse consequences for other people.

How are you going to evaluate each activity?

Plan how to monitor the success of each of your activities and make sure you allow time to analyse information you collect and act on the results of the analysis. If a method isn't working well, stop using it and try something else. If you take communication seriously and plan it properly, you will have enough time to change your activities if your initial choice isn't as effective as you had hoped. If a method works very well, try to work out why it worked well, so you can make an informed decision about whether to use it again in future.

Be prepared to revise your communication plan

Revise your communication plan as your project progresses in the light of developments in your work and developments in work elsewhere. For example, if a new project that is similar to your own is launched in another healthcare organisation, or in another part of the organisation where you are working, you may want to collaborate on communication activities. You may also wish to revise your plan after evaluating the success of communication methods you are using, and/or feedback from members of your target audience/s.

Language – think about how you speak and write

All sorts of people need to know about a project that seeks to improve services and implement change. For example, different groups of people might need to know why the project matters; why it would be good for them to get involved; why they should consider funding it; why they should change the way they work. At different times during your project, you will be talking to a number of different audiences and promoting a number of different messages. If your audiences don't understand what you are saying, your communication will be unsuccessful, which may in turn hinder your project.

Much of the terminology used in quality improvement and implementation can be described as jargon.

Some of your audiences may understand this jargon, but many will not. Even those working in health services or improvement and implementation science may not always understand the terms used, or may think a particular term or word means something different from your understanding of its definition.

Jargon can hide the meaning of your messages, and make it hard to get things done. If people don't understand what you are saying because you are using words and phrases that are not in everyday use, they may feel confused, alienated, and even stupid. The use of jargon can make people distrustful of your motives – and of your ability. If you search on the internet, you will find scores of articles and opinion pieces about why jargon – and 'academic speak' – is bad for all sorts of activities and business.

When KIS undertook a small evaluation of training about quality improvement in 2016, many participants in the training asked that plain English be used.

Speaking and writing in plain English doesn't mean 'dumbing down'. Just imagine you are chatting to your friends, or to members of your family, and explaining to them what you are working on.

Remember:

- projects that seek to improve services are meant to have an impact on people's lives. Writing and speaking about your work in an easy-to-understand way will help make that happen.
- if you want to successfully introduce change, people need to understand what you are saying.
- if research is funded by public money, it is right and proper that the public should be able to understand what you are saying and doing.
- Albert Einstein is credited with saying something along the lines of… 'if you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough…' Even if he didn't say it, the sentiment is a good one.
- if you get in the habit of writing and speaking in an intelligible manner, avoiding all jargon, it will become second nature to you. Unless your subject matter is very technical, why do you need to write a 'lay summary'? Why can't you write everything in language that most people understand?

Finally – If you must use a jargon word, explain what it means when you first use it. Never presume your audience, and even your colleagues, already know the meaning. The same applies to acronyms.

Describe your project in a direct and simple way

When writing, speaking, or preparing a presentation about your project, ask – and answer – the following questions: what, why, how, who, where and when? This is a logical but not prescriptive order. If you are presenting to a group of people, you might like to introduce yourself before describing the project. The 'who' in the list can then introduce any collaborators – including patients and service users who are involved – and funders.

For example:

- What is your project? What are you doing? What are you trying to achieve?
- Why are you doing it? Why is it important? Why does it matter?
- How are you doing it? How are you going to involve/talk to the people who will help you achieve your goals?
- Where is the project taking place?
- When does it start/when does it end?
- Who are you and why are you involved in the project? Who else is involved in the project, who are they, and how are they involved? Who do you want to be involved? Who is funding the work?
- When does it start/when does it end?

There will be many other whats, whys, hows, whos, wheres and whens, depending on the nature of your project and what are you trying to achieve. Try to think of them all.

When answering the questions, try to see your project from other people's perspectives. You might understand the way a management structure or health service works, but will all members of your audience? Think about the words you use and what they mean to other people. Explain clearly so there can be no misunderstanding.

Naming a project

Try to give your project a simple name that describes what it is in a way that everyone can understand.

Check your work

Check spelling, grammar and punctuation. If your writing contains a lot of mistakes, the perceived quality of your work may be diminished.

If you are not confident, use a dictionary to check the spelling of any words you are unsure about (if you use the spelling check tool in an application on a computer, make sure it is set to English spellings).

If you write in short, simple sentences, grammar should not be a problem. If you are really under-confident about spelling and grammar, get someone else to read and check your work.

Consistency is also important. Make sure you spell the same word and use the same style in everything pertaining to your project – for example, if you use 'wellbeing' in one document, always use 'wellbeing', not 'well-being' or 'well being'. If you use '2017-18' in one place, don't use '2017/18' in another. If you use single quotes ('xxx'), don't use double quotes ("xxx") elsewhere. This applies to every piece of writing you produce – websites, sub-titles and captions on films, tweets, PowerPoint presentations, posters, etc – as well as documents. You may find it helpful to write down the styles you choose to use and create a simple 'style sheet'. Then you can refer to it every time you write something about your project.

Think about presentation

Style guidelines

Check whether your employer, or your project funder, has style guidelines. To find out, ask your head of department, or the communication officer at your organisation or funder.

Style guidelines help an organisation create an identity or 'brand' that is instantly recognisable. A style guide (or 'book') will include guidance about how and where to position the organisation's logo in different circumstances, and which typeface and colours to use. If you don't have the exact typeface on your computer, the guide will normally stipulate an alternative. Style guides mostly include editorial guidance to ensure consistency across the organisation, including spelling and style preferences (for example, 1 September versus 1st September).

A good style guide is very useful. Following the 'rules' contained within it can save you time, make your work look more professional and ensure your organisation and/or funder is publicly credited for your work.

Design

Design plays an important part in communication: your audience will form an impression based on what your document, website or slides look like before they start reading, or before you start talking.

Think about how you present information – in leaflets, on posters, on slides, for example.

If you try to squash too much information on a page or slide, or use too small a typeface, it may be hard to read. Your organisation's style guidelines may contain guidance about type size.

The space between the lines is as important as the size of the type. If there is hardly any space, text becomes more difficult to read.

Think about the colours you use (again, consult your organisation's style guidelines). Don't use too many contrasting/clashing colours. Light coloured text is harder to read than dark coloured text.

Keep headlines simple and be consistent – don't use lots of different sizes and typefaces.

You can ask for advice from your organisation's communication officer: they may be able to put you in touch with a professional designer.

See Posters; Slides and other presentations; Leaflets, flyers, reports and other publications; and Websites.

Logos

If you distort logos, or use them incorrectly, your document will look amateurish. You should acknowledge funders and collaborators, but it is not always necessary to use every logo of every organisation involved. If in doubt, take advice from each organisation's communication team.

Images

Select any pictures or illustrations carefully. Choose images only if they are appropriate and relevant. Check whether you need to credit and/or pay for images you use. If you want to use photographs of people, it is good practice to seek their permission before doing so.

Capital letters

Don't automatically use capital letters for every word – over capitalising can make text hard to read. You need capital letters at the beginning of a sentence and for proper nouns, and that's it. Job titles don't *need* capital letters – that is a style choice.

Other resources

- Many universities run their own communication or presentation courses for their researchers. Find out what is available at your organisation.

- **Communicating your research – a toolkit.** The Health Foundation (July 2017). 'A toolkit for researchers to help increase influence and impact in health and health care.' www.health.org.uk/collection/communications-health-research-toolkit

- **Using communication approaches to spread improvement.** The Health Foundation (2015). www.health.org.uk/publication/using-communications-approaches-spread-improvement

- **'Unreadable academic writing.'** Plain English Campaign (2015). www.plainenglish.co.uk/news/1212-unreadable-academic-writing.html

- **Spreading improvement ideas: Health Foundation Evidence Scan.** (May 2014). www.health.org.uk/publication/spreading-improvement-ideas-tips-empirical-research

- **Exploring the role of communications in quality improvement: a case study of the 1000 Lives Campaign in NHS Wales.** Andrew Cooper et al, Journal of Communication in Healthcare, 2015. www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4391293/

- **English communication for scientists.** Free online modules from Scitable by natureeducation. www.nature.com/scitable/ebooks/english-communication-for-scientists-14053993/118519407

- **Spreading the word – communicating health innovation. Lessons and tips from the frontline.** Guy's and St Thomas' Charity. www.gsttcharity.org.uk/events/communicating-health-innovation

- **Public engagement: a practical guide.** Sense about Science and the National Institute for Health Research, 2017. http://senseaboutscience.org/activities/public-engagement-guide

- **Planning your public engagement activities: step by step guide.** Wellcome Trust (2014). https://wellcome.ac.uk/sites/default/files/planning-engagement-guide-wellcome-nov14.pdf

- **Research for all.** Published by UCL IoE on behalf of the National Coordinating Centre for Public engagement. A journal for 'anyone working inside or outside universities who is committed to seeing research make a difference in society.' The journal aims to 'raise the quality of engaged research by stimulating discussion about the effectiveness of engagement with researchers, research outcomes and processes.' http://ingentaconnect.com/content/ioep/rfa

Communication methods

This part of the resource contains information about different communication methods.

Think carefully about all your different target audiences, which methods you might use to communicate with them, *and* the resources (time as well as money) that you have.

For example, if you build a website, you need to be confident that members of your target audience/s use the internet. But you also need to have the resources to build and maintain the site and promote the address to your audience/s to ensure they know about it and visit it.

Similarly, it would be ineffective to write and print a leaflet unless you plan how you are going to distribute it to members of your target audience/s and have the time, and possibly money, to organise and implement the distribution.

Remember too that methods that are appropriate for different target audiences may change over time. At the moment, fewer older people use social media, for example, but that is changing. At the time of writing, local newspapers are closing, but there are campaigns to safeguard local news – by treating local papers as community assets, operated in the public interest, perhaps run by local co-operatives, for example. 'Hyperlocal' independent news publications (both printed and online) based in a specific neighbourhood, town, village or postcode, for example, are on the increase. The Independent Community News Network, set up by Cardiff University Centre for Community Journalism, says there are more than 400 of them in England, Wales and Scotland.

Take advice from members of your target audience/s about the best communication methods to use. It is also a good idea to talk through your plans with any communication professionals you can find, and ask for their expert input.

Finally, when thinking about communication methods, be imaginative: anything might be possible.

For example, Samuel Illingworth, senior lecturer in science communication at Manchester Metropolitan University, communicates recent research findings in poetry: https:thepoetryofscience.scienceblog.com

At the 2017 Edinburgh Festival, there was a short performance based on the results of research carried out at the University of Bristol about the stress experienced by GPs at work. It was called *PreScribed (a life written for me)* and was created in collaboration with performance artist Viv Gordon (www.vivgordon.com/prescribed.html).

Johanna Spiers, a University of Bristol researcher, wrote in the *British Journal of General Practice* blog in October 2016:

'As an academic, it can be discouraging to feel that no matter how important and insightful the findings of a research project may be, they are likely to have a pretty limited audience. Most researchers will talk about wanting to do work that makes the mystical and revered "real life difference", but the reality can often be more about inciting the same half dozen people one sees at every conference to a lukewarm discussion before heading off to the buffet. It is therefore really refreshing to see our findings turned into something with genuine emotional power, and the potential to reach a diverse audience.

'I would love to feel that our work had the potential to influence governmental policies on support for GPs, and who knows, maybe it does. What I am sure of, though, is that Viv's piece will engage members of the public, who may then approach their GPs with more empathy, and read their "red tops" with more scepticism.'

Advisory committee/group members: use their contacts and skills

If you set up an advisory committee/group for your project, discuss your communication plans with members and ask for their views, advice and support.

Consider inviting a communication professional to join your advisory committee/group to contribute their expertise.

Ask members to share any relevant contacts. If members work for a health organisation, a voluntary organisation or charity, or a patients' or service users' group, ask if their organisation has a communication officer/team. Can they introduce you?

Add the names of all relevant communication officers to your network of communication contacts (see Create a communication network) and ask them to help publicise your work through their existing communication channels – for example, newsletters, social media, mailouts. The 'angle' for them is that a member of their organisation is involved in the work because they sit on the project's advisory committee/group.

Finally, do not assume that members who represent patients, service users and the public are confident about writing. It is one thing to ask them to review material you produce, but another to ask them to create it. People may feel out of their depth if you ask them to do that.

Blogs

Start your own blog

A dedicated blog about your improvement or implementation project is a potentially powerful way to engage and consult with your target audience/s and publicise the results of your work. If you start a blog at the very beginning of your project, you can use it to discuss difficulties as well as successes, to help recruit people to advisory groups, etc.

Anyone can start a blog, but it is a lot of work to run a successful one. You need to write posts regularly (and respond to comments) and work out how you will publicise your blog to build a following, particularly among members of your target audience/s. There is no point writing a blog unless people are reading it, and hopefully commenting on what you say.

If you are considering starting a dedicated blog about your work, answer the following questions first of all.

Who is/are your target audience/s?
There is not much information available about who reads blogs, so you need to think about how you are going to get members of your target audience/s to visit your blog page and sign up as followers (see How will you promote your own blog? below). Once they have done that, they will be notified by email every time you post something new, and will hopefully want to read your latest offering.

Think about your target audience/s when you choose the name of your blog. It may be tempting to choose something whacky and off-the-wall, but if, for example, you want to attract people interested in improving the maternity care of women who have eating disorders, it's wise to call the blog 'Improving care for pregnant women and new mothers who have an eating disorder' – or something similar that explains what the project is about. People searching for information about that particular subject are more likely to find your posts.

Is a blog sustainable – what will you write about and will you be able to post regularly?
If you're not going to be able to post regularly, don't consider starting a dedicated blog. However, 'regular' doesn't have to be once a day, or even once a week. It can mean every two weeks, or once a month – just be clear about how often you are going to post on your blog and stick to what you say. The more regularly you post, the more likely your blog will be picked up by search engines.

Tell people who you are and what your blog is about. A blog can be an online diary: you can write about how the project is progressing, for example. You can write about different aspects of the project, and how you plan to tackle them. You could reflect and comment on problems and challenges; on relevant publications; on conversations and responses you have had from colleagues. You can share what you learn as the project progresses.

Make sure what you write is friendly, interesting and accessible (use plain English and avoid jargon and acronyms – see Language – think about how you speak and write), not too long (800-1000 words) and appropriate for your target audience/s. Include words in your posts that your audience might use when searching for information on the internet.

Will you have time to respond/engage with followers who leave comments?
Blogging enables you to engage with readers online. If someone comments on your post, it usually means they are interested in what you have written. If you reply, other readers may comment. Comments and replies may lead to conversations and debate, which may be helpful for your project. Replying to comments demonstrates to your readers that you care about what they think, and that their perspective is important to you. Bloggers generally think that replying also encourages readers to return to your blog, or to follow the blog.

Where will you set up your blog and do you have the money to pay for any costs?
Talk to your organisation's communication team: there may be a central blog space that you can use. Alternatively, communication officers will be able to give you up-to-date advice about the best platform to use to create your own blog.

There are many different blog builders, all of them offering different deals and features, including a range of templates. Some of them are free, or free for a while, but this means advertising may appear on your blog, and the address of your blog – the domain name – will contain the name of the blog builder. Alternatively, you can buy a domain name of your choice and pay a hosting company (a hosting company puts the files that constitute your blog on the internet) to look after the blog that you build. There will be easy-to-use instructions about how to link up your blog, your hosting company and your domain name within the blog builder you choose.

Before you start, ask your communication officer if your organisation has any guidelines about setting up a blog – and make sure you use relevant logos.

How will you promote your own blog?
Create a mini communication plan. You could consider:

- using social media;
- asking every communication professional you have contacted to promote it through their channels;
- asking the communication teams at organisations that might be interested in what you write to promote it, and to add information about the blog to their websites;
- trying to get a link to the blog on as many relevant websites as possible;
- using mailing lists to promote every new post;
- leaving interesting comments and contributing to discussions on other blogs that are relevant to/related to your work – every time you comment, enter your name and blog address;
- adding your blog address to every document you produce, at the end of your email signature, and on your business cards;
- adding social media buttons in prominent places on your blog to make it very easy for visitors to share your posts;
- trying to get your blog featured in relevant publications – eg the eating disorders and maternity care example could be featured in magazines for pregnant women; magazines for new mothers; publications produced by maternity professional organisations etc.

Monitor visitor numbers regularly: it takes time and hard work to build a following, but if visitors are not increasing, you will want to rethink what you are doing.

Be a guest or occasional blogger

Consider being a guest or occasional blogger for other blogs that are relevant to your work or project, or that are about improvement and/or implementation.

Search for existing blogs that have an established following that you think includes members of your target audience/s. It is difficult to know who follows blogs, though you might be able to get a good idea by reading all the blog posts and the comments made about them.

You will have to 'pitch' to the blog manager/editor. Find out his or her name and write a personal email. Tell them what your guest blog would be about – and make sure there are no spelling mistakes or grammatical errors in your pitch email. A blog manager/editor will judge your ability to write by its contents. Make sure your introductory email is clear, succinct, friendly and interesting. If you are accepted as a guest blogger, ask for guidance about length – how many words? – and about deadlines. Ask too whether there is any other submission guidance. Follow any guidance – and make sure you submit your post on time.

Some universities have a blog space where researchers can contribute an occasional blog: contact the central communication team to find out.

Create a communication network

Communication channels of your organisation or funder

If your organisation/funder has a communication officer/team, make contact with them, tell them about your project and ask them to help you promote different aspects of your work through their already-established communication channels.

Keep in touch with them and ask them to let you know if they hear of any events or initiatives that you may be interested in attending/getting involved in to help publicise your project. They may also be able to offer you advice and support your communication activities in other ways.

Enlist the help of other organisations

Make contact with communication officers at any relevant organisation and create a communication network of people who might be able to help and advise you. This is a time-consuming but worthwhile task. Tell them about your project, and ask them to help publicise what you are doing; opportunities to get involved with your work; events you organise; the launch of websites, blogs etc. They might be able to send out information to their mailing lists and via their social media channels, and add articles to their websites. You might be able to write something for their online or printed publications. You might be able to attend events they are holding, and present or take information about your project.

Keep in touch with your network throughout your project. Send updates and ask people for their support as and when you need it.

Professional and other networks

Are there local and national networks of specialist health professionals, other NHS staff and/or social care staff who are involved in the services you are trying to improve?

There may also be networks about improvement and implementation set up by the NHS organisation where you are working, in the geographical area where the organisation is based, or by other research organisations.

Professional organisations and associations

Are there organisations that are concerned with/support health professionals, other NHS staff and/or social care staff who work in the service you are trying to improve, or who are affected by the implementation work you are doing? This includes organisations responsible for education, accreditation and professional development, and organisations that represent the interests of groups of staff.

Charities and voluntary organisations

Are there any charities and voluntary organisations associated with the service you are trying to improve/implementation work you are doing? Look locally and nationally.

Local campaign organisations

Are there any local groups that have been set up to campaign for better services within the NHS?

Patient and service user groups

Are there local and national groups of patients and service users that are relevant to/will be interested in your work? Sometimes there are local groups that are affiliated to national charities. If you are trying to improve services in a very specific locality, you might consider contacting patient groups affiliated to GP practices or commissioning groups. You could also contact the local Healthwatch.

Local authorities

Many (though not all) local authorities produce an electronic newsletter or/and a publication that is delivered through every letterbox in the borough. It's worth making contact with the team responsible for producing electronic and printed newsletters. You may want to ask them to include information about your project, appeals for advisors, events etc. Local authority printed publications are often only published a handful of times a year, so you need to plan in advance if you want to include something – think about this at the start of your project when you are putting your communication plan together. Local authority electronic newsletters tend to be much more frequent.

Events

Organise your own event

An event can be a great way to talk to and engage people, to tell them about your project and enthuse them. You can also try to get publicity about the event itself, and therefore raise awareness about your project and promote it to a wider audience. However, organising a successful and effective event is very time-consuming. The most important thing to do is to promote it properly to ensure the people you want to come turn up on the day.

If you decide to organise an event, or are considering organising an event, write a mini communication plan first of all. Then ask colleagues to help you organise the event and be there on the day to help ensure it runs smoothly.

Why are you organising the event and what do you want to achieve?
Think about whether an event is the best and most cost-effective way to achieve your aim.

Work out a budget
Events can be costly. Write down all the likely costs (for example, cost of room hire, the cost of promoting the event, refreshments, reimbursing travel expenses to patients and service users) to work out a budget. If you include an event in your communication plan when you compile your proposal, you can add the costs to your funding application.

Consider collaborators
Is there another relevant organisation that can help you organise/pay for the event and present information about similar projects?

Who will come to the event?
Who is/are your target audience/s, and are they likely to come to an event? Or will it be more effective to communicate with them using different methods?

How are you going to make sure members of your target audience/s come?
Which communication methods are you going to use to invite your audience/s and publicise the event (and therefore your project)? You could:

- use email lists and electronic newsletters;
- post information on relevant internet forums;
- post information on websites;
- send out press releases/contact the local press;
- produce flyers – but don't forget if they are to be effective, you will have to distribute them to places where your target audience/s are likely to pick them up;
- use social media;
- produce posters – but if they are to be effective, you will have to put them up in places where they are likely to be seen by members of your target audience/s;
- contact groups that may be interested by telephone and email;
- ask your organisation's/funder's communication teams and any other communication contacts to publicise the event through their communication channels.

Consider inviting an MP or 'celebrity' to speak at, or chair, the event
If a celebrity or MP agrees to attend, people may turn up to see them – though a celebrity may be more of a draw than an MP! You can find out an MP's contact details by searching for him/her on the internet. Finding a celebrity may be more difficult: it's a good idea to think of someone who has a link to the service you are trying to improve, or who lives locally. But if you decide to invite a celebrity, you first have to track them down, often through an agency (search on the internet), and, unless they are personally committed to your project, they are likely to charge a fee.

What are you going to tell your audience and how are you going to tell them?
Think of ways to make the event interesting and engaging. Give members of your audience a chance to get involved and say what they think.

Think about the logistics of the event

- Where will you hold the event? Think about how many people will be coming and what size venue you will need. Make sure there is good access for people who have a disability and people who are less mobile. Is the venue easily accessible by public transport for members of your target audience/s?
- When will you hold it? Avoid peak holiday seasons and think about the likely commitments of your target audience/s. If you want nurses to come, for example, do not plan your event on the same day as a big nurses' rally. Check what else is happening before you set your date. Consult with representatives of your target audience/s.

- What time will you hold your event? If you want patients and service users to come, it is better to hold it outside office hours. Otherwise, only people who are retired, self-employed or unemployed will be able to come. Ask representatives of your target audience/s what time they think would be best.
- Who will be speaking? Check with potential speakers if they will be available before you finalise a date.
- Who will help you 'stage manage' the day? – eg setting up the venue, registration, trouble-shooting, giving directions.
- What do you need at the venue? – eg tables, chairs, microphones/sound, projectors.
- What do you need to produce for the day? – eg PowerPoint presentations, printed materials, posters.

Photographs

Many people automatically take photographs at events, but in reality, pictures of people sitting in rows, or at tables, aren't very interesting. Think about why you want to take photographs, and what you plan to do with them. If you put them online, for example, will anyone actually look at them?

If you want to take photos at your event (and use them afterwards on websites/social media etc), it is good practice to check with members of the audience as they come in. Some people don't want their photos taken for a very good reason, and they don't have to share that reason with you. You should also seek people's permission before using their photograph on any publicity material.

Plan an evaluation

How are you going to evaluate the success of your event? Will you produce some sort of evaluation form for members of your audience? If so, don't forget to ask them to complete the form and hand it in. It's also helpful to try to evaluate the success of each communication method you have used to publicise the event: you could simply ask attendees how they heard about the event.

Promote your project at events organised by other groups/organisations

Researchers are used to presenting information at academic conferences – but that means they are mostly only communicating with other researchers. You could consider going to events that patients, members of the public and health professionals will be attending.

Keep an eye on what is happening:

- at the organisation for which you work/where the project is based – for example, hospital open days, special improvement/implementation events, conferences;
- in the neighbourhoods where patients who use the service you are trying to improve live – community events like summer fairs, other seasonal events, and meetings of local groups (women's groups, for example, tenants' groups, carers' groups, patients' groups, church groups, mother and baby groups, older people's groups, etc);
- in the specialist area in which you are working. Sign up to newsletters from relevant organisations to be kept up to date with what they are doing. This will help your project – because your work will be informed by what's happening in the wider world – and also alert you to any events that you may wish to attend;
- at any event that might be attended by members of your target audience/s.

If you would like to talk/hand out information at an event, find out the names of the organisers and ask if you can give a presentation/have a stall, etc. Sometimes you will be asked to pay for a stall.

If you are attending an event organised by another organisation, promote your presence there – through social media, mailouts, website posting etc. Ask every communication professional you know to help (see Create a communication network).

Exhibitions

Organise your own exhibition

Showing off your work at an exhibition can be an effective way to inform and engage people. However, staging an exhibition can be time-consuming and costly. Before you decide to do it, write a plan to see if it is achievable, and likely to be a good investment of your time.

(NB: although an exhibition is an 'event', some of the researchers we consulted asked us to include a separate section because of the specific logistics of exhibiting.)

What is the purpose of the exhibition?
Is it simply to showcase your project/tell people about what you're doing? Or do you want to set up a mechanism whereby people can comment, feedback or get involved? Think about how you would do that, and the implications in terms of cost and time. Will you/your colleagues need to be on site explaining your work, for example?

Which audience/s do you want to come to the exhibition and how will you get them there?
List your target audience/s and what methods you are going to use to get them there. Will you seek press coverage, use mailing lists, hand out flyers, use social media, for example? You could liaise with communication teams based at your organisation, employed by your funder, and based at the venue where you plan to hold the exhibition, and ask them to help you promote it.

Where will you hold the exhibition?
Think about your target audience/s when you choose a venue. Is it accessible by public transport/easy to find? Is there parking? Is there good access for people with disabilities? Is it open at times when members of your target audience/s will be able to visit?

If you want to talk to members of the public, or a particular group of people (eg older people, people with a specific condition), think about venues they might already visit: community centres, residents' halls, youth club premises, clubs for older people, libraries, shopping centres, etc. Ask whether you can use (or hire) these venues, and in doing so, tell the organisation that is responsible for the venue about your project. Can they help you communicate with your target audience/s about both the exhibition and the project?

Could you organise a travelling exhibition?

If you want to show your work to health professionals and managers working within the organisation where you hope to improve services, is there a space where people congregate? What about a cafeteria or corridors?

What will you exhibit and how will you prepare the material?
What you exhibit will depend somewhat on the venue, and also on your budget.

For example, you could put together a low cost exhibition for a noticeboard in a cafeteria by preparing small (A4 or A3) posters (see Posters) on your computer and printing them out yourself on good quality paper.

Does the venue have a projector where you could show slides on a loop? Or could you make a short film? (see Slides and other presentations and Films).

Do you have the budget, or could you apply for funding, to work with a designer, photographer, illustrator, film maker and/or communication expert to create professionally designed large posters, to make a film, record a narrative that can be broadcast to visitors, or create other material? Will you prepare a leaflet that visitors can take away? Do you want them to fill in a questionnaire to give you feedback?

Think creatively and take inspiration from exhibitions you have seen that have impressed you.

If you want to create a travelling exhibition, it's worth taking professional advice from communication officers as you will need to create material that will work in different spaces, and you will also need to think about how to arrange transport between venues.

How will you fund it?
Think about staging an exhibition early on, and if you want to be ambitious, include the cost in your funding proposal. Alternatively, you could apply for separate funding.

When will you hold the exhibition?
Think not only about dates and how it will fit in with your project (eg will you stage an exhibition early on to involve people, or later on to tell them about your results?), but also about 'opening hours'.

Your exhibition should be open at a time when it can be viewed by members of your target audience/s. If you want to be at the exhibition to be able talk to visitors, think about the implications for your time and your colleagues' time. If it is going to be open in the evenings for a week, for example, will you be able to drum up enough support from your colleagues to be able to staff it?

Can you collaborate?
Might colleagues like to collaborate if they are doing similar or other improvement work?

Could you work with an artist? You could apply for funding from an organisation that encourages such collaborations – the Wellcome Trust, for example.

Is there a charity, or pertinent professional organisation, or patient or service user group, that could work with you and bring a different perspective that would enhance the exhibition?

How will you evaluate the exhibition?
As with every communication activity, think about how to evaluate your exhibition so you can work out how effective it has been in helping you achieve your aims, and to learn lessons for the future (and share your learning with colleagues). You could measure visitor numbers, for example, and ask visitors how they found out about the exhibition to help you gauge the success of the methods you used to promote it. You could devise a mechanism whereby visitors give feedback on the material you have used, and whether they feel better informed/inspired to engage and get involved. You could monitor social media (retweets, likes, mentions etc) and any press coverage.

Prepare a schedule
If you put a plan together and think it's worthwhile staging an exhibition, prepare a schedule. Set the dates of your exhibition (which may be influenced by the availability of your venue) and work backwards. Allow enough time to prepare materials and publicise the exhibition, and to arrange the logistics – eg asking your colleagues to help, arranging transport of materials, working with professionals to create the material.

Showcase your work at other exhibitions

Know what's going on… there may be exhibitions that are particularly relevant to your work, or exhibitions that showcase health/science initiatives to the public, or local exhibitions that focus on a particular neighbourhood.

Sign up to newsletters/email alerts from any and all relevant organisations (both locally and nationally) to be kept up to date with what they are doing, including any upcoming exhibitions.

Before approaching an exhibition organiser, think carefully whether you have the time and resources to contribute, and whether doing so will help achieve your communication aims.

Who will be at the exhibition?
Will members of your target audience/s be there? Will it be staged at a venue where they are likely to visit, and at a time that will suit them?

Will you need to carry out any extra promotional work?
Even though the organisers will publicise the exhibition, it's also worth promoting it yourself to try to get as many people there as possible. Think about what methods you will use to do this – eg leaflets, mailouts, social media.

Will you need to be there?
Are there any implications for your time, and your colleagues' time?

What will you exhibit?
If you are contributing to someone else's exhibition, ask if there are guidelines for materials. The organisers may want you to present work of a certain size or in a certain way.

How will you prepare the material?
Will you be able to do it yourself? Do you need to work with a professional? Can the communication team at your organisation/funder help you?

What costs will there be?
If you plan to work with a professional designer, illustrator, photographer or artist, there are likely to be costs. Make sure you know what they are before you commit to anything.

How will you evaluate your contribution?
If you don't organise the exhibition yourself, it may be harder to monitor visitor numbers. The organisers may measure overall visitors, but that won't tell you how many people looked at your exhibit. If you staff your contribution, then it will be easier to record how many people look at your exhibit/talk to you, and to ask visitors to fill in a feedback form. You might also monitor the use of social media (mentions, likes, retweets, for example) and any press coverage.

Films

Making even a simple film showing an individual talking directly to the camera is time-consuming and can be expensive. Before you start planning to make a film, think carefully about the logistics of creating and publicising one, and work out the costs of both production and promotional activities. Ask yourself:

What will be the film's content and who is it for?
What is the purpose of the film? Which of your target audiences will watch it? What are you going to say to them? Is making a film the best way to communicate that message to them?

Where would people view your film?
How would you distribute your film and make it available to viewers?

Would you start your own YouTube channel (https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/1646861?hl=en-GB)? Or/and would your film be available on your organisation's YouTube channel/website? Or/and will it be available on a dedicated website? Do you have the budget to set up such a site? (See Websites.) Would other relevant organisations post your film on their websites?

Can you arrange for the film to be shown on TV screens in clinics and GP waiting rooms? Will you have the time (and possibly a budget) to organise that?

Can you show the film at an exhibition you organise, or at someone else's exhibition?

How are you going to promote your film to your target audience/s?
Which communication methods would you use to promote a film? How will you direct members of your target audiences to YouTube and/or websites? Will you use mailouts, social media, websites and blogs? Will you stage an event to show a preview of the film? Will you seek press coverage? Be sure the methods you choose are likely to be effective. Take advice from communication professionals and representatives of your target audience/s and write a plan. Who is going to implement the plan? Do you have the resources and time to do that?

How will you make your film?
Take advice from the communication team based at the organisation where you are making the improvement or implementing research results, or based at your funding organisation. They may have inhouse film-making facilities, or they may be able to recommend film-making companies with whom you can work.

Before you meet with film-makers, write a short summary of what you have in mind, how long you think the finished film will be, what the purpose is and where it will be shown. Give them as much information as possible about the planned content and talk through your ideas so they can give you a quote. Make sure you know what the quote includes, and ask them to detail the process and schedule they propose.

Alternatively, anyone can make a film with a smartphone and edit it with easy-to-use software. If you search on the internet, you will find many short (often online) courses about how to make films on a smartphone.

Words on screen
If there are any words on screen – instead of a spoken soundtrack, or as subtitles – check spelling and punctuation, and for consistency. If you use a full stop at the end of one sentence, use a full stop at the end of all sentences, for example.

What will it cost?
Work out a budget for your film – and any costs that you will incur promoting it – and include those costs in your project plans/grant application from the very beginning.

How will you evaluate the success of the film?
If you use YouTube, you can monitor views. You will also be able to monitor the number of times the film is viewed on any website you set up. If the film is available on other organisations' websites, it may be more difficult to get viewing figures. You could ask viewers for feedback – through social media, for example. Think about how you will collect viewers' views if you show the film at an exhibition, on clinic screens or elsewhere.

Leaflets, flyers, reports and other publications

How are you going to distribute a leaflet or other publication?

If you are thinking about producing a leaflet or other publication (electronic or printed), the most important thing to do is to work out how you are going to distribute it, and if you have the time to do that. Write a distribution plan first of all. Working out where and how you will distribute a printed document will inform decisions about how many to print and the size of the publication (see Choosing a size/format below). Start your distribution plan by writing down the purpose of the publication and your target audience/s.

What is the purpose of the publication?

For example, are you aiming to use it to recruit advisors? Are you producing it for an exhibition? To publicise an event? Or do you want to produce a professional looking summary of your project that can be used in many different situations? Be clear about what you want to achieve and keep that goal in mind when you are writing the content and planning the distribution.

Who is the publication written for? How will you distribute it to make sure members of your target audience/s read it?

If it is an electronic publication, you will need to send it out electronically and get it posted as a download on websites. Do you already have a list of emails? (See Mailing lists and newsletters.) Which organisations can you can ask to mail out the leaflet via their lists/upload the document on their websites? Draw up a list of organisations and contact them to ask who is responsible for managing their mailing lists/managing their websites. Tell them about your project and ask them if they are willing to help distribute your publication.

Post your leaflet on your organisation's website. Can you use social media to promote the link? (See Social media.) Add a link to your email signature and any other document you produce.

Are you thinking about printing a leaflet or other publication? If you want health professionals to see it, ask the organisation where you are improving services or implementing research results if there are internal distribution mechanisms that you can use.

The communication team or site management team will be able to advise.

Can you hand out copies at a staff café, or at a staff event?

If you want to distribute copies to patients, service users and members of the public, find out if there are leaflet stands in clinics/reception areas. You may have to be a bit of a detective to discover the right person to ask about putting leaflets there – going along to the clinic or building reception and asking staff on the desk is a good starting point.

Depending on the purpose of the publication (eg if you are hoping to use it to promote an event), you may consider handing copies out to members of the public – at train stations, for example – or putting copies through letterboxes. Can you ask other organisations to help distribute printed copies? Can members of your advisory committee/group help?

If it is a general awareness-raising summary of your project, it's a good idea to print copies and take some with you wherever you go, so you can hand them out at any opportunity. Instead of a leaflet, you might consider printing 'business cards' about your project, that include a link to a website.

Production

Choosing a size/format

Your distribution mechanisms may help determine the size and format of your publication, if you are going to print it. If you plan to post a leaflet, for example, you may want to produce a leaflet that is one-third A4 size so it fits in a DL envelope (this is the size envelope that is used for an A4 piece of paper folded into three from top to bottom). If you are using the post, think about the weight of the publication too – the heavier the paper/bigger the size, the more it will cost to mail.

If you are printing a leaflet and want to get it in leaflet stands, or through people's doors, then A5 or one-third A4 size may be better than A4. Some organisations do have A4 stands: check when you are planning distribution.

If you are producing an electronic publication, people may want to print it out. Therefore A4 may be a sensible size.

Print run

If you print, how many will you print? The more you print, the more cost-effective a publication is, but you don't want to print so many that you have copies left over in your office. That's another reason why distribution plans are so important, particularly when you are thinking about a printed production. Working out your distribution plan first of all, means you will be able to more accurately estimate how many copies you will need.

Content

Use plain English and avoid jargon. Write clearly and concisely, as if you are talking to a friend. Check spelling and grammar, and check for consistency (see Language – think about how you speak and write and Check your work).

Don't copy and paste background information from other documents, or from a website. If you copy and paste, you are using other people's words, and there may be breaches of copyright. If you copy and paste from the internet, you may also be copying and pasting out-of-date or incorrect information. Say things in your own words, check sources and credit them.

How to make a publication look professional

If your organisation has style guidelines, consult them to find out what typeface you should use, and where logos should be positioned. Ask your organisation's communication officer for advice. If your organisation employs a designer, ask for their help.

Do not distort logos and don't make them too big – a 'stretched' or 'squashed' logo that is vastly blown up looks very amateurish. Sometimes style guidelines stipulate the size of a logo on different formats (eg A4, A5), where you should position it and what should happen if you need to use other logos (eg which one should come first).

Don't put too much text on a page and use a font size that is big enough to read easily. Make sure there is enough space between the lines of text, and around the text. Consider using more than one column of text and make headlines consistent – either the same size, or one larger headline and sub-heads that are all the same size.

Consult style guidelines to find out about colours you can use. Avoid clashing colours that could make the text hard to read. Avoid dark backgrounds and light coloured text. Black text on a light background is easiest to read (see Questions: Do different colours have different connotations?).

If you use pictures, check whether it is necessary to have permission from the photographer/person in the photograph. If you use photographs from a photo library (eg NHS Library), then permissions have already been sought. If you take your own photographs, make sure any people featured are happy for the images to be used on your material.

Always think about your target audience and what they will think when they pick up your leaflet or document. Most importantly, is it clear and easy to read? It's a good idea to ask a couple of people who have nothing to do with your work to read it through and comment on your words and design. See Think about presentation.

Where to get your publication printed

Check whether your organisation has an 'approved' list of printers. If not, search on the internet for local printers, get quotes and ask for paper samples. Paperweight is described as 'gsm' – grams per square metre. The higher the gsm, the heavier the paper. Photocopying paper is normally 80-90 gsm. 350-400gsm is used for business cards.

The heavier the paper, the less 'show through' there will be if you print on two sides. Think about whether you want a glossy, satin or matt finish. If you want to write on the document (if it's a feedback form, for example), choose a matt finish.

Mailing lists and newsletters

Creating mailing lists

Create your own mailing list so you can send out information to people who say they are interested in your work.

You can collect email addresses via a dedicated website (if you set one up), or at events, or you can invite people to send their contact details to you at presentations, on any material you produce, and in any article you write.

If you do collect email addresses, you must keep them in accordance with data protection laws as they count as personal information (https://ico.org.uk). This means you must be clear about why you are collecting email addresses (and any other personal information) and you must not use them for another purpose – eg you must not hand over email addresses to someone else to use, unless the individuals on your list have given permission for that to happen. You must also keep the information you collect up to date.

Newsletters

If you want to send out a regular or occasional newsletter, you can use email marketing software. There are many companies that offer this – some, like MailChimp, offer a free service for a limited number of emails to a limited number of addresses. Search on the internet and compare what each company offers and what, if any, cost is involved.

If you do send out an occasional or regular newsletter, write in concise plain English, check spelling, grammar, punctuation and consistency, avoid jargon and explain acronyms at first mention. Include a contact email or phone number and a brief reminder of what your project is about and who you are. Don't assume people will have read any newsletters that have come before, or will remember what you previously said at a presentation.

If you create a dedicated website (see Websites), you could build in the functionality that enables email addresses of interested people to be collected and newsletters sent out to those addresses.

People who sign up to a newsletter should be given the chance to unsubscribe in each issue.

Other organisations' mailing lists

Try to identify existing mailing lists that may include members of your target audience/s. This includes local and national lists. Ask the communication team in the organisation where you are working/the organisation that is funding your project. Ask members of your advisory committee/group (if you have one) whether their organisation has a mailing list.

Think about charities, voluntary organisations, professional organisations, commissioning organisations and patient and service user groups as well as other research teams and other research organisations. There may be mailing lists specifically for improvement/implementation researchers, for example, or for researchers working in the particular area you are trying to improve.

Make contact with the people who manage each list. Ask everyone you contact if it will be possible for them to send out information about your work and if they say yes, find out how often they send out information (at set times or on an ad hoc basis) and what guidelines/criteria they operate. Keep a list of all mailing lists, the relevant contact and any pertinent information about deadlines and criteria.

Sometimes other organisations will say they can't send out information about your work because your project has nothing to do with them. If you can come up with an 'angle' that links their organisation to your work – if their organisation is represented on your advisory committee/group for example – they might then agree. Sometimes they will say 'no' simply because people on their mailing list have asked not be sent information about the work of any other organisation.

MPs might help

MPs are elected to represent their constituents, so are likely to be interested in the work you are doing if it will benefit the people they represent.

Think about whether the local MP can help you talk to your target audience/s.

You could ask them to highlight a particular problem and/or successful improvement by writing to a Minister, or a relevant manager, or to the media.

You could ask an MP to support your work by attending and speaking at an event you are organising. Their presence might help you get press coverage.

You could ask them to raise an issue in the House of Commons, where it will be officially recorded and could be picked up by the press and public.

Email the MP and tell them about your work, why it matters, and what you would like them to do. Write in plain English, explain who you are and what you are trying to achieve. Summarise your project concisely. If you are going to invite an MP to an event, make sure you give them plenty of notice.

You can also meet an MP and tell them in person about your work. MPs hold regular surgeries in their constituencies: find out where and when the surgeries are, go along and talk about your work, explain what support you would like and ask if that support will be possible.

You can find out the names and contact details of the MP representing the constituency in which the service you are trying to improve is based by visiting the website www.theyworkforyou.com. The site has a search that allows you to enter a postcode and find details of the relevant MP, including their specialist interests.

NB: if you are thinking about contacting an MP, it is advisable to discuss your plans with the communication team based at your organisation or funder (if there is one) first of all, and with your team leader/manager. Your organisation may have a corporate policy about contacting/ involving MPs.

Online forums

Neighbourhood forums

If you want to talk to/make announcements to people who live in the area where you are working (this could include NHS staff as well as patients, service users and relatives, and members of the public), consider identifying and posting information on neighbourhood online forums.

Local online forums vary considerably, but many accept adverts as well as free postings and listings. Advertising rates tend to be very reasonable.

A good neighbourhood forum is visited frequently by all sorts of people living in that particular area, so it really is worth investigating which ones are active in the area where you are working.

Identify all the relevant neighbourhood forums by searching on the internet. Some of them may be for everyone living in an area; others are for certain groups (eg parents of young children). You may have to sign up to be able to post on a forum, or you may be able to simply submit information.

NB: online neighbourhood forums may be referred to as community or 'hyperlocal' publications (see Press coverage and Communication methods).

Specialist interest forums

There are many online forums where patients and service users, health professionals and researchers discuss issues that are important to them. Some are run by charities and other organisations, others are run independently by groups of people who have the same diagnosis, or the same job, or the same research interest. It is worth spending some time searching for all specialist interest forums that are relevant to your project.

You could try to use these forums to publicise your work, or to recruit patients and service users who are willing to get involved/comment on your project. Some health-based forums don't allow researchers to post, while others encourage it. You may have to contact a forum's moderator in the first instance. Most forums explain the 'rules' and display contact details clearly.

Podcasts

Make your own podcast

Anyone who has a computer, internet connection and some audio software/equipment can record a podcast and make it available online. A podcast is an audio file (typically an MP3) that is downloaded by listeners. They can listen on their computer or on their mobile devices, at a time and places that suits them.

You can make a one-off podcast or a series of podcasts. If you make a regular podcast, listeners can subscribe and your weekly/monthly/more occasional recording will automatically get sent out to them when it's ready.

Podcasting can be a great way to publicise and generate interest in your work. It's not hard to make a podcast – what's more difficult is getting people to listen to it. Ask yourself:

Why do you want to make a podcast? What's the aim?
Will making a podcast, or a series of podcasts, help you achieve your aim in the most effective and efficient way? If you are thinking about creating a series, do you have the time and resources to invest in making a regular podcast and publicising it?

Who is it for?
Think about your target audience/s. Are these groups of people likely to listen to podcasts?

How are you going to make the podcast/s and where will it/they be available?
To record a podcast, you will need a microphone and audio recording software. Talk, edit and save what you record on your computer. You then upload the audio file onto a dedicated website, or onto a podcasting host site.

Most universities – and some NHS organisations – have facilities for making podcasts, and dedicated web pages where podcasts can be posted. If you want to make a podcast/series of podcasts about your work, speak to the communication team within your organisation first of all. Ask if they can help you make the podcast and post it online, and whether they can help you publicise it. They will probably already have subscribers to their podcasts: ask how many subscribers they have, and whether they know anything about them – do they include members of your target audience/s? If they can't help you make the podcast, they will be able to advise you about the best way for you to create a podcast yourself, and how to make it available online.

What about content?
You will need to think carefully about content and how you are going to present your work. It may be more interesting to make your podcast like a radio programme rather than a lecture, so you may want to involve colleagues, patients, service users and health professionals (ie people with different perspectives and experiences) and use a 'chat' or 'interview' format. It's helpful to roughly script what you are going to say. Remember to use plain English and avoid jargon and acronyms. If you do use an acronym, explain what it stands for. A podcast should last for about 20-30 minutes, 60 minutes maximum.

How will you publicise the podcast/get subscribers?
You will need to use a variety of communication methods to publicise your podcast and, if you decide to create a series/regular podcast, build the number of subscribers. Make sure you choose communication methods that suit your target audience/s. Include details of your podcast on everything you produce – on every document, publication, in letters, on any social media home pages or websites, on your email signature.

Before you start making a podcast, decide whether you have the time to put into practice all the communication methods you will need to use to promote it.

Be a guest on an existing podcast series

Many organisations produce regular podcasts. If you think your project would make a good feature in a regular podcast, contact the producers, tell them about your work, and offer to be a guest. Make sure the podcast series is relevant to what you do – for example, if you are trying to improve mental health services, you could approach the Mental Health Foundation. The organisation runs a podcast series featuring interviews with people involved in mental health (correct at October 2017). Check whether organisations that might be interested in your work produce podcasts. You may need to be a detective (and be prepared to persevere) to find out the name of the right person to approach in each organisation, or for each podcast series.

Posters

Posters for academic events

If you are a researcher, you will be familiar with the concept of making posters about your work to display at academic conferences. Academic posters are large – A1 or A0 – and universities usually make it easy for their staff to print them by providing an inhouse or recommended service.

Plan the layout

Academic posters often contain several 'chunks' of information with different headlines.

These 'chunks' are usually a mixture of text, tables, graphs and images. It is a good idea to work out a rough, simple plan showing how to present all the information you want to include before you start putting your poster together, using whichever software you prefer (eg PowerPoint or Word).

People are more likely to look at something if the design and layout is clear and easy to navigate. Too many 'chunks', randomly positioned, will make the poster difficult to read. Plan for the information to flow from left to right and from top to bottom in a logical fashion.

Text

Try to write text in concise, plain English. For ease of reading, avoid using too many capital letters and consider using narrow columns of text rather than wide measures. Aim for 10-12 words maximum for a line of text. Consider using bold type for headlines, including the overall title of the poster, to make them stand out. Check your organisation's style guidelines for advice about which typeface to use (the guidelines may also include advice about type size for posters). If there are no style guidelines, choose a simple, clear typeface. It's a good idea not to use lots of different typefaces – you may end up with a chaotic look.

Use big enough type

You want your poster to grab people's attention from afar, so make sure you use big enough type and images. Ideally, you should be able to read all the information clearly from a distance of about two metres, and the title – the element that will draw people towards your poster – should be visible from a distance of about six metres. On an A1 or A0 poster, the title should be at least 50pt and the main text should be at least 24pt.

Be consistent

Be consistent: if you give every 'chunk' a headline, make sure all the headlines are the same size and same style, unless you want to emphasise something (an introduction or overall summary, for example). Use the same size type for all text unless you want a particular section to stand out. If you use lots of different sizes, the poster may look 'bitty' and the 'chunks' may not feel connected.

Use big enough images

Make sure any image or graph you use is big enough to start with so that when it is enlarged and printed, it doesn't appear fuzzy. Make sure any type used on graphs or charts is clear and readable, and does not distort when enlarged.

Include 'non-filled space'

You don't have to fill up every available space on the poster: including some 'non-filled space' can help the viewer better process the information.

Colour

Think about colour and avoid clashing combinations that could make the poster harder to read for some people. For example, red and green close together may cause problems for people who have colour blindness. Avoid dark backgrounds and light coloured text: black text on a light background is the easiest combination to read.

Some colours, or combination of colours, have particular meanings in different cultures, so it is worth thinking about this, and if you are unsure, checking before finalising your colour scheme.

If your organisation has style guidelines, they may stipulate a palette of colours.

Logos

Also consult your organisation's style guidelines for advice about the use of the logo – what size and what position. Do not distort logos and try not to let them dominate the poster.

Improve your skills

Many universities run courses on 'how to make a good poster' to help people who are presenting at academic conferences.

Using social media to display digital posters

Traditionally, academic posters have been physically displayed at conferences. Some researchers are now displaying their posters on social media such as Twitter or Instagram. Instead of pinning up a printed poster, you tweet or post a digital poster summarising your work. Other people who are at the conference can then respond and debate with you via social media. If you are using social media to distribute a poster, it's even more important to make it legible and clear – and to write concise, punchy text – as the image will be viewed at a small size.

QR codes

A QR (quick response) code is a barcode label that can be scanned using a mobile phone app and links to a website. You can add a QR code to a poster to direct viewers to more information about your project. There are many free QR generator websites that you can find by searching on the internet. However, viewers will only be able to use a QR code if they have an appropriate app, so it's also worth considering simply adding a short website address to the bottom of your poster.

Posters for non-academic events

You may want to create posters for non-academic audiences – for use at exhibitions (see Exhibitions), academic conferences, on stalls at fairs and other events (see Events), to display on noticeboards in the service where you are working, for example.

Poster sizes are normally A3, A2 and A1. You might be able to create a smaller poster (A3) on your computer and print it out yourself if you have access to an A3 printer. For anything bigger, you will have to get it printed. If you work in a university, or collaborate with a university, you may have access to inhouse printing arrangements. Otherwise, search on the internet for poster printing. Some companies make it very easy for their customers to upload artwork onto their website: they print and deliver a few days later.

If your organisation has access to a professional designer, ask for their help.

On a non-academic poster, it is better to say what you want to say in as few, simple words as possible. Keep your text concise and simple. When you write the words, think about the aim of the poster and the message you want to convey.

If you can find a relevant image, use it, though check whether you need to get the permission of the photographer (and whether you need to pay to use it), or the permission of any people featured in the image. Make sure the image is large enough not to be blurry when printed.

If you don't have an appropriate image, think of a good headline that will make people stop and read on. Make the headline stand out – use bold text and a large size.

Read the sections about type, consistency, 'non-filled space', colour, logos and QR code in Posters for academic events above: they are all relevant for posters for non-academic events.

You may find *Poster design: a practical guide for researchers* (May 2013) helpful. It was published by the Wellcome Trust and Design Science (a design agency) to help researchers who want to engage the public: http://design-science.co.uk/poster-design-a-practical-guide-for-researchers

Press coverage

Are you working on something new? Will your project be of interest to patients and members of the public? Will your project make a real difference to the NHS? Are your research results shocking, unexpected, or controversial? Do you think the project – or aspects of the project – would make a good story for the press? Would press coverage of an event you are organising help get more people there? Are you hoping to get members of the public involved and would press coverage help that happen?

If you think your project is 'newsworthy', consider seeking coverage in local, national or specialist publications, on the radio, or on TV news.

First of all, take advice from your organisation's communication team
If you are considering seeking press coverage for your work, speak to your organisation's/funder's communication team first of all, before you start contacting journalists. Many university and NHS communication teams like all press contact to go through them, or at least want to be told about contact with the press/proposed press coverage. What's more, they may be willing to share names of journalists and that will be very helpful if you are going to try to organise press coverage yourself.

Identify local publications/radio stations
Local publications may well include stories about local projects, events, or appeals for people to get involved. It's worth spending some time identifying publications in the area in which you are working – local newspapers and magazines. Check if there are any community or 'hyperlocal' (printed and digital) publications in the area. The website of the Independent Community News Network (set up by Cardiff University Centre for Community Journalism) has a listing of hyperlocal publications in England, Wales and Scotland: www.communityjournalism.co.uk/icnn. There may be local radio stations in the neighbourhood, and if you are working in a hospital, there may be a hospital radio station. Visit the Hospital Broadcasting Association website for a list of member stations by region: www.hbauk.com.

Many local organisations produce newsletters and magazines (either online or printed) that aren't described as 'the press' but are read by all sorts of people. Try to find out what's produced in the area where you are working.

Contacting newsrooms
If your communication team is happy for you to seek press coverage yourself, compile a list of publications and start contacting them. Look at the publications and, if possible, get a name of a journalist, contact email and phone number for each one. It's often better to ring up and chat to a journalist before emailing them. They are more likely to remember you and then read a follow-up email/press release. Explain succinctly who are you, what you are doing, and ask if they would include a short article in a forthcoming issue. If you 'cold call' a newsdesk (without having a name), don't forget to ask for the name and email of the person at the other end of the phone.

How to write a press release
Make sure what you write is clear and easy to understand. If journalists have to struggle to work out what the story is, they will give up.

Try to summarise the 'story' in the first sentence: answer what, why, who, where, when and how. If you are appealing for advisors, or publicising an event, say so in the first paragraph.

Keep the press release short – no more than one side A4, 400 words maximum. You can add 'notes to editors' at the bottom if you need to explain a bit more – funding or a complicated collaboration, for example.

Use plain English and avoid jargon and acronyms.

Include a quote – explain why you are doing the work and what difference it will make to NHS services. Can you also include a quote from a patient or service user about the impact of your work from their perspective? (see Human interest below.)

Date the press release and write a short clear headline that explains what it is about.

Check what you have written. Make sure the spelling and grammar is correct, and that style is consistent (see Language – think about how you speak and write and Check your work).

Send the release by email as a PDF, not as a Word document. Word may render differently in different browsers, so if you spend time making the document look good on one page A4, unless you save it as PDF, your formatting may be lost on someone else's computer. You might also paste the text of your press release at the end of your email to make it easier for journalists.

'Human interest'

Are there patients and service users who are willing to talk to journalists about the impact your improvement/ implementation work has had on their experience of using the NHS? Make sure you have their permission before you pass on their details.

Media training

If you get a television or radio programme interested, a journalist may want to interview you. Many universities and NHS organisations offer media training to help their staff feel more confident in these circumstances. Speak to the communication team within your organisation/ funding organisation. You may find the resources on the Science Media Centre's website helpful: www.sciencemediacentre.org. The Centre runs events and produces resources for scientists who wish to engage with the media.

Write letters to local newspapers

If you, or your organisation's communication team, think that your work is not newsworthy, you could still get something in the press by writing a letter to local newspapers. Many people read the letters columns and this can be a very effective way to publicise an event or new website, or to appeal for groups of people to get involved. Refer to a website that contains information about your project or include another way for readers to find out more, or to contact you.

Slides and other presentations

If you are asked to present information about your project – at a meeting, conference, exhibition or other event, for example – first of all, think about your audience.

Try to use plain English, avoid jargon and speak in a way that will be understood by all members of the audience.

Explain who you are, which organisation you work for, and why you are speaking.

Think about the main message of your talk and what you want the audience to remember/act on. Present what you are saying in a logical fashion. People relate to stories about other people – are there any you can use to illustrate why you are carrying out your improvement/implementation project? Can you show why you want to make improvements by talking about the experiences of patients and service users, for example?

If you would like members of your audience to get involved, or to give you feedback, be clear about how they can do that. You might like to prepare a small leaflet or flyer for members of your audience to take away with contact details and a link to a website/web page about your project.

Slides

Most people use slide-making software like PowerPoint to support their talk. Prezi is another presentation tool you may like to consider.

Your organisation may have a slide template: ask the communication team if this exists. If you do use a template, try not to tamper with the size or position of the logos.

If there is no template, check which logos you should use (your organisation's logo? your funder's logo?). Do not distort logos and do use them at too big or too small a size. If they are too big, they will dominate the slide. If they are too small, they will not be legible. If you need to use a lot of logos, you could consider putting them all together on the last slide.

Try to make your slides look professional and engaging. On slides, 'less is more'. Don't try to cram too much information in: space around the text and images is good, and cluttered slides are hard to read. Use large type – minimum 24pt – and make sure any images you use are clear. Don't stretch a small, low-resolution image to fill a space: it will look blurred and amateurish.

Think carefully about what to include on each slide and remember that slides are supposed to support what you are saying and simply illustrate your main points. You should aim to use minimal text, a headline or an image. People often ask for copies of slide presentations, but the best presentations are meaningless without the speaker.

If you use photographs, check whether you need to get permission from the photographer/people featured in the pictures. If you take your own photographs, make sure people are happy for you to use their faces in presentations.

Posters

See Posters.

Material for exhibitions

See Exhibitions.

Be adventurous?

Can you talk about your project without using PowerPoint, Prezi or other presentation software? If you use another method, your presentation may stand out from the crowd and stick in people's minds.

Could you make your talk interactive and use a mechanism to record contributions from the audience? Could you make a short film on a smartphone and then show it to prompt debate? (See Films.) Could you take advantage of seasonal goodwill and create a humorous presentation for staff/colleagues (using music or poetry, for example)? Could you apply for a grant and work with a theatre/music group to create an alternative way of presenting information about your project?

Social media

Setting up a dedicated social media account

Think carefully before you set up a dedicated social media account for your project. Social media can be a powerful communication tool, but to make a social media campaign effective, you will need to invest time. Before you open any dedicated accounts, make a plan by answering the following questions:

Who is/are your target audience/s?

76 per cent of internet users, from all different backgrounds, have a social media account[1]. Younger adults are more likely to be active on social media: people aged 16-24 use social media more than any other age group[2]. The number of adults aged 75+ who have a social media profile/account is increasing, but the older people get, the less time they spend on social media[2]. At the time of writing, if you want to talk to younger people, definitely use social media. If you want to talk to older people, it may be worth priortising other communication methods, particularly if your time is limited. Next year, that may not be the case (see What sort of social media account? below).

It is also worth remembering that not everyone in the UK is online: the Office for National Statistics (ONS) says from January to March 2017, 89 per cent of adults in the UK had used the internet in the last three months. However, nine per cent had *never* used the internet. ONS also says 22 per cent of adults who have a disability had not used the internet during the first three months of 2017.

What sort of social media account?

You need to think about what sort of social media account is most used by your target audience/s.

At the time of writing, Facebook is the most used social network in the UK[2]. In April 2016, more than three-quarters of active internet users – 38.9 million people – had an account. This compares to 20.9 million people with a Twitter account, and 21.8 million people with a LinkedIn account[2].

95 per cent of adults who have a social media profile/account say they use Facebook[1], compared with 26 per cent who say they use Twitter and 31 per cent who say they use Instagram. More than one in 10 say they have a LinkedIn profile/account[1], but very few of them use it every day[3] and many only really use it when they are looking for a new job[4].

Facebook currently appeals to all ages, and to people from all backgrounds living in both towns and rural areas. About 40 per cent of account holders use Facebook several times a day[3].

So at the time of writing, if you are going to open a dedicated social media account with broad appeal, Facebook is the platform to consider. Twitter users tend to be younger (though some researchers of all ages favour this medium – see A note about Twitter below) and the majority of Instagram users are 18-29 years old[3].

But all that may change: if you decide to launch a social media campaign, investigate the most up-to-date statistics and most current demographics of each channel's users. Talk to representatives of your target audience/s to find out which type of social media might be best.

Who is going to run your project's social media account/s?

Running an effective social media account can be very time-consuming. You need to encourage people to follow you, read and share what you post. You will need to actively encourage members of your target audience/s to follow you – by joining Facebook groups and networks, by using Twitter hashtags, for example. You will need to post regularly, reply and comment. You will need to dedicate time every day to monitor the account and engage with your followers, and you will need to publicise your user name on everything else you produce about the project (eg flyers, posters, a dedicated website, summaries on other websites).

What are you going to post and when are you going to post?

Social media users are inundated with information: you will need to make your posts interesting, relevant and eye-catching, and, for most effect, post them at times when people are checking their accounts (this may be outside office hours). You can post words, pictures, links and videos, so you may want to spend time creating something that helps you stand out from the crowd.

[1] Ofcom: Adults' media use and attitudes report 2017
[2] Ofcom Communications Market Report 2016
[3] UK Social Media Demographics 2016, We are Flint, August 2016
[4] UK Digital Market Overview, UK Online Measurement Company, March 2017

What do the experts say?
Before you set up a dedicated social media account, it is worth taking advice from your organisation's communication officer about which platform may best suit your needs, and about different ways of making your posts interesting. You should also ask if your organisation has any social media guidelines.

Use existing social media accounts

If you don't have the time to set up dedicated social media accounts for your project, you and your colleagues could:

- tweet/post on your own personal accounts;
- ask your organisation's communication team to tweet/post about your project on their social media accounts;
- ask your funder and other relevant organisations (eg charities, campaign organisations) to tweet/post about your project on their accounts (see Create a communication network).

If you decide to take this route, it is worth making it happen systematically by writing a brief plan including which organisations you are going to approach, what you want to say via tweet or post, when you are going to say it and how you are going to say it: you could make different versions of an animated GIF to circulate, for example (search 'How to make a GIF' on the internet).

Many organisations have Instagram and YouTube channels. Can you find images that represent your project? Or write an 'Instaessay' – a 2,200 character (at November 2017) long caption story describing an aspect of your work? Or make a very short film explaining what you are trying to do?

A note about Twitter

At the time of writing (2017), many researchers are reporting the benefits of using their personal Twitter accounts to aid their research. They are using Twitter to promote their ideas, their work, opportunities to get involved in their research, and opportunities to collaborate.

If you want to use your own Twitter account for research purposes, think about your audience and the language you use. If you want to be accessible to a wide range of people (including researchers in other fields), you should use everyday language in your tweets. Every now and then, check your list of followers to ensure you're tailoring your tweeting style to your audience.

You can tweet about different aspects of your research and associated activities, and about your research results. You can tweet links to websites, add videos and add images. You can tweet about other people's research, about relevant developments that affect your research or are linked to your work. You can tweet about impressive or relevant speeches while you are at conferences. You can also comment and campaign on Twitter (but make sure you read your employer's social media guidelines first of all).

As well as 'talking', you can also 'listen' and start a conversation. You can learn, reply, share and encourage others. People may ask questions or comment on your tweets and you can ask questions and comment on other people's tweets.

Think carefully about the people and organisations you might want to follow, and why you are interested in reading their tweets. Follow other individual researchers and health professionals to connect with them and their work. You may also want to follow non-professionals who have something to say about an area you are interested in, for example people who are campaigning, people who run local groups, or those involved in patient and service user groups, and relevant voluntary organisations. But remember, the more people you follow, the more tweets there are going to be in your feed, so you may want to be selective unless you are simply going to skim incoming tweets.

You can start a private or group conversation with any of your followers – this could be useful for a particular project, or for a group organising an event, or for a discussion. Everyone in a group can see all the messages, even if they don't follow each other.

You may also use Twitter to debate and display academic posters (see Posters).

Talk to people

One of the best ways of telling people about your work is by talking to them. You will discover that almost everyone is interested in improving health services and will therefore be interested in what you are doing and why you are doing it.

Talk to people everywhere you go – in queues for coffee or food, in gyms, in shops, in any place where members of your target audience/s gather. If you have a leaflet about your work (see Leaflets, flyers, reports and other publications), carry a supply around with you and give one to anyone who is interested. If you run a stall at an event (see Events), introduce yourself to visitors and ask if you can tell them about how you are hoping to improve a service. Talk to the person sitting next to you on the bus or train, and to your family members and friends.

If you're hoping to involve patients, service users, members of the public or relatives in your project, talking can be the best way to do that. Can you get permission to visit the waiting rooms at clinics and talk to people there? Patients and service users are often very keen to find out about, and/or get involved in research or projects that seek to improve health services, and many are happy to talk while they are waiting to see a health professional.

Arrange to visit meetings of local community groups, carers' groups, patient and service user groups, women's groups, older people's groups, parents' groups, etc. Ask if you can give a short talk about your work and informally ask people what they think (and if they would like to get involved, if there are opportunities for them to do so).

Websites

If your project involves setting up a website, make sure you plan and cost this properly, otherwise you run the risk of creating a site that is not effective. Think too about members of your target audience/s and how you are going to promote the website to them.

Most importantly… write a plan

First of all, write a short plan for yourself, and for anyone else involved in the creation of the site. The plan can help clarify your thinking, act as a guide throughout the project and can be used for costing purposes.

Answer the following questions in the plan:

Why are you building the website?
What is its purpose?

Who is/are the target audience/s?
Who do you want to visit the site/for whom are you creating the site? Don't try to appeal to too many audiences if their information needs are very different unless you have a large-ish budget and lots of time to plan sensible, easy-to-use navigation systems for different groups of people to find their way around the site.

What will the website contain?
It is useful to write down what you want to include and what you *don't* want to include. Sometimes research websites become depositories of information that isn't relevant to target audiences or the site's aims. If you have a short description of the site's purpose and contents, it is easier to say 'no' to colleagues who ask you to add superfluous information.

Who will write the content?
The text should be succint and divided between pages in a logical way so visitors can easily find information they need. The style should appeal to your target audience/s. Unless you only want to talk to academics working in the same field, use plain English and avoid jargon. Think whether the terms you use will mean the same thing to every visitor. Check spelling, grammar and punctuation, and make sure names of organisations are accurate (a surprisingly large number of people write the name of organisations incorrectly so it is worth double checking).

Are you going to include images, and if so, what will those images show? Where will you source the images?
Any images should be relevant to the content of the website. It is good practice to seek permission from people before putting their pictures on a website. Be careful of taking images randomly from the web – you may be infringing copyright. The NHS has a picture library, but, beware, many of the images are used time and time again on different websites and publications. There are agencies where you can buy images at very reasonable cost – for example Shutterstock (www.shutterstock.com).

How will your site be 'branded'? Which logos will you need to use?
The logo of your organisation, your funder, any others? Find out from each organisation if they have style guidelines about where their logos should be positioned and which version of their logo should be used on a website.

What sort of functionality do you need?
Will the site simply contain information, or do you need a mailout facility; a blog; streamed videos; any other functionality?

When do you want the website to launch?
Fixing a launch date will allow you to work backwards and create a sensible schedule, with deadlines for completing the contents and uploading them to the site. It will also allow you to plan how you are going to promote the site after it has launched.

What is the lifetime of the website?
Is it time-limited or will it continue for ever? The answer will help you plan maintenance arrangements and work out ongoing costs.

Who will maintain the website pages/update the site during its lifetime?
It is important to regularly update websites and check links are not broken.

What will happen to the website if you leave/when your project is over?
Who will be responsible for maintaining the site if you leave? At the end of your project, will you close the site or keep it going as a record of your work? If so, how long will the site stay online and who will be responsible for it?

Who will pay for any costs?

Where will the money for the creation and maintenance of the site come from? Who will give the time needed to steer the project/create the content etc?

Who will promote the website address to members of your target audience/s? How are you going to encourage them to visit?

How do you plan to promote the address to members of your target audience/s? Plan which communication methods you are going to use to promote the site *before* the site launches. Who will carry out this work? Will the promotional work cost anything? If so, include those costs in your budget.

It is also important to try to get links from as many other relevant websites and blogs as possible. To do this, you need to approach the organisation responsible for the site, find the name of the person responsible for maintaining it and contact them. You will need to 'sell' your site and explain why it would be useful to include a link. You may need to chase them. This can be a time-consuming task, but it's worth doing. If other sites link to your site, Google interprets this as approval and ranks your site higher in search results (especially if the site that links to you is itself high-ranking). When searching, people are more likely to visit sites that appear near the top of the results list. So if you have made a site about a particular health condition, and a BBC soap opera has a storyline that includes that condition, you might want to try to get a link from the BBC site (as that is high-ranking). And you might want to try to get a link from the relevant page on NHS Choices (another high-ranking site).

Who will monitor visitor numbers?

You need to know if people are visiting your site: if you are not getting the visitor numbers you are expecting, you are not promoting the site properly and you will need to revisit your promotional plans.

You may want to work out target visitor numbers to ensure your site is effective, especially if you are using the site as an improvement initiative (promoting research results to a group of health professionals, for example). In which case, you will need to spend a bit of time working out the estimated size of your target audience/s, and then decide a reasonable visitor number target for the first year, second year, third year etc, or during the lifetime of the site.

You can sign up to Google Analytics, or another monitoring system, to find out how many people are visiting, how many people visit the site time and time again, and which pages are most frequently visited.

Who will engage with visitors?

If you set up a 'contact us' functionality on the website, who will be responsible for checking and responding to messages? If you set up a newsletter functionality, who will write the text and send out each 'issue'?

What will be the website's address? (domain name)

You will need to buy and register a domain name (website address). There are many different retailers (registrars) that sell them: search on the internet for 'buy a domain name' – you'll see companies like GoDaddy and 123-Reg. They all offer different prices and different offers (though prices may well increase when you come to renew the name).

Domain names are unique and you can only register a domain name that no one else has already purchased. When choosing a name, make it relevant to/reflect the aim and contents of your site. For example, your project may have a name that is an acronym that has nothing to do with the contents of your site. It's not a good idea to use that acronym as a domain name if the contents and purpose of the site are not immediately obvious. Think about what members of your target audience would search for. Keep the domain name short and simple as well as obvious. Make it easy for people to find and remember.

Think too about who will register and 'own' the name, and who will be responsible for paying for it in future, if that person leaves the organisation.

Who will build the website and where will it be hosted?

Will you hire a professional or will you build it yourself? (see below). Whichever way you choose, you will need to have a hosting company – an organisation that looks after the files that comprise your website and makes them available on the internet.

If you build the website yourself, the company that provides the DIY template will usually offer a hosting service. You may have to pay extra for hosting, usually a set amount per month or per year, and the cost is likely to depend on the size of your site. If you work with a website developer, they may offer hosting services.

Often companies that sell domain names will also offer hosting. Some domain name registrars offer you free hosting for a set period of time when you first buy the name, but this may not be the most economical option when you start paying after the free period.

Alternatively, you can buy a hosting service from a separate company and then arrange to link your domain name and website. Whichever provider you use will be able to guide you through the process of doing this. You can usually contact them for support online.

Who will offer technical support/fix parts of the website if they break?
If you work with a professional website developer (see below), they may be able to offer ongoing technical support. If you build the website yourself, check what sort of services are offered by the DIY provider you use and by the hosting company you choose.

Building the site: working with a professional

If you decide to hire a professional website builder (developer), give them your written plan and talk to them about your requirements. Website design and website building are two different skills. A website company will mostly use graphic designers and programmers who work together. Some individual developers, however, do both design and build. Ask about the design and build process and who will be doing what.

It's helpful to discuss the way a developer likes to work with their clients, and you should ask for a quote and make sure you understand what is included in the price. For example, what happens if you don't like a first design? Will you be charged extra for a second iteration? A professional may also be able to host your site, register your domain name and offer you ongoing maintenance services. Be clear what the ongoing costs are, and what they cover.

It's important to look at websites a developer has built previously to see if you like the way they look and operate. You should discuss and agree:

- the process and schedule. Make sure they can work to your timescale and deliver the site by the planned launch date (make sure you build in time for any approvals you will need to get from your organisation/funder).
- site navigation (how visitors will find their way around) and site functionality (what you want the site to do – eg mailouts, stream videos, host a blog, be interactive in some way).
- the design – the look and feel of the site – and logos that need to be used.
- that the developer will build the site to work on all browsers and test that it does, and that the site will be 'responsive' – that is, work on all devices.
- the content management system (CMS). A professional should build a website with an easy-to-use CMS which means you will be able to update pages yourself and format text. It's important to be clear about how you want the pages to look/what edits you want to be able to make so the CMS can be built to meet your needs. Ask who will explain to you how the CMS works – will they give you a written guide or a training session?
- analytics – how visitor numbers and data are going to be collected. Some developers create and build their own analytics system. Will they do this, or set up an off-the-shelf system – Google Analytics, for example.
- email services – do you want visitors to be able to email you via the website?
- newsletter design and set up. Are you going to generate a newsletter from the site? If so, discuss the database of email addresses, where it will be held and how will it comply with data protection laws (see https://ico.org.uk), and how people will add their name. Agree the design of the newsletter and look at the template to make sure you can understand how to use it.
- domain name – will the developer purchase this for you or will you buy it yourself?
- web hosting – will the developer be able to host the site for you? If not, can they advise about potential hosts?
- future development. Ask what the likely cost will be if you decide to further develop the site in future.
- one-off and ongoing costs.

Building the site yourself

You can build your own simple, basic website by using one of the many systems available, all offering a number of different templates, many of them free. WordPress is (in 2017) the most popular and its DIY templates are easy to follow and use.

Whichever one you use, you are likely be offered the chance to pay for some more complicated templates, normally a set amount per year or month. Make sure you work out all the costs involved.

Some domain name registrars and hosting organisations will offer you a website template. Check the deal/small print carefully when anything is offered for free – it may mean advertising is placed on your site.

If you use a DIY template, remember to opt to make it a responsive site. This means the site changes so it can be more easily navigated when viewed on tablets and mobiles.

A micro-site within your organisation's website

Some universities and NHS organisations prefer that you set up a micro-site on their main website. Speak to your organisation's communication officer to get advice on organisational rules about websites, and general advice about setting one up.

Writing articles for non-academic publications

Researchers regularly write for academic publications, but what about writing for other publications, read by non-academics? Many voluntary organisations, charities, community organisations, health organisations and local authorities produce publications, either online or printed (or both). The organisation in which you are trying to make an improvement/implement research results may produce a publication that is distributed to patients and service users.

When you have drawn up a list of organisations that might be interested in your work (see Create a communication network), check whether any of them produce a publication, and decide if it would be useful to try to get an article about your work included. Decide:

- What would be the purpose of the article? What would you hope to achieve? Would you be awareness-raising, discussing challenges, successes, results? Or would you be appealing for readers to get involved in some way?
- Are the publication's readers members of your target audience/s?
- When would the article appear? Find out how often the publication comes out (monthly, quarterly, weekly etc) to help you plan the timing of an article.

'Pitch'

Find out the name and email address of the editor, then 'pitch' your article. Your pitch email should be short, succinct, and include a brief summary of who you are, your work, the proposed article and why it might be of interest to the publication's readers. If the content of your article is time-tied (eg you want to promote an event or recruit advisors), explain this and ask if it would be possible for your article to appear in the appropriate issue.

Writing and submitting the article

If the editor accepts your article, check how long it should be (word count) and the deadline.

Read several back copies of the publication and try to write in the same style. Write in plain English and check your work for spelling, grammar, punctuation and consistency before you submit the article. It is often helpful to ask friends who are not involved in your work to read articles through to make sure they understand what you have said, and are interested and engaged enough to want to read on.

Questions

The questions were asked by researchers, service users, patients and health professionals during the development of this resource.

What's the difference between a communication plan and a stakeholder analysis?

A stakeholder analysis is a project management tool that helps you identify individuals and groups of people who may be affected by your project (both positively and negatively). The analysis also encourages you to 'rank' stakeholders – decide which ones are most important in terms of achieving your project's goals. You can use the results of a stakeholder analysis to help develop a communication plan. The groups of people who are identified as 'stakeholders' are your 'target audiences'.

What's the best way to communicate with GPs?

The answer will depend on where your project is based, and it is helpful if you can ask local GPs what they think is the best way. There are bound to be mechanisms for communicating with GPs set up by the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), so another good starting point is the CCG's communication team. They will be able to advise you about local bulletins and mailing lists. The CCG chair may have a Twitter/other social media account, and you could message and ask him or her to tweet/post about your project. The NHS trust where your project is based may also have set up a way of speaking to local GPs – perhaps a regular newsletter or round-up email. Ask the trust's communication team or search the trust's website. Nationally, NHS England sends a monthly bulletin to GPs, practice managers and practice nurses: www.england.nhs.uk/email-bulletins/gp-and-practice-team-bulletin. The web page includes information about how to submit an article. Publications written for GPs like *Pulse* may be interested in carrying a story, if your project is 'newsworthy' (see Press coverage).

I've made a leaflet for patients explaining my project. Is it best to print it on glossy or matt paper?

Your decision may come down to personal preference or practicality. Glossy paper may be best if your leaflet includes many images, as photographs reproduce very well on a gloss finish. But if you want people to write on your publication (eg if it's a feedback form), use matt paper. Matt paper can feel more 'elegant' and understated. A silk finish is somewhere between gloss and matt, and has a slight sheen to it rather than the full shine of gloss. Ask to see samples of paper before you make a decision, and examples of documents printed on that paper. It's not just about whether it's glossy, silk or matt, the weight of the paper will also make a difference to the look of the leaflet (and to the cost).

What are the best communication methods to use to find patients and service users who haven't been involved in research before?

Finding patients, service users and members of the public who are completely new to involvement in improvement and implementation projects (or in other types of research) is a time-consuming but worthwhile process.

The best way of all is to talk to people. Find out about local open days, local fairs, festivals, exhibitions – anywhere visited by local people and go along, meet people and tell them about your work. Produce some posters and/or simple leaflets about your project. Explain how patients and service users and members of the public can get involved, what they would need to do and why you value their perspective. Don't forget to include your contact details.

You could visit local libraries, local churches and local shops and ask to leave a supply of leaflets. You could find out about local community organisations and tenants' associations, make contact, send them copies of your leaflet and ask if you could go to their next meeting to speak about your project. You could get permission to hand out leaflets in a specific clinic and talk to patients and service users who are waiting to see a health professional.

You could stand outside train stations and hand out leaflets to commuters. You could even put leaflets through letterboxes. You could also consider writing a letter to a local newspaper, or trying to get an appeal posted on local online forums.

If people aren't very good at spelling and grammar, how can they get help to check their work?

If you know you're not very good at spelling and grammar, use a dictionary to check how to spell words. It's better not to rely on a computer 'spell check', as this often uses American spellings. Ask a colleague or friend to read over what you have written, or ask a communication professional to check and make suggestions. It may help to read your work out loud. For example, if a sentence is hard to read without taking a breath, you may need to add a comma or two.

Which communication methods work best for which target audiences?

It depends on when you ask. At the time of writing, for example, Facebook is the social media platform most used by all age groups, but that may change next year and the demographic profile may be different. It is always best to do your homework and find out which methods are working well for which audiences at that particular time. It's also sensible to take advice from representatives of your target audience, and a communication professional, if possible.

Do different colours have different connotations?

The answer is yes, and the connotations may depend on people's cultural background. In some cultures, for example, red is associated with 'danger' or 'stop'; in others, it is an auspicious colour. White can represent purity to some, and symbolise death to others. Some colour combinations may conjure up an association with a country, or with a movement (green, white and red may be associated with Italy because of the flag, for example; a rainbow may be associated with LGBTQ+ Pride).

When choosing colour combinations, you should also consider legibility and readability. Some people cannot differentiate between colours, and some combinations are particularly difficult for people who have impaired vision or dyslexia. Light colours on a white background are hard to read, as is small type of any colour on a black background. Use your common sense: black or other dark colours on a white or very light background is the most accessible combination.

How do I find out exhibitions that might be relevant to my work?

Search on the internet for exhibitions in the area where you are working. Look in local newspapers and magazines, on local forums and on relevant what's on' websites. Set up Google Alerts at www.google.co.uk/alerts – that means whenever new content about your chosen subject matter appears on the web, you will be notified by email. Join electronic mailing lists and get regular bulletins from as many relevant organisations as you can think of – national organisations as well as local ones.

I'm halfway through my project and haven't thought about communication. Is it too late to start a communication plan?

You're not alone. A 2012 survey of 266 researchers in the USA (involving researchers at universities, the National Institutes of Health, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) showed that although 51 per cent of respondents strongly agreed that 'it is an obligation of researchers to disseminate their research to those who need to learn about it and make use of the findings', only 27 per cent said they planned dissemination activities at proposal stage[1].

If you're halfway through your project, it's not too late to think about communication and create a plan. At the very least, you can plan how you are going to tell people about the results of your project.

[1] Designing for dissemination among public health researchers: findings from a national survey in the United States. Brownson et al. American Journal of Public Health, 2013

What is the difference between communication and dissemination? In the US they often talk about dissemination research/science.

Dissemination, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, is the 'act of spreading something, especially information, widely'. Communication is 'the imparting or exchanging of information by speaking, writing, or using some other medium' (https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition). So when you disseminate information you 'spread' it, and when you communicate, you 'impart' it. With reference to information, you could be forgiven for thinking the words mean the same thing.

In research, however, there seems to be a number of different definitions of both communication and dissemination.

When many researchers talk about 'dissemination', they often simply mean communicating their research results to other people – getting their results 'out there'. Traditionally, they do this through academic publications and conferences (and may not consider non-academic audiences).

The European Commission makes the following distinction for researchers working on projects it funds. It says: 'dissemination is the public disclosure of the results of the project in any medium ... it is a process of promotion and awareness-raising right from the beginning of a project. It makes research results known to various stakeholder groups … in a targeted way… to enable them to use the results in their own work. This process must be planned and organised at the beginning of each project, usually in a dissemination plan.' According the European Commission, 'communication means taking strategic and targeted measures for promoting the action itself and its results to a multitude of audiences, including the media and the public, and possibly engaging in a two-way exchange' (https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/support/faqs/faq-933.html).

In implementation science, some researchers talk about a 'diffusion-dissemination-implementation continuum'. In this instance, dissemination is 'an active approach of spreading evidence-based interventions to the target audience via determined channels using planned strategies'[1]. The 'active spread' can include communication methods, but can also include training, social marketing campaigns, creating new computer systems etc. In this definition therefore, dissemination is more than communication and a communication plan (identifying target audiences and the communication methods to be used to speak to them) is part of a dissemination strategy that includes many different ways of encouraging change/implementing research results.

In America, researchers now seem to refer to 'dissemination and implementation science' rather than just 'dissemination science', and a number of 'frameworks', theories and 'models' have been created for the discipline. See, for example, http://dissemination-implementation.org.

[1] A glossary for dissemination and implementation research in health, A Borsika et al, Journal of Public Health Management and Practice, 2008.

As an improvement researcher, do I have to become an expert in all things communication?

Communication is at the heart of the majority of projects that aim to improve health services, so if you want to run a successful improvement/implementation project, you do have to think about communication, and it is best to do so right at the beginning of a project.

If you can, enlist the help of communication professionals – employed by your organisation or your funder – from the very start. Or, invite a communication professional to join your project's advisory committee/group.

However, some researchers may not have access to a communication professional. If that's the case, you don't have to become an expert in all things communication. It does make sense however, to think about your target audiences, plan which methods you are going to use to talk to them, and find about those methods. In the longer term, that will be more cost-effective and time-effective.

Some researchers working in the fields of improvement/implementation are using communication methods as a way of effecting change (eg setting up websites, making films). If this is the case, it is very important to learn about the nuts and bolts of using these methods.

How can I improve my plain English writing?

Try to structure your text by answering the 'what, why, where, how, when, who' questions. Use simple, short sentences, avoid jargon and idioms (expressions that use words in a different way from their true meaning – eg 'kick the bucket') because they can mean different things to different people, and use everyday words. It can be very useful to get someone who is not a researcher, or who is not associated with your project, to read what you write and tell you if they understand it.

Are there certain communication methods that I should always consider?

The methods you choose should always be informed by your target audiences (which methods are most likely to reach members of your target audience/s), why you want to talk to them and what you want to say to them, as well as the amount of time and money you have available for each project.

This resource was created by King's Improvement Science (KIS), a specialist team of improvement scientists, senior researchers and fellows, based at King's College London.

First set up and funded by King's Health Partners*, the KIS team initially helped health professionals and managers who work in NHS services in south-east London to carry out quality improvement projects. Until 2018, the team will be supporting the individual quality improvement and 'transformation' plans put in place by the three NHS trusts that are part of King's Health Partners – Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust – and developing resources and training to support quality improvement projects. KIS is now part of the Centre for Implementation Science at King's College London.

KIS resources

You can view and/or download the following resources from the KIS website (www.kingsimprovementscience.org).

- Quality improvement guides
Step 1: KIS Introduction to quality improvement
Step 2: KIS guidance for deciding what to improve and assessing the feasibility of a quality improvement project
Step 3: KIS template for planning and evaluating a quality improvement project
- KIS advice about patient and public involvement
- Communication: a practical resource
- Implementation Science Research Development (ImpRes) tool and guide
- KIS guide to evaluation resources

A KIS glossary of terms used in improvement and implementation will be available later in 2018.

The KIS website also contains information about improvement science and quality improvement methods, and archived information about five quality improvement projects carried out by the KIS team in collaboration with health professionals, patients and service users between 2013 and 2017.

The KIS team is available to help and advise anyone who wants to carry out a quality improvement project in south London, or further afield.

Project Design Clinic

If you are planning a quality improvement or implementation science project and need expert advice, you can book a place on the Project Design Clinic run jointly by the KIS team and the Centre for Implementation Science (CIS) at King's College London.

The Clinic is free to any health professional or researcher who works for one of the following organisations: King's College London, St George's, University of London, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, the Health Innovation Network and King's Health Partners. Otherwise, there is a charge for each one-and-a-half hour face-to-face session.

Email clahrcshortcourses@kcl.ac.uk to find out more.

* King's Health Partners is an academic health science centre: its partners are Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust, King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, King's College London and South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust. The work of the KIS fellows has been funded by Guy's and St Thomas' Charity and the Maudsley Charity. The work of KIS fellow Louise Hull has also been supported by the NIHR CLAHRC South London.

Monthly seminars about improvement and implementation

Leaders in the field of improvement and implementation share and debate their experiences at monthly end-of-afternoon seminars organised by the KIS team in collaboration with colleagues at the Centre for Implementation Science. The seminars take place at the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience in de Crespigny Park, Camberwell, south London, and are open to anyone interested in improvement and implementation. Visit www.clahrc-southlondon.nihr.ac.uk/events to find out dates and details.

Evaluation

Any organisation can commission the KIS team to evaluate improvement/implementation programmes or projects, or to help set up ongoing evaluation procedures to ensure the impact of an initiative is constantly monitored.

The KIS team works in collaboration with colleagues at the Centre for Implementation Science at King's College London, King's Health Economics and Maudsley International, a specialist not-for-profit mental health consultancy.

KIS fees include programme management and stakeholder engagement, qualitative research, health economics analysis, collection and analysis of relevant statistics.

We are also happy to discuss the possibility of collaborating as an evaluation partner on a grant application.

Email KIS programme manager Lucy Goulding to find out more, lucy.goulding@kcl.ac.uk.

MSc in Implementation and Improvement Science

This is a practical MSc (awarded by King's College London) for anyone who is interested in improving health services: health professionals, researchers, health service managers, patients and service users, members of patient organisations, people who work for health-related charities and commissioning organisations. The course has been created jointly by researchers at King's and at St George's, University of London, and accepts both full-time (one year) and part-time (two to five years) students. Members of the KIS team teach on the course.

Students learn how to plan and deliver an effective improvement or implementation project; about the pros and cons of different designs and methods; about the importance of measurement and how to evaluate the effectiveness of different implementation strategies.

For more information, visit www.kcl.ac.uk/study/postgraduate/taught-courses/implementation-and-improvement-science-msc.aspx

Principles of Implementation and Improvement Science

Members of the KIS team also teach on this standalone Masters module at King's College London that involves 10 days in the classroom spread over one or two terms. For more information, email alice.simon@kcl.ac.uk

Implementation Science Masterclass

A two-day summer Implementation Science Masterclass for health professionals and researchers is held every year in south London. Patients and service users who have experience of research may also be interested. The event was originally set up by members of the KIS team and is organised by the Centre for Implementation Science at King's College London under the auspices of the NIHR CLAHRC South London. Members of the KIS team continue to contribute. To find out more, visit the CLAHRC South London website: www.clahrc-southlondon.nihr.ac.uk/training-and-education/short-courses-healthcare-professionals/implementation-science-masterclass

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KING'S College LONDON

Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust