

Patient and Public Involvement Strategy 2023–2027

Introduction

Engaging patients and their representatives in the delivery and planning of healthcare services has in recent years become an accepted element and indeed a requirement for healthcare providers, for example in the establishment of Integrated Care Systems. [Section 242](#) of the National Health Service Act 2006 requires NHS organisations to involve service users in the planning and development of services.

Shared decision making, a joint process in which a healthcare professional works together with a patient to reach a decision about their care, is also becoming a national standard, with guidance issued by the [National Institute for Health and Care Excellence](#) and the [General Medical Council](#), and supported by [quality indicators](#) for healthcare providers to meet through the NHS's Commissioning for Quality and Innovation (CQUIN) 2022–2023.

Furthermore, our Royal Charter states that we must 'educate the general public in all matters relating to anaesthesia' and 'set standards for the provision of high-quality anaesthetic services for the benefit of patients'.

As the membership body representing the single largest hospital specialty in the NHS, the RCoA has a duty to embrace the ethos of patient and public involvement (PPI) and strive to ensure our own workstreams have contribution from patient representatives.

The new strategy 2022–2027, with its increased focus on improving outcomes and patient engagement, the appointment of a dedicated Patient and Public Involvement Manager and the establishment of [PatientsVoices@RCoA](#) signal a commitment by the RCoA to strengthen the patient's voice in its work and present an ideal opportunity to revisit its model of PPI.

Our commitment to patient and public involvement

At the beginning of 2023 the Lay Committee was renamed to PatientsVoices@RCoA with a view to modernising and updating the group and paving the way for a stronger patient voice not only within the organisation, but also externally.

This also signals the RCoA's commitment to shifting away from an engagement model based largely on 'informing' and 'consulting' to a more agile and flexible model where we can 'involve, collaborate with and empower' patients' voices and allowing us to cover a wider spectrum of participation as illustrated by the [International Association for Public Participation](#).

In reviewing the PPI model and activities carried out historically by the RCoA another gap in participation has emerged, which is around communicating with the wider public and raising the profile of anaesthesia and perioperative care.

This is an important element of public involvement as not only our Charter mandates us to 'educate the general public in all matters relating to anaesthesia', but also because a positive public opinion of the role of anaesthesia and perioperative care can support many of the RCoA's activities and aims.

Moving to a more effective model of PPI will bring benefits to the organisation as a whole, to staff and our volunteers, leading to a better volunteering experience for our patients' voices, increasing their level of engagement and allowing us to work with a more diverse community of patient representatives.

More recently a network of PPI champions has been created, made up of staff who are passionate about patient engagement and will support the delivery and enhancement of PPI activities across the Directorates. Already the RCoA has embarked on new and different [PPI approaches and activities](#) since the Spring of 2022 and we are committed to build on these over the coming years.

Purpose of the strategy

This strategy sets out a roadmap for a more impactful PPI function and stronger patient voice, moving the organisation away from a 'one size fits all' approach to more targeted patient engagement methodologies. It does this by:

- setting ambitious organisational strategic objectives for PPI, which will help deliver the relevant aims for the [RCoA strategy 2022–2027](#) and the [PatientsVoices@RCoA strategy 2023–2027](#).
- building on the success and learning from PPI methods used previously by the RCoA and develop an understanding of where improvements are required
- illustrating different levels of participation and provide examples of activities to strengthen the patient voice and improve public involvement
- providing a theory of change model outlining the changes required at an organisational level for the effective delivery of the strategy and identifying the risks and assumptions which might hinder its success
- providing a framework for evaluating and measuring the impact of the PPI strategy, its aims and objectives.

A vision for Patient and Public Involvement at the RCoA

'For a stronger patient voice throughout the work of the RCoA to help us deliver safe, effective, patient-centred care through impactful engagement with the diverse communities of patients in the UK.'

Our strategic aims for Patient and Public Involvement at the RCoA

The Patient and Public Involvement strategy focusses on four strategic aims, supported by tailored objectives.

1 Championing and embedding the voice of patients in what we do

We want to hear the voices of patients much louder across the work of the RCoA and ensure that the patient experience of anaesthesia and perioperative care is at the heart of what we do. To achieve this we will:

- empower PatientsVoices@RCoA, to become more visible and raise their profile
- actively seek meaningful contributions from PatientsVoices@RCoA and other patient groups to ensure that the views of patients are at the centre of what we do
- provide opportunities for patients' voices to have a presence at RCoA events, communication channels, including social media and publications
- be smarter about how we utilise the available resource and adopt a 'quality over quantity' approach to patient and public involvement
- foster an organisational culture change so that it becomes second nature for teams and clinical leads to give careful thought to how they can achieve meaningful patient and public involvement at the right time for different RCoA activities.

2 Educating and engaging with the public about anaesthesia and perioperative care

We are keen to further develop our communications to patients and the public. We want to inform them about our work and the important role of anaesthesia and perioperative care in healthcare. We also want to educate them on how to achieve healthier outcomes and make the right decisions about their care. To achieve this we will:

- communicate the work we do in a way that is accessible and relevant to patients and the public by providing publications specifically tailored for a non-medical audience
- continue to build on our portfolio of PIF TICK accredited patient information resources to help patients prepare for anaesthesia and surgery and support shared decision making
- galvanise public opinion and utilise the patient voice to support the RCoA's aims and campaigns
- extend our reach into media channels aimed at members of the public or specific groups to enable us to reach our target audiences and communicate better our messages.

3 Pursuing excellence in patient and public involvement

We want all patients' voices working with us to have a positive experience of volunteering with us and for effective patient and public involvement to be everybody's responsibility. To achieve this we will:

- ensure that our patients' voices feel valued and engaged with the activities that we involve them in and evaluate their experience by gathering feedback through periodic surveys and individual feedback
- explore different methods of engaging with patients' voices, which enable them to make a meaningful contribution and are tailored to individual projects and activities
- establish a wide network of PPI champions across College directorates
- embed PPI in the governance structures of the RCoA, so that it achieves equal status with other functions and all Directorates have PPI objectives in their operational plans
- equip PPI and RCoA staff, Committee/Board Chairs and clinical leads with the skills required to deliver effective patient engagement activities
- invest in the resources required to grow the patient and public involvement function at the RCoA to allow it to reach its full potential, including support for income generation activities to deliver PPI projects.

4 Striving to include the diverse voices of patients in what we do

We are committed to ensuring that RCoA PPI activities are representative of the diverse voices of patients. To achieve this we will:

- strive to increase the diversity of our PatientsVoices@RCoA group by providing different methods of engagement,
- build a diverse community of patients to support our engagement activities and whose experiences we can use to inform our work
- reach out to specific patient communities and lived experiences to ensure we are engaging with the right patients' voices for different PPI activities, including working with relevant partners and engagement experts to achieve this
- build links and collaborate with relevant organisations to bring in a greater breadth of expertise, patients' experiences and views to our PPI projects
- provide accessible information to patients on anaesthesia and perioperative care and strive to produce resources in different formats to meet the needs of different communities of patients.

How the PPI strategy supports the RCoA and PatientsVoices@RCoA strategies

PatientsVoices@RCoA strategy

- Strengthening our voice.
- Improving how we communicate the views of patients internally and externally.
- Increasing our impact by developing effective ways of working.

RCoA Patient and Public Involvement strategy

Championing and embedding the voice of patients in what we do.

Educating and engaging with the public about anaesthesia and perioperative care.

Pursuing excellence in patient and public involvement.

Striving to include the diverse voices of patients in what we do.

RCoA strategy 2022–2027

Our vision for 2022–2027 is safe, more effective, patient-centred care, delivered by a well-trained, supported and valued workforce.

Through a partnership approach to delivering good outcomes for patients, we will:

- ✓ educate and empower patients in their healthcare choices.
- ✓ co-produce and signpost information and resources that will equip patients to make decisions about their care.
- ✓ ensure that the patient voice is heard and integrated with the work of the College to improve the experience of anaesthesia and perioperative care for patients and the public.
- ✓ work collaboratively with other healthcare organisations and specialties to improve the health of patients, promote equity of access and reduce health inequalities.
- ✓ ensure that College activities are reflective of the diverse voices of patients and the public.

A theory of change for more effective Patient and Public Involvement at the RCoA

The strategic aims and objectives outlined in this strategy are deliberately ambitious and reflect the desire and the commitment by the organisation to change its approach to patient and public involvement after many years of using a more conventional methodology. This will require a significant change in the culture around PPI within the RCoA and in the behaviours, skills and capabilities that the organisation will require to achieve these aims.

The below theory of change model is an attempt at describing the journey required to move the RCoA from the traditional model of patient engagement to a more effective and impactful methodology of PPI.

Overall aim/change	Target groups	Changes required to achieve aim/assumptions	Outcomes in target groups (changes in behaviours and capabilities)	Risks
A stronger patient voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ RCoA staff and teams. ■ Committee/ Board Chairs/ Council members. ■ Board of Trustees, Executive Team, Senior Management Team. ■ PatientsVoices@ RCoA and other patient groups. ■ Public and patient community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ An organisational change in culture moving away from a tokenistic approach to PPI to embracing more effective models of engagement. ■ Increased presence of PPI as its own function in governance structures/equal status. ■ PPI activities in Directorate’ operational plans, including KPIs. ■ Review of Committee/Board TOR to assess best model of PPI. ■ Increased efforts to communicate to public and patients and include patients voice in College communications. ■ Investment in PPI function and team. ■ Allocation of adequate resources to carry out PPI activities. ■ Training on effective PPI for staff, clinical leads, Chairs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A proactive approach to PPI and teams engaging with PPI team to include patient voice. ■ Teams, leads, Chairs buy-in for a different approach to PPI. ■ Confidence and expertise of staff to plan and carry out PPI activities with or without support from PPI team. ■ Increased confidence and expertise in working with specific patient groups. ■ Increased visibility and confidence of patients’ voices to contribute. ■ Improved volunteering experience of patients’ voices and increased level of engagement. ■ Increased expertise and drive to communicate with the public about anaesthesia and perioperative care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lack of engagement/ commitment from staff, Chairs, Council, management. ■ Lack of engagement from PatientsVoices@ RCoA and patient groups. ■ Lack of capacity in teams to carry out PPI activities. ■ Lack of investment in PPI function. ■ Lack of training and support to carry out PPI activities. ■ Lack of financial resources to carry out PPI activities.

Evaluation and impact

Critical to the success of the strategy will be to monitor and evaluate the performance against the strategic objectives set in the strategy. To this end a set of provisional key performance indicators (KPIs) has been provided. The PPI team will agree, in collaboration and agreement with teams and managers, Directorate specific KPIs to be included in their operational plans and performance measuring tactics. The Patient and Public Involvement Manager will produce yearly reports to show progress against KPIs bringing together all PPI activities across the Directorates.

Royal College of Anaesthetists
Churchill House, 35 Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4SG
020 7092 1500

rcoa.ac.uk

