

NIHR Imperial Patient Experience Research Centre Public Involvement and Engagement Code of Conduct

Introduction

The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) Patient Experience Research Centre (PERC) is committed to making public involvement and engagement activities including events (e.g. meetings, workshops, training sessions) and communication (both online and in-person) productive and enjoyable for everyone. This is regardless of gender, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, physical appearance, body size, ethnicity, nationality or religion. We will not tolerate unprofessional and/or inappropriate behaviour including rudeness towards, or harassment of, staff or attendees in any form. As part of the registration process for public involvement and engagement activities and events, attendees are required to agree to adhere to this Code of Conduct.

Code of Conduct:

This Code of Conduct is a guideline to ensure that a respectful and effective environment is maintained by all attendees of our activities and events for the benefit of all. For this purpose, unprofessional and/or inappropriate behaviour shall include (but is not limited to) any activities that are judged to be:

- Personal - Including private information about yourself (deemed inappropriate) or other people
- Offensive - Imagery or comments that might reasonably be expected to cause distress to others. Attendees agree to act in a civil, tasteful and polite manner and agree not to use vulgar language. Such imagery or comments could relate to gender, race, nationality, sexual orientation, religion, disability or other similarly sensitive issues
- Harassing - Harassment is unwanted conduct (including insults and 'jokes') affecting the dignity of another, including written attacks on another person or aggressive pressure or intimidation. It also includes inappropriate physical contact, sexual attention or innuendo, deliberate intimidation, stalking, and photography or recording of an individual without consent. It also includes offensive or belittling comments related to gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, physical appearance, body size, ethnicity or religion. Comments should not be mean-spirited or made with the intention of causing trouble. Attendees should show respect for participants of all ages and abilities. Do not insult or put down others
- Disruptive - Sustained disruption of talks, activities or other events
- Obscene - Imagery or comments that are offensive, indecent or pornographic, including anything of a sexual nature
- Using multiple or inappropriate attendee profiles - If you use profiles deemed to be appropriate or multiple profiles for the purpose of disruption or annoying other attendees you may be barred from future activity
- Duplicate, overly trivial repetitive or trivial comments – e.g., spamming or off-topic material
- Impersonation - Postings perceived as impersonating another through username or views
- Using vulgar or offensive profile names

- One-to-one arguments
- Misrepresentation/dishonesty – stating demographics or lived experience of a health condition which are not the case including failing to disclose that the demographics are not correct or the lived experience is not held or evading opportunities or questions to make this information clear
- Unprofessional - behaviour and communication should be appropriate for a professional audience including people of many different backgrounds. Sexual language and imagery are not appropriate.
- Confidential - Any information, disclosure of which would constitute a breach of the common law duty of confidentiality.
- Defamatory - Adversely affecting the reputation of a clearly identifiable person, company or organisation
- An incitement - Any material or comments that seek to influence another to the commission of a criminal offence
- In contempt of court - Disclosing information about live court proceedings before that information has been heard in court or where reporting restrictions are in place
- Party political - Any comments that are clearly party political in nature. This is particularly relevant during elections, and comments that canvass support for, or opposition to, any political party
- In breach of copyright - Comments that may infringe any of the laws governing copyright. PERC accepts no liability whatsoever for any actionable breach of such laws

Incident reporting and resolution:

If you observe or experience someone not adhering to this Code of Conduct or in any way making you or anyone else feel uncomfortable, unsafe or unwelcome, please report it as soon as possible to:

- One of the organisers of the event/activity (for online events, this may be via a direct message in the Chat box or if in person, by speaking to an organiser); and/or
- PERC's public involvement team at publicinvolvement@imperial.ac.uk.

PERC is committed to addressing and resolving any matters that arise to the best of our abilities.

If you are hesitant about addressing the person yourself, report it as soon as possible to a member of the PERC team - see contact information above. The PERC team is committed to addressing and resolving the matter to the best of their abilities.

Sanctions:

When someone is asked to stop any behaviour that contravenes this Code of Conduct, they are expected to comply immediately. In response to inappropriate behaviour (e.g. sexual content, rudeness, unprofessional) PERC staff may take any action they deem appropriate, including warning the person in question, asking them to leave the event/activity, or removing them from a mailing list (temporarily or permanently).

Specific actions may be taken by PERC including but are not limited to:

- asking the person to cease the inappropriate behaviour, and warning them that any further reports will result in other sanctions
- requiring that the person avoid any interaction with, and physical proximity to, another person for the remainder of the event
- early termination of an event that violates the policy
- not publishing the video or slides of an event that violates the policy
- not allowing a speaker who violated the policy to give (further) presentations at the event
- immediately ending any event/activity responsibilities or privileges held
- requiring that the person immediately leave the event/activity and not return
- blocking the person on social media platforms and email
- banning the person from future events/activities
- publishing an anonymous account of the harassment
- reporting the incident to the person's employer
- removal from a mailing list (temporarily or permanently)

For any event/activity hosted by Imperial College, Imperial has the right to remove any person who does not adhere to the Code of Conduct.

Thank you for your participation in the PERC community, and your efforts to keep our events/activities and communications professional, welcoming, respectful, and friendly for all attendees and our staff!