

Being a lay member on the Expert Advisory Groups at the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency

What is a “lay member”?

Expert Advisory Groups (EAGs) provide the MHRA with independent scientific and clinical advice about medicines and research. Each group has a number of members with relevant specialist expertise in the topics to be discussed as well as one or more lay members.

A “lay member” describes individuals who sit on our expert advisory groups to provide a non-specialist contribution to discussions about medicines and research. Lay members are members of the community who have an interest in the EAGs discussion area, for example: patients, carers or those from related areas such as a support group within the community. This contribution gives the EAG a different viewpoint from the experts who sit on the EAG, thus aiding a fuller understanding of the area being discussed. Our lay members come from a variety of different backgrounds and generally will not be an expert in a field of relevance to the advisory group of which they are a member.

Becoming a lay member

General roles

The role of an EAG lay member includes:

- assisting the advisory group to frame clear and unequivocal advice from a general public or patient perspective.
- highlighting ethical and other governance concerns posed by medicines, medical devices and research
- being able and prepared to contribute actively to the work of the advisory group
- being able to provide a broader perspective to the advisory group’s considerations
- displaying behaviours of honesty, openness, responsiveness, courtesy and leadership

Opportunities

As a lay member of one of the expert advisory group, you will have the opportunity to:

- ensure the needs of patients, carers and the wider public are at the centre of all deliberations/discussions and decisions
- bring a non-specialist perspective to the advisory group’s deliberation
- ensure people from different backgrounds are taken into consideration
- bring your wider knowledge, skills and experience to the advisory group

- work with a range of experts to guide the implementation of UK medicines and healthcare products regulations
- demonstrate a commitment to ensuring the safety and quality of medicines, medical devices and research
- demonstrate a commitment to patient and public involvement

Core competencies and essential criteria

Each lay member is expected to:

1. be able to review complex issues and contribute to the decision making or advisory process
2. be able to engage in constructive debate without being adversarial
3. have the confidence to question information and explanation supplied by others, who may be experts in their field
4. maintain strict confidentiality with respect to the work of the advisory group
5. take an objective view, seeing issues from different perspectives – especially patient and carer perspectives
6. be committed to values of selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, professionalism, impartiality and consistency
7. demonstrate a commitment to patient and public involvement
8. have an awareness or interest in the issues covered by the work of the group from a patient or general public perspective

Expert Advisory Group Information

The work of the advisory group is vital to the protection and improvement of public health.

The Commission on Human Medicines (CHM) advises the licensing authority and ministers on the quality, safety and efficacy of medicinal products. The CHM has a number of Expert Advisory Groups (EAGs) that provide recommendations on specific areas relating to safety, quality and efficacy, including therapeutically aligned groups as well as topic specific ad hoc working groups. The CHM appoints experts and lay members to the supporting expert advisory groups (EAGs) and ad hoc working parties. More information can be found here:

[EAGs](#)