



## **Call for lay members for PHE Screening antenatal and newborn screening research advisory committee**

We are looking for individuals living in England to become lay members of the [research advisory committee](#) (RAC) for the NHS antenatal and newborn (ANNB) screening programmes.

Lay members are also known as patient and public involvement members.

Public Health England (PHE) coordinates the RACs.

### **What is the ANNB RAC?**

The [NHS population screening programmes](#) encourage well designed research that addresses important new questions that will inform, guide and improve the screening programmes and benefit the future care of the whole population.

There are 6 NHS ANNB screening programmes, all of which hold data and samples collected during screening. The screening programmes use data for a number of purposes including to evaluate the effectiveness of screening and to invite the eligible population. This is done in compliance with [patient confidentiality](#).

The RAC receives frequent requests from researchers to access these data and samples for use in further research, audit or evaluation studies to improve screening and the health of children and adults. RAC members consider these requests with the aim of enabling re-use in ethically acceptable research.

The RAC also receives requests to carry out studies requiring involvement of screening programme participants. RAC members review the risks and benefits of each proposal for the screening programme and participants, as well as the public interest in carrying out the study. Based on this assessment, the RAC decides whether to support the research.

The RAC currently has 6 to 8 members with clinical, scientific, technical and research ethics expertise. We now wish to appoint up to 2 public involvement or lay members. These should be individuals who are not directly involved in clinical practice or medical research.

## **What will the role involve?**

As a lay member you will be expected to:

- attend and actively participate in committee meetings up to 4 times a year
- prepare for meetings by reading any paperwork as required
- offer your views on research applications as a member of the public with a focus on the interests and involvement of patients and the public
- participate in other committee projects and activities as agreed

Committee meetings are currently held remotely on Microsoft Teams and last 2 to 3 hours. When possible, in-person meetings are held in London lasting 3 to 4 hours, with an option to join remotely.

## **What are we looking for?**

We are looking for up to 2 new members who are not directly involved in clinical practice or medical research. Applicants should have:

- good communications skills, enthusiasm, reliability
- the ability to maintain a neutral/objective stance and to listen, add value and challenge appropriately
- access to appropriate technology (such as a computer or tablet) for email and remote meetings.

It would be desirable to have:

- an understanding of health research
- an interest in [health inequalities](#)
- experience of reviewing scientific papers or applications
- knowledge of research ethics

Anyone considering applying should not do so with the intention of representing or lobbying on behalf of any specific stakeholder, population or interest group. It is important members are appointed as individuals bringing their own skills and knowledge to the group.

## **What will we offer?**

Reimbursement for all reasonable travel and subsistence costs for attendance at meetings in line with PHE policy (valid receipts must be provided).

## **How to apply**

If you are interested in joining the RAC, then please send a short statement (no more than one page of A4) explaining:

- why you are interested in being part of the committee

- what you feel you can contribute.

Please email your statement to [screening.research@phe.gov.uk](mailto:screening.research@phe.gov.uk) by **28 July 2021**.

If you have any questions or want more information, please contact Jess Tarrant, RAC team leader, at [screening.research@phe.gov.uk](mailto:screening.research@phe.gov.uk)

[More information about the RAC](#) is available online.

### **What happens next?**

We will acknowledge receipt of all applications.

Statements will be reviewed by the secretariat and selected applicants will be invited to a short interview (telephone, Skype or Microsoft Teams) in August. We will contact all those who have sent a statement to inform them whether they have been selected or not.

After the interview we will invite up to 2 individuals to become lay members of the RAC for an initial period of 3 years.