

Recognising involvement pilot

May 2025

1. Introduction and purpose

This paper sets out a pilot approach for recognising involvement of local people in the work of NHS South East London.

The ICB agreed the [working with people and communities strategic framework](#) in July 2022 which sets out the ICS ambition for how we want to engage with people and communities and what we need to put in place in order to achieve this, addressing the issues we heard through community engagement that took place to inform the framework. These include:

- we need to build relationships and trust with local people and communities
- we need to make engagement accessible and inviting
- we need to coordinate engagement better across south east London
- we need to go out to communities and bring the conversation closer to people
- we need to recognise the impact that engagement has on people.

The framework sets out a vision, mission, principles, commitments, aims and key deliverables for the next three years including working with people and communities in new ways to transform health and care and support health and wellbeing through a shift to genuine coproduction so people have choice and control in how their care and support is planned and delivered, with a focus on communities experiencing the greatest health inequalities and ensuring people are recognised for their time and the experience and expertise that they bring.

The ICB has developed an [expenses reimbursement policy](#) whereby people are paid for out of pocket travel and care / child care expenses on the production of receipts and a flat rate £5 / meeting to cover additional costs for taking part on line.

However, to truly achieve the ambitions set out in the framework and to work with people and communities experiencing the greatest health inequalities, build trust and relationships, empower people, encourage wider participation to develop services that are tailored to local needs and thus achieve more sustainable outcomes for people we need to recognise the time and expertise that local people bring when working with us.

2. Principles

Principles that our approach should recognise include:

- The **experience** of taking part should be **positive**
- Money is not the only way in which we recognise and reward people – rewarding people for their time (whether it be with money, training, provision of references) – shows that we **respect and value** people's experience and views
- It helps to **address the power imbalance** between people who work in the system and local people and communities and **recognises different skills and expertise**.
- It opens the doors to **more people being able to become engaged**. Very often the people we're not hearing from, or listening to, are the people most impacted by health inequalities.
- It will enable the system to work in a more **collaborative and on-going** manner with local people and communities, **enable inclusion** and support the **building of trust and relationships** rather than statutory services being seen as 'mining' communities for their insight and intelligence without giving back.

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- By recognising involvement through offering money, we are able to demonstrate our **understanding about some of the real challenges** within people’s lives, particularly those experiencing the cost of living crisis
- It will help **build trust** - if residents can see that the NHS is being open, transparent, and inviting people to have a meaningful say, this could help with future work including health campaigns and health messaging
- Supports **return on investment** - if we are listening to the people that experience the greatest health inequalities, and who may be high users of health and care services, we can ensure services are meeting the current and future needs of our populations - helping us to ensure funding and resources are deployed where and when they are most effective.

3. Approach

- To pilot for a year 2024 / 2025 recognising people who are **involved at level 3** (see table below) the offer of a flat rate of **£14 per hour**, based on best practice and what many partner organisations do.
- To use the pilot to further refine our approach in terms of
 - monitoring uptake and, therefore, budget requirements,
 - further developing support and advice people may need around benefits and tax issues as set out in appendix one

This approach should be clear that this is part of a number of ways of rewarding and recognising people’s contribution and that information is provided so people can make informed choices about whether to claim and accept the offer.

Where local people are involved in partnership projects, whether at south east London level or local care partnership level, the relevant policy of the lead organisation carrying out the engagement activity will need to be followed. Where the lead organisation is not the ICB, the approach outlined in this document will not apply.

Engagement activity	Example activity	Level of reward
Level 1: open activity	Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending an AGM or Board meeting in public • Completing a survey (on-line or paper) • Attending public events such as drop in sessions, open days, webinars 	No financial support
Level 2: one off engagement event	Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being part of a one-off discussion forum, focus group or workshop (where not presenting) 	Pay expenses as per current ICB expenses policy
Level 3: ongoing engagement activity	Local people working alongside as community leaders in co-design, co-production and joint decision-making. Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership of formal governance and / or decision making committees • Facilitating or chairing engagement and participation events or meetings and / or delivering presentations as part of an engagement programme • As a person with relevant lived experience and level of expertise, being part of coproduction groups that 	Recognition at £14 / hour including preparation time

	<p>are part of a programme / project governance and decision making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement in procurement panels, interview panels, service evaluations • Peer researchers • Participatory budgeting 	
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4. Claim process

The manager responsible for engagement activity needs to fill in the form at appendix 2 prior to any agreement for recognising involvement fee being made to ascertain whether the proposed engagement activity is at level 3 as outlined above. This form will be submitted to the engagement team to be considered by a panel which includes **xxxx**. The engagement team will notify the manager of the outcome of the panel decision.

Once it has been agreed by the panel that the engagement activity meets level 3, the person requesting recognition needs to fill in the form (attached at appendix 3). The form needs to be countersigned by the ICB manager organising the engagement who needs to confirm on the form the detail of the engagement activity including that it meets level 3 requirements as set out in the above table. The manager needs to sign the form and then send to the [engagement team](#).

A member of the engagement team will then counter sign the form, (as determined by the ICB's Standing Financial Instructions), before submitting a recognising involvement fee request form to the finance department.

Money will be transferred by BACS (Bankers Automated Clearing System) – this is an electronic money transfer between the ICB and your bank. The ICB will endeavour to make sure that money is transferred as quickly as possible but this can be within three to four weeks of the form being submitted.

If money is not received within four weeks, individuals should contact the [engagement team](#).

Requests need to be made within three months of the engagement activity taking place even if the project is on-going and by the end of the financial year ie 31 March.

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Appendix one: issues to be addressed through the pilot

There are a number of issues that we may need to consider and address through the pilot through the pilot. The table below outlines some issues and possible mitigations.

Issue	Mitigation
Impact and effect on benefits	<p>Include a clear explainer on how benefits are impacted.</p> <p>Provide template letters for programmes to use.</p> <p>To explore working with an advice agency to provide advice to individuals around impact on benefits.</p>
Effect on tax and HMRC issues	<p>Explore further best practice across the patch and the use of the Check Employment Status for Tax (CEST) tool with finance team to fully understand the ICB's responsibility and liability regarding employment and tax.</p>
Inflexible systems and people without bank accounts	<p>Work with the finance team to explore how programmes might bulk buy vouchers for those people who do not have access to a bank account, have lived experience which means receiving money compromises their safety or recovery or where we are we working with people under 16.</p>
Programme budgets and impact on working with people and communities	<p>To develop the policy as guidelines for programmes to work towards so we not adversely impact on them doing engagement at the same time as working with them to plan their engagement in a timely manner to identify budgets and develop their engagement work so that it informs decision making.</p> <p>To highlight other means of recognising and rewarding people such as access to training, providing references for job applications, supporting people to develop skills and knowledge to include on CVs.</p>
Risk that people take part or give certain views in order to only receive money.	<p>Setting out level of involvement activity where recognising involvement fee would be offered as below</p>

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Appendix two: Form to determine whether proposed engagement activity is at level 3

This form is to be filled out by ICB managers outlining how proposed engagement activity meets level 3 as set out above. The form needs to be filled in **before** any agreement is made to offer a recognising involvement fee.

Steps to be followed:

1. ICB manager fills out form
2. ICB manager submits to engagement team
3. Engagement team submits to panel – **add details of panel when agreed.**
4. Panel meets to discuss and decide whether proposed activity sits at level 3
5. Engagement team inform manager of panel decision.

Proposed engagement activity:

Level 3 engagement activity is local people working alongside as community leaders in co-design, co-production and joint decision-making. This includes:

- Membership of formal governance and / or decision making committees
- Facilitating or chairing engagement and participation events or meetings and / or delivering presentations as part of an engagement programme
- As a person with relevant lived experience and level of expertise, being part of coproduction groups that are part of a programme / project governance and decision making
- Involvement in procurement panels, interview panels, service evaluations
- Peer researchers
- Participatory budgeting

Outline of proposed engagement activity and how it meets level 3:

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Print name:

Job title:

Directorate

Date submitted to engagement team for consideration by panel:

Date considered by panel:

Panel members (names and roles):

Outcome of panel decision:

Detail of panel decision:

Date manager notified of panel decision:

Appendix 3

Request form for Recognising Involvement activity

The person requesting this fee needs to fill out section 1 below. Please fill in this form accurately to ensure that money is transferred into the correct bank account as mistakes made on the basis of incorrect information below cannot be rectified later.

If you need help filling out this form please ask your parent or carer.

Section 1

Name:
Email address:
Contact tel number:
Name as appears on bank account:
Name of bank:
Sort code:
Account number:

Activity details:

Date and time	Name and description of involvement activity level 3 involvement activity	Hours claimed	Value @£14/ hour
TOTAL claimed			

Please note that for activity not included in level 3 activity you may be able to claim expenses as set out in the ICB's expenses policy at [Expenses Policy - NHS South East London \(selondonics.org\)](http://selondonics.org).

Declaration:

I understand that it is my responsibility to inform the department of Work and Pensions/HMRC/Local Authority of any fees I receive or donate that may or may not affect any benefits that I receive.

I have not claimed or received a fee from any other source for the above engagement activity.

I understand that action may be taken against me if I make an incorrect claim.

I consent to the disclosure of relevant information on this form for the purpose of fraud, prevention, detection and investigation.

Signature of involved person:

Print name:

Date:

The manager responsible for the engagement needs to fill out section 2.

Section 2

Authorisation by ICB manager (confirming engagement activity): I declare that the information provided above is correct and I approve the claim.

Signature of Manager responsible for engagement project

Print name:

Job title:

Directorate

Date:

The manager responsible for the engagement activity needs to email signed form to the [SEL engagement team](#).

Signature of manager in SEL engagement team:

Print name:

Job title:

Date received:

The engagement team will submit the above details to the finance team.