Reviewer's report

Title: Co-producing public involvement training with members of the public and research organisations in the East Midlands: Creating, delivering and evaluating the lay assessor training programme

Version: 0  Date: 07 Nov 2016

Reviewer: Krysia Dziedzic

Reviewer's report:

This is a very interesting and well written description of a regional approach to training lay research users. It marks an increasing understanding of the need for joined up working across the NIHR and other stakeholders within a regional context. Having a shared project is an excellent way of doing this.

I have a few comments that the authors may find helpful:

The title could be more precise to allow for a more detailed description of the content - particularly useful for international readers.

Abstract: suggest delete line 'Training for public….not always available'; methods - who led the meetings? Name the organisations. Results - who led the working group? Suggest match findings with the type of evaluation e.g. Likert scores; open ended questions. Give n= for responses and give overall valid response rate. Last sentence better in Conclusion. In the Conclusion state who delivers the training programme; suggest delete last line.

Main paper

Is the lay co-author happy for his personal email to be in the public domain? Page 5 lists the aspirations of engaging the public - was this the content in the training? Is the NIHR RDS bursary linked to this training programme?

Methods - How were the trainers trained? Who led the programme? Statement on ethical approval needed as people were invited to complete evaluation forms and these data are being represented in a publication.
Could you give more details on payments - that would be helpful for others to know? Detail the method for pre- and post-questionnaire distribution.

Results - Be clear about the low response rate to follow up and state valid response rate.

Discussion - include a sentence on the importance of ongoing support structures to enable lay members to take part in research in the different organisations and how regional working might help; a discussion on selection bias would be useful - if you include those eager to take part then the training works for them rather than a more heterogeneous group of individuals who we really should be engaging. Discuss the low response rate and discuss the limitations of the evaluation more explicitly.

Diagram - this is similar to others so consider attributing e.g. adapted from INVOLVE framework (or similar)

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