**Local Authority Public Health Research Network (London and North Thames)**

**Terms of Reference**

**Date:** 4 July 2022 (LW and JS following input from members)

The network was established in 2021. Partners include colleagues from NIHR ARC North Thames (providing secretariat), ARCS across London, Regional UK Health Security Agency and Office for Health improvement and Disparities, local authorities, Association of Directors of Public Health London, NHS and academics across London and North Thames, Public health registrars.

**Purpose / role:**

* Identify, share, support and progress opportunities for generating robust academic research in LA settings across the region and nationally.
* Platform for sharing findings, assisting local areas in the development of their research that directly addresses local government and London/North Thames public health priorities.
* Support the development of research skills
* Enable collaboration on research grant applications with the longer-term goal of improving the wider determinants of health at regional level and beyond, see appendix 1 for examples.

**Membership:**

* The network is open to anybody with an interest in this area, including NHS partners.
* It might be particularly useful for:
	+ Local authority staff with an interest in public health research
	+ Academics with local government service role/interest
	+ Public health registrars in a local government role and/or interested to conduct local government research
	+ Regional colleagues supporting academia within the local authority
* There are no restrictions on numbers or duration of membership.
* Fulfilment of key roles, e.g. chairs, subtheme leads, will be limited to three years, with the possibility of renewal.
* Resident/public involvement will be through liaison with standing resident/lay advisory panels, e.g. ARC North Thames Research Advisory Panel.

**Working methods / ways of working:** see appendix 1.

**Meetings**

* Meetings will be held remotely approximately 4-6 times a year, with core business within 60 minutes and a further 30 minutes for deep dive topics. The agenda will include standing items (e.g. conference/abstract deadlines, new funding calls, studies seeking participation), skills development opportunities and specific topic (e.g. mental health, dementia) and AOB.
* Any member is encouraged to propose agenda items, which should be emailed to Kim Airey at least two weeks in advance of the meeting date. Documents will be circulated a week prior to the meeting.
* Hosting/organisation of meetings will rotate between different local authority members, depending on the meeting topic.
* Leonora Weil and Jessica Sheringham (ARC North Thames) will alternate chairing.
* An Academic Lead Rep for ADPH London will be invited to attend.
* Kim Airey will provide secretariat.
* Non-members be invited to meetings to present/discuss topics of interest.

**Sharing of information and resources (including confidential materials)** for example

* Communication between meetings will be by email to provide opportunities for timely updates on research funding calls and projects.
* There will be an open, static web space for the group on via SharePoint accessible for all team members with Microsoft office login details.
* Agendas, slide-sets from presentations, meeting notes will be normally posted on the SharePoint, unless content is confidential, there are copyright issues or otherwise sensitive.

**Accountability:**

* Individual network members are responsible for reporting back on activities of the network and to their constituent organisations
* Updates to the ARC North Thames Management Board will be by Jessica Sheringham and/or Leonora Weil.

**Review**: July 2023 *[12 months after agreed with members]*

**Definition of terms**

* North Thames – covers the population living in inner city, urban and rural communities across parts of London, Bedfordshire, Essex and Hertfordshire – a total of 26 boroughs. The geography maps to the area covered by the Academic Health Science Network: https://uclpartners.com/about-us/where-we-work/
* NIHR ARCs - Applied Research Collaborations (ARCs) support applied health and care research that responds to, and meets, the needs of local populations and local health and care systems. Funded by National Institute for Health Research:

https://www.nihr.ac.uk/explore-nihr/support/collaborating-in-applied-health-research.htm

**Appendix 1: Proposed network principles and activities **