

NIHR

MVA and the National Institute of Research collaborated on the Research Ready Communities Medway initiative.

The Research Ready Communities programme has been closely engaged with Medway communities. The primary objective of the project was to gather insights on people's perspectives on Health Research and identify suitable avenues for research organisations to interact with the public on health research topics.

The significance of health research is underscored by the groundbreaking discoveries it has yielded over the years, from the development of the first artificial lens in the 1940s to the findings in the 1990s that placing infants to sleep on their backs reduces the risk of cot death. More recently, the impact of research on long covid has been evident, showcasing just a few examples of the numerous invaluable discoveries.

This research delved into demographic groups that require enhanced services, encompassing three key areas: ethnic minorities, low-income groups, and individuals with varying health statuses such as mental health conditions. By conducting focused research within these groups, the NIHR can furnish compelling evidence on the most effective approaches tailored to each group's specific needs, thereby addressing health inequalities within our communities.

There was considerable community engagement on this subject, with a notable interest in understanding the essence of health research and its potential benefits. However, there were reservations among some individuals about participating in health research, often due to lack of awareness on how to get involved. To address these concerns, we organised events to dispel myths surrounding health research and educate individuals on the avenues available for participation.

Moving forward, the VCSEF must continue to elevate the visibility of initiatives like "Be Part of Research" and promote health and care research as a commonplace activity that anyone can engage in. By enhancing 'research readiness,' individuals encountering opportunities to participate in research will be more inclined to explore further, as it becomes a more familiar and accessible concept to them.

Your participation therefore vital! Increased engagement in Health & Care Research directly addresses the health inequalities in Medway. By joining us, you'll be making a significant impact on the well-being of our community.

Why Participate? Learn more through this [Case study: Why people in Medway should take part in health and care research | NIHR](#)

- **[Be Part of Research here \(nih.ac.uk\)](#)**

Interested? Please contact us at info@mva.org.uk