

Speaker biographies



Mr Simon Denegri

NIHR National Director for Patients and the Public in Research and Chair, INVOLVE

Simon Denegri is National Director for Patients and the Public in Research at the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR), and Chair of INVOLVE – the national advisory group for the promotion and support of public involvement in research funded by NIHR. He was Chief Executive of the Association of Medical Research Charities (AMRC) from 2006 until 2011 and, prior to this, Director of Corporate Communications at the Royal College of Physicians from 2003. He also worked in corporate communications for Procter & Gamble in the United States from 1997 to 2000. He has a long-standing personal and professional interest in the needs and priorities of people with dementia and their carers and currently chairs the Lay Champions Group for the national portal on dementia research that is to be launched this year. He is a member of the NIHR Advisory and Strategy Boards, and a Board member of the UK Clinical Research Collaboration (UKCRC), Farr Institute and care.data programme respectively.



Professor Mark Drakeford

Minister for Health and Social Care, Welsh Government

Professor Mark Drakeford AM was born in West Wales before moving to Cardiff some 30 years ago. A former probation officer and youth justice worker, he is a professor of social policy and applied social sciences at Cardiff University. A Labour councillor on South Glamorgan County Council, he worked as the Welsh Government's health and social policy adviser between 2000 and 2010 and later became head of the First Minister's political office. Mark was elected Assembly Member for Cardiff West in May 2011. He was chair of the Assembly's health and social care committee before being appointed Minister in March 2013.



Dr Fiona Godlee

Editor in Chief, The BMJ

Fiona Godlee has been Editor in Chief of The BMJ since 2005. She qualified as a doctor in 1985, trained as a general physician in Cambridge and London, and is a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians. She first joined The BMJ in 1990 and has written and lectured on a broad range of issues, including health and the environment, the ethics of academic publishing, evidence based medicine, access to clinical trial data, research integrity, open access publishing, patient partnership, conflict of interest, and overdiagnosis and over treatment. As Editorial Director for Medicine from 2000-2002, she helped to establish the open access publisher BioMedCentral. She sits on several advisory and executive boards. She was a Harkness Fellow (1994), President of WAME (1998-2000), Chair of the Committee on Publication Ethics (2003-5), and PPA Editor of the Year (2014). She is co-editor of Peer Review in Health Sciences.



Dr Ruth Hussey

Chief Medical Officer / Medical Director for NHS Wales

Dr Ruth Hussey OBE was appointed Chief Medical Officer/ Medical Director for NHS Wales in September 2012. She was born and brought up in the Conwy Valley, living there until she went to university. She worked as Regional Director of Public Health and Senior Medical Director at NHS North West. She led the Department of Health in the North West region.



Professor Niro Siriwardena

Professor of Primary & Pre-Hospital Health Care, University of Lincoln

Niroshan is an academic general practitioner and director of the Community and Health Research Unit, a research centre at the University of Lincoln. He completed medical training at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London and then as a GP in Lincoln. His research focuses on quality improvement and implementation science in primary care and ambulance services. He is co-lead for Prehospital Outcomes for Evidence Based Evaluation (PhOEBE), a National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Programme for Applied Health Research. His current research is also funded by the NIHR, MRC, European Commission, Health Foundation and British Heart Foundation.



Professor Jean White

Chief Nursing Officer for Wales / Nurse Director NHS Wales

Jean White was appointed as Chief Nursing Officer for Wales in October 2010. Welsh by birth, she trained as a general nurse in Swansea and practised as a theatre nurse in Wales and London. Jean has held positions in nurse education, at the Welsh National Board, Health Professions Wales and Welsh Government. Jean has worked with a number of European Governments and is currently an expert adviser to WHO European Region. Jean is an Honorary Visiting Professor to the School of Nursing and Midwifery Studies, Cardiff University and a Trustee of the Florence Nightingale Foundation. She was made Fellow of Swansea University in January 2013 and Fellow of Bangor University in July 2014.