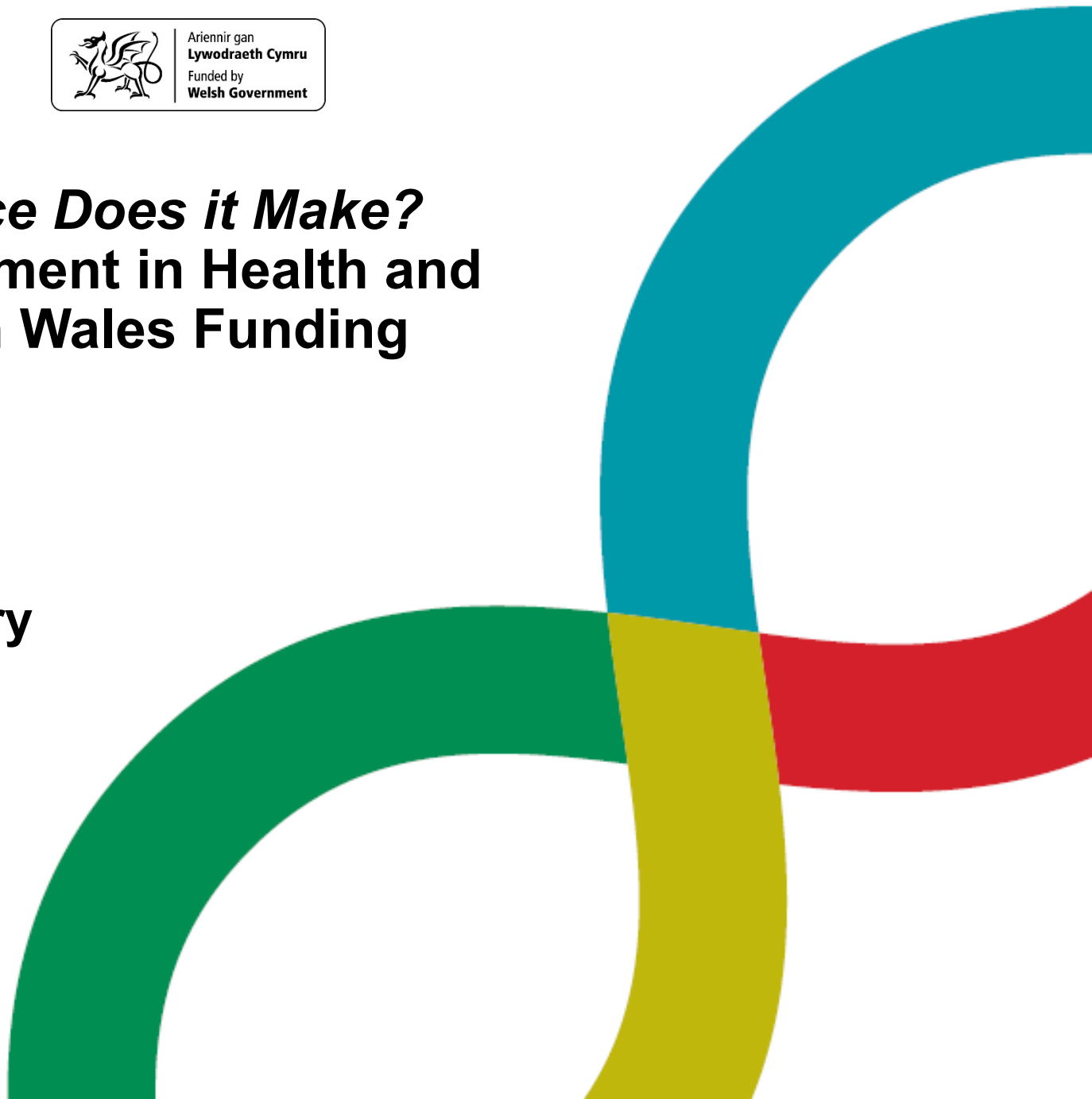


What Difference Does it Make? **Public Involvement in Health and Care Research Wales Funding Schemes**

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Today's presentation

- Our commitment to Public Involvement
- Our Research Funding Scheme and Research for Patient and Public Benefit Scheme
- Stage 1: the importance of the research question
- Stage 2: academic peer review and Funding Board assessment
- Demonstrate the way we involve public partners in our flagship funding programmes
- Illustrate – via contributions from Jan, Mari and Sarah – the difference it makes
- Chance for you to ask questions and get involved!

Our commitment to public involvement

- Long history of public involvement in our funding schemes
- By ‘public’ we mean patients, carers and users, including future and potential users of health and social care services
- We recognise the importance and added-value of involving the public – and especially those with lived experience – not just in research but in the research funding process
- Aware and mindful of the UK Standards for Public Involvement
- We are always keen to improve

Our project-based funding schemes

Research Funding Scheme

- Annual call – alternating between health and social care
- £1.5m per call – no project cost limit, but max 2 year duration
- Funds between 4-8 projects (from translation to service delivery, including public health)

Research for Patient and Public Benefit

- Annual call – NHS-focused (including public health)
- £1.2m - funding bands with max of £230k per project and 2 year duration
- Funds around 6 projects each year, focus on patient and public benefit

Our project-based funding schemes

- Topic-wise our schemes are broad (we are a general funder)
- However, we do set priority areas in discussion with policy colleagues (we are a government funder)
- Current focus, for example, on *Programme for Government* and *A Healthier Wales*
- Scheme generate about 50 applications a year
- We require public involvement in the development of applications and we require ongoing public involvement in the delivery of funded projects.
- Two-stage application and assessment process.
- We have public involvement in all assessment steps and stages.

Stage 1: the importance of the question

- Stage 1 applications are relatively short and focus on the importance of the research question to public, policy and practice
- Applicants have to specify how public involvement has helped identify and define the research question and the expected outcomes
- Our guidance notes make our beliefs about the importance of public involvement to the quality, relevance and utility of research, and refer applicants to the **UK Standards for Public Involvement in Research**. (There is no excuse for poor public involvement!)
- To well at Stage 1, applicants must make a case on the basis of need, impact and demonstrated evidence gap. Why is this research important? Who will it affect? Why should we fund it?

Stage 1: the importance of the question – AWPP

- All Stage 1 applications are initially assessed by the All Wales Prioritisation Panel (AWPP)
- The AWPP is a large virtual panel of **public** and **practice** reviewers
- There are currently **23** public members on the AWPP – but there is a rolling membership and people are welcome to apply to join.
- Each application submitted to us receives 5 reviews and scores – ensuring that public review features strongly
- NB: there is no scientific/academic input assessment at this stage

Stage 1: the importance of the question – POC

- Following AWPP review, a ranked list of all assessed Stage 1 applications is considered by the Prioritisation Oversight Committee (POC)
- The POC is a small group of public, practice and policy representatives, joined by the Chair and Deputy Chairs of the relevant Funding Board.
- The POC looks at the ranked list of AWPP-reviewed applications and makes recommendations to Health and Care Research Wales about which applications should be prioritised and invited to Stage 2.
- The POC is chaired by a public member – Jan Lawrence - who is here today and who I'd like to invite to reflect on her experience of chairing the POC and the difference public involvement makes to Stage 1 assessment.

Public Involvement in Stage 1 of Health and Care Research Wales Funding Schemes

What difference does it make?

Jan Lawrence

Chair of the Prioritisation Oversight
Committee (POC)

Stage 2: peer review and Funding Board

- Applications invited to Stage 2 undergo full peer review and Funding Board assessment
- Having established that the question is important, there is even more focus on the nature and quality of the public involvement in the application to date and included in the delivery of the project
- Public involvement and engagement are seen as part of the overall scientific merit of the project and assessed as such
- All applications sent to peer review receive at least one further public peer review, ideally from someone with lived experience in the topic area
- Peer reviews inform Funding Board discussions

Stage 2: peer review and Funding Board

- Final assessment of applications takes place at Funding Board meetings
- All of our Funding Boards have at least two public members, recruited through open advert, working alongside academic Board members
- Public members have full membership including full and equal voting rights (and are paid for their involvement)
- Public members are expected to contribute – especially as Designated Board Members (DBMs) – to the introduction, discussion and assessment of every application considered by the Board.
- The Boards make funding recommendations to Health and Care Research Wales

Stage 2: PI&E assessment criteria

- PI&E issues considered and discussed at Funding Board (introduced by the Public DBMs) include:
 - the quality of the lay summary;
 - public involvement in the application to date;
 - ongoing public involvement in the project;
 - public engagement and dissemination plans;
 - adequacy of costings for public involvement and engagement;
 - any relevant ethical and acceptability considerations.
- Our scheme guidance is explicit about our PI&E expectations and refers applicants to the National Standards – so again, there is no excuse for poor PI&E.

Stage 2: Impact of Public Members

- As Health and Care Research Wales officials we believe that the involvement of our public members makes a significant difference to the quality and nature of the research we fund.
- The views of the public members can make a huge difference to:
 - whether or not a project is funded
 - the form the project takes, where changes are required to a project before we agree to fund it
- We are very pleased to have two of our public Funding Board members with us today, so I'd like to introduce Mari James and Sarah Peddle to give us their perspective on how they have made a difference

Public Involvement in Stage 2 of Health and Care Research Wales Funding Schemes

What difference does it make?

Mari James

Member of the RfPPB Funding Board

Sarah Peddle

Member of the RfPPB and HRG Funding Board

Concluding remarks

- We take our commitment to public involvement very seriously and recognise its benefits as all stages of the research funding process
- We are always looking for greater involvement – and would like to encourage you to take advantage of the open and ongoing opportunity to join the All Wales Prioritisation Panel
- There are also frequent opportunities for those who wish to apply for Funding Board membership (in personal award schemes like Fellowships, Studentships and our Research Time Award Scheme too)
- Please keep an eye out, and consider getting involved!

Thank you for listening!

Any Questions?

