Interview 5

Interviewer

Welcome and thank you for talking to me this morning!

Interviewee

Okay, you’re welcome.

Interviewer

Thank you. So, as you have read the participant information sheet. The purpose of this interview is to gain a better understanding of your views about about and the experience of remote public working public and environment working, which is PPI working, we have been doing. And we are also interested in your thoughts how we can facilitate and improve doing PPI remotely. Could I start first by asking you to tell me about what PPIE work you were involved in prior to covid-19, what PPI you were doing before COVID-19?

Interviewee

Just before COVID-19? [yes]. Okay, there are mostly There are two main strands. And I've been involved with that for three years, I think. And that involves probably meeting once every couple of months with xxx staff and other PPI contributors. And that was there's a physical meeting to discuss a range of different topics, including particular research proposals. So that's the main one I've been working on. More recently, I've joined first first, I think it's xxx , I think it's called, I think running out of the University of B, as opposed to the University of the X. That's headed up by Professor R. And I've joined the first group. And we'll be working not only on the management group, but also on a one of the projects that's just started, then I'll be at PPI rep for that as well.

Interviewer

Thank you very much. That's very useful, we'll come back to that. So how did you do PPI before COVID-19?

Interviewee

It was the physically physical physical meetings in offices either university offices that were that the first group we're occupying? So yeah, physical attendance meetings. I live in B. And those meetings were always in B. And so it's very convenient.

Interviewer

Thank you. How do how do you feel? How did you feel about your contribution to PPI?

Interviewee

With both groups is very similar. It's a very respectful relationship where the people that are the researchers or the managers of the projects, listen carefully, and pay close attention to what's being said. And they are keen to hear views, even if abuse are happening contained criticisms, they're happy to justify the positions they take. And what's been less satisfactory, is it's difficult to know what the results of your contributions, what influence you're having. The meetings are fine, your opinions are noted. But then it's hard to know what changes as a result of your contribution. And that's been the case in both of the main areas I've worked in. In fact, in all the areas I've worked in, it's you never really know whether your opinion is making a difference.

Interviewer

Yeah, so it's more like you want to see the outcome. What is the outcome, the outcome coming from your opinion? That’s very interesting, thank you very much. And anything in particular that supported your involvement and engagement in PPI before COVID-19, please?

Interviewee 4:8

Umm one of the staff team, I've got a dedicated staff member to encourage active PPI engagement. And without that role, I think it would be a very different experience. The first group which is newer, don't have a person at the moment is dedicated to support our involvement. So I tend to feel a little less connected with the first group, meetings are great. But in between meetings, I don't feel like I'm kept up to date with what how things are progressing with it with the group. And I feel like that the fact that it's the person's role and she takes it very seriously, means I'm getting emails regularly saying this is going on. There's this webinar coming up. Are you interested? And I feel like I'm part of team with the xxx team less so with the first team. Test engagement is the time that is in the team to support the active engagement of the peak.

Interviewer 05:11

Thank you. It's very helpful. So it feels like this video breaking breaking down. So if is, if it continues, feel free to switch it off any time, please. Okay, yeah. Okay. Yeah. So you be referring to that good communication, which is, you know, keep you update everything. So that was really helpful, supportive, thank you very much, it's very important thing, anything difficult or challenging to do the face to face working before COVID-19, please.

Interviewee 05:45

Not that I can. Remember, I come from a xxx background. And I find myself talking about two issues very often. One is about the lack of diversity in the group of ppi contributors, we're all white middle class, mostly x professionals. And I think that's not diverse enough for the purpose of this exercise. And the other issue is that I continue to work as a volunteer on [disability] issues. And I know that to reach those communities, you need to purposefully target their involvement and get past the barriers that are in the way for engaging with those groups of people. And for whatever reason, the those barriers are still in place. And the people that come forward to do PPI still a very narrow section of the community. And so it's it doesn't get in the way of my contributing, but it doesn't feel like it's a natural and the correct balance of representation. And so I made that point very regularly in different ways.

Interviewer 07:14

Thank you very much. That's very important point. Thank you. diversity in PPI Thank you very much. Now, we will move to current PPI work, which you have mentioned a little bit earlier the the PPI you are taking part at the moment and started from COVID-19. Since last year. Any please, if you please tell me something more about this.

Interviewee 07:38

Okay, with both groups are on regular online meetings. For the first group, I'm involved with a management group meeting, which is once a month for an hour, the meetings tend to be more varied about probably twice a month, we have zoom meetings, either on a very purpose, you know, on a very focused topic, on the general sort of oversight role. I've just joined something called xxx which is a network of research agencies in this part of the country. And I'm representing xx on that group is made up of eight research agencies in the X area. And my role there is to inject a PPI perspective into the broader discussions as well. So as well as the I'm probably meeting about PPI roll about once a week, on average, for an hour or two in different settings, but the issues are pretty similar.

Interviewer 08:53

That’s great. Thank you very much. That's pretty helpful. So what what is different or anything change that you feel before COVID-19 and after COVID-19? Anything any particular changes or different differences you can feel about you can tell me about please, you can share?

Interviewee 09:15

Well, two things. One is the I don't know how you feel about all the zooming you must be doing in your work. But I think it's hard to make new relationships on zoom. I think the the fact that most of the people I'm involved with our people I met physically at meetings before COVID means that I feel like I'm keeping working relationships fresh. But making new working relationships is difficult online, I think so I don't feel like I know I know the people I'm working with them so well. It's fine. It's very professional, it's fine, but I mean having a conversation over a cup of coffee during the break is is very important. very reassuring. And we don't have the informal contacts between meetings that I think we've had before. On the other hand, I've just finished a zoom meeting to do with disability. And the majority of people on the call with disabled people, including a visually impaired man, who has said that, since moving to online meetings, he thinks there's been like an, he said, a 90% improvement over him. [oh that’s great]. Because he feels like all the hassle, the bother of as a blind man traveling to a meeting, not having the paperwork the same as the rest of us. The he was saying, he and the number of other people agreed, vastly prefers online meetings, because it's just less, there's barriers in the way of making that meeting work for them. So that's not an issue we're currently facing with xxx are going to first because there aren't people with physical impairments on those groups, and there may be not visible ones. And so in theory, moving online can be an advantage for some people to be properly engaged. If the barrier to involvement is physical access, then that barrier disappears when you're on zoom, and substantially so my own experiences on balance, I'd rather keep on meeting physically. But I do know that there are big pluses for some of the groups we should be targeting for increasing involvement in the future.

Interviewer 11:50

So good for those individuals to join online for example, as you’ve mentioned beneficial for that visually impaired gentleman. But for some other people in general do you think social connection, like interaction during the breaks is important?

Interviewee 12:11

Yes, it's swings and roundabouts. But the other issue, which for me is really important is the digital divide. You know, what that is? [yes digital exclusion]. You we know that certain groups of people in that community are less likely to use this sort of media to get engaged. I think that the internet based set of discussions will continue to disadvantage some groups of people. And that makes me very uncomfortable. Because I'd like the PPI thing to be representative of the community that we're serving. And that was with a digital divide such a strong issue. I don't think we'll achieve it while we're we're based on the on the internet.

Interviewer 13:00

Thank you very much. Thank you. We will, yes, digital divide… this is our second aim as well. Okay, is there anything new for you, or any impact on your involvement during this time, because of remote PPI?

Interviewee 13:35

No, it feels like I'm continuing the path that was established before COVID. I think that, like this conversation. It I mean, I it's because I'm engaged. And I understand the technology enough to say yes, I'm interested in Yes, I can zoom this conversation as possible. And aware that others might not have found that such an easy level of engagement. But no, I think the I feel as engaged as connected, post COVID as I do pre COVID. I'm looking forward to getting back to physical meetings, some of the time that can see that in the future, there will be a balance between the different methods of involving people. One of the projects I was involved with before retiring was around how you get the views of disabled people, there was a very interesting project called xxx. That allows the local health service to discover that the physical access to one of the GP surgeries was terrible. And so the local health service, in a constructed a different way of listening to people who would not normally be attending archetype meetings, but they got the feedback that they wanted, for a particular operational issue. I can see that developing PPI in a different way being more creative. And perhaps that sort of device to take people's use in a different way, might be useful in the future, rather than assuming that someone would come to a group that meets every month. Definitely, we could do it, we could do a mix of different methodologies. Yes,

Interviewer

That's very helpful, thank you. You want to see a balance. If some people cannot attend physically, they should have the option to attend the meeting virtually, for example, have a big screen on the wall?

Interviewee

Yeah, more like it.

Interviewer

Now can I ask you to tell me a bit about the resources you have available at home to support you in PPIE remote working at this time?

Interviewee 16:42

I'm not a very technical person. So my problem is around my technical knowledge. And simple things like with one of the two groups of the group, there's a digital platform that's just been created, which means I can access any of the resources at any time, any of the papers, I can contribute to the development of a paper, online, etc, etc. And part of my technical competence initiative to take the other group I'm involved with hasn't got that far yet. I'm well informed in terms of papers, people send me lots of papers online for me to read before meetings. My problem is a simple one, this machine that I'm using is a Chromebook. Which I think there's a technical issue which I haven't solved, which means I can't see the faces and see the papers at the same time. So it's, I've just got a small technical issue that I haven't yet resolved. But generally speaking, I feel I can access the resources. And I'm kept informed by the staff involved so that I can perform my function effectively. No, I've never short of information.

Interviewer 18:03

Oh thank you very much. That’s great you know where to get support from when you needed them.

Interviewee 18:18

Yeah, I know who to ask on each in each of the main group. So I'm about one or two other things as well. And there's always a link person is very important that you know, for PPI people that they know who to ask if they if they need to inquire about something. And but in all the projects I've been involved with that it's been crystal clear who I should be talking to.

Interviewer 18:39

Did you also have any family friends IT support? Have you asked anyone in the family or friends for..

Interviewee 18:50

Uhh it's under under lockdown is fairly difficult. So and I'm yeah, I could ask. But it's for the last year or so. It's

Interviewer 19:03

Thank you, just in the question just in the prompt whether you have any family friends, it because sometime maybe in the weekend or during the night, you wanted to read something or if there's technical issues, you cannot contact those IT professionals. Now, we would like to ask was there anything in particular that helped your involvement and engagement work during covid-19 current introduced measures?

Interviewee 19:45

I feel these the issues I raised ones that I've always been concerned about. I'm involved as a volunteer in various other organizations. That means that the quality of life of disabled people is remains fresh and constant. And so I always feel like I'm in touch with the day to day issues that people are experiencing. And those are the things I bring to the meetings. My special area of interest has been people with learning disabilities over the years, and this is a group of citizens who are very badly served by the NHS, often. And so it's not, there are always issues that I feel that the involvement gives me an opportunity to raise important issues about local the local health situation for local citizens.

Interviewer 20:46

Thank you very much. That's your contribution, of course, is helpful as well. So they're something that influenced you and your contribution that is also helpful. Some of the support you might require in relation to specific challenges. We talked about IT technical support, now anything regarding regarding your physical or mental needs, anything you'd like to share please?

Interviewee 21:21

No, I'm not a disabled person. And I've been in lockdown as it's been manageable. So I don't feel there's any short or medium term issues that are impairing my ability to contribute, we we talk about these issues routinely on and it's no, it's there no barriers for me.

Interviewer 21:54

*Thank you very much. So was there anything in this? What has worked well doing PPIE remotely?*

Interviewee 22:23

Uhh uh… B is a very busy city is difficult to move around public transport, it's not very good. Usually too many cars. So getting to a meeting is sometimes not not easy, almost like xxx sometimes. So that's the only thing I can think of the meetings are both in, you know, venues that are easy to find, easy to get to the offices. You know, there's usually food and drink and things like that if necessary. No, it's a very welcoming atmosphere. Apart from the things we've talked about. In general, I certainly find no barriers to access for me.

Interviewer 23:14

Thank you, and could you also share about anything that did not work very well during this time?

Interviewee 23:28

There are the only technical issues. Maybe that assumes a decent level of technical competence to be involved. Say the broader issues of digital divide will be a barrier, a profound barrier for many. But for me, no, it's only the I think the technical issues of which I’m not confident, are a mild, you know, blockage, but nothing that prevents me saying what I got to say.

Interviewer 24:00

That’s great, thank you! anything that you think uhh what could have been done differently? Do it better way?

Interviewee 24:11

Yes, I think an induction would have been helpful would always be helpful. And for me, my need is to understand the context of the work. And so for the last year or so I've been encouraging colleagues to produce visual representation of what the local operating environment is. So where does xx fit into the other research agencies? So I need to have an understanding of how research projects are identified. You know, it's very practical stuff, something that maps out the context within which xxx sits. And that's recently been produced and I wish I'd had it two years ago. It's it makes it a lot clearer now. Because it just seems to me that quite a lot of people are involved in research activity in the B area. But I couldn't see the way the organizations interacted. So, so both the within the organization arc, what's the chain of commands? How do the various committees interact? But also between arc and all the other sister agencies? How do they all fit together? And the relationship with xxx as well, I don't fully understand that. But I've got a rough idea there. But it's first, it was a bit of a mystery.

Interviewer 25:42

Thank you. I think it's the last question about any limitations placed on PPIE through working remotely? You mentioned earlier about the technical issues. Anything else you could think of?

Interviewee 26:19

No, for me? No, it's the it's a it's a mild issue. But the the assumption of technical competence. And the believe that it's my Chromebook, that's the issue. So and I know and advise me on different methods of accessing the graduate to that. And I've gotten to a level where I can, it doesn't stop me being an active participant. So it's fine, just a minor irritation to having someone probably in the team that could say, you know, bring your computer and we'll set you up, and it'll all be fine. And the beginning might have been quite helpful for me. But that wasn't there, people just assumed that I'd work it out, which was a mistake. So turns out

Interviewer 27:10

Thank you very much. So just before we finish, is there anything that I have not asked about that you would like to add anything else?

Interviewee 27:21

No, I'm happy with what we've covered. I'm interested to know what your context of your research is, and what will happen as a result. Okay, cool.

Interviewer 27:30

Yeah, so you'd like to see the report once the study has finished?

Interviewee 27:32

Yes, that would be nice. Thank you!

Interviewer 28:56

Thank you very much. I will email you and shortly I will send you another email which I will cc with finance team who would as a thank you arrange a gift card for you. We provide you a gift vouchers for your time. Thank you very much.

Interviewee 29:11

Nice to meet you.

Interviewer 29:13

It was very nice to meet you. Take care. Thank you very much. It was very lovely to talk to you. Bye bye. Thank you. Take care.