Exploring the role of patient and public involvement (PPI) in healthcare realist reviews: a review in progress


Department of Primary Care and Population Health, UCL

BACKGROUND

“Patient and public involvement (PPI) in research refers to research carried out with and by members of the public” NHS Involve (2014)

- Patients and the public have been involved in a variety of ways within evidence synthesis. However PPI within realist reviews has received less attention.1,2
- PPI is described as transforming the way in which healthcare research is undertaken – it improves efficiency, accountability and balances the power dynamics of healthcare research through a democratic dialogue.3
- PPI is often an essential requirement for research funding. However there is limited evidence on the impact of PPI on research and clear standards for PPI reporting.4

AIMS

This literature review explores the ways in which contributors are involved within healthcare realist reviews published since the release of INVOLVE guidance on PPI in evidence synthesis.5

- To understand the different ways in which researchers broadly involve contributors in realist reviews
- To look specifically at how PPI is reported within realist reviews.

METHODS

- A search of electronic databases (CINAHL, Embase, PsychINFO and Medline) was undertaken.
- 448 papers published between 2014-2019 were screened.
- Papers were included if they were realist reviews and made reference to terms for contributors such as: stakeholder, PPI, patient and public involvement, expert panel and advisory.

Framework analysis

- Data was analysed using a framework analysis.6
- Framework analysis followed a six stage process including familiarisation, coding, developing an analytical framework, application of the analytical framework, charting the data in a framework matrix and interpreting the data.

RESULTS

- 74 articles were included in this review.
- Contributor involvement across each review has been analysed using the framework analysis.

ANALYSIS OF CONTRIBUTOR INVOLVEMENT

- Three themes were identified:
  - Missed opportunities
  - Masked impact
  - Motivated contexts

- The majority of reviews demonstrate that a range of contributors are involved in realist reviews but that involvement is not always clearly reported.
- Specifically, PPI is often not clearly defined and little information is reported on the exact contributions of PPI.
- Our review findings will contribute to future recommendations on the role of PPI in realist reviews and provide guidance to support researchers in their future collaboration with PPI participants.
- These findings will contribute towards creating a series of reflective questions for researchers to consider when using PPI in realist reviews.
- Reasons for limited use/reporting of PPI in realist reviews:
  - Word count restrictions
  - Conflicting interests
  - Experience of the researcher

PATIENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

This review sought the perspective of two patient contributors who had experience of being involved in various different stages of a research cycle including evidence syntheses. Their involvement shaped the types of questions we asked of our data and framed our findings, ensuring that the patient perspective was accounted.

REFERENCES