Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement in the Coproduction of Perioperative care for Older People undergoing Surgery (POPS) Services

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Background

POPS services have grown across the UK and internationally over the past 20 years.

These services have been established and refined through proactive PPIE, despite underrepresentation from older adults.

A proactive PPIE approach ensures that older service users from diverse backgrounds shape clinical service development and guide research.

Recently, funded PPIE has supported an NIHR study on the scale of POPS services across the NHS (POPS-SUp).

Methods

Patients and carers with surgical experience were recruited during POPS clinics and invited to contribute to discussions about research and study design.

Their **views were embedded** throughout the development of the grant applications.

A **range of engagement options** were offered to reduce barriers to involvement - telephone conversations, small-group video meetings, in-person discussions.

Information in plain English was provided prior to interviews, to aid patient understanding.

A **costed patient represenative acted as a peer facilitator** during interviews.

All contributors were offered to join an ongoing public advisory group for our POPS-SUp study - meeting biannually to help shape the study as it progresses.

Outcomes

Effective PPIE work at our centre has:

- Informed the POPS-SUp research question.
- Shaped the hybrid effectiveness–implementation study design.
- Guided the selection of co-primary outcome measures.
- Influenced the dissemination strategy.
- Embedded a shared decision-making approach – "no decision about me, without me".
- Led to a sub-study on the impact of mental health on perioperative shared decision-making.
- Recognised with the RCoA Patient Voices Gold Award.
- Supported further NIHR funding through codesign and coproduction.

Conclusion

Meaningful, tailored **PPIE can successfully engage older adults who are often underserved in research and service design.** Engaging patient voices as equal partners from project conception has led to translatable clinical research with direct sustainable benefit to patients and the NHS.