

**NIHR Applied Research Collaboration Oxford and Thames Valley  
(ARC OxTV)  
Communication strategy**

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## Introduction

This strategy is intended to be a live document, updated as new organisational objectives and priorities arise. It represents a snapshot of the situation at the time of writing and how communications can help achieve organisation objectives.

The strategy aims to remain agile and responsive to new opportunities and information, rather than to rigidly define the communications objective of the ARC OxTV for a given period. As such there is no defined review period but will be reviewed at a minimum of every 6 months.

However, the communications strategy will be version controlled with old version archived and records of changes and their reasoning can be tracked. Both the ARC OxTV Communications lead and the ARC OxTV Senior Manager can approve new versions (unless they are the authors of the change).

## Documents relevant to or used in preparing this strategy.

- The NIHR Communications Strategy (2017-2022)
- ARC OxTV Public health strategy
- ARC OxTV Implementation strategy
- ARC OxTV Patient and Public Involvement Strategy
- ARC OxTV revised application to NIHR, Feb 2019

## The ARC OxTVs Vision

The overall vision for the ARC OxTV is:

*Improving people's health, wellbeing, and care, by working together with all involved.*

## Statement of purpose

This communications strategy shows how effective communications can:

- support the ARC OxTV to achieve its overall organisational objectives.
- demonstrate the success of our work.
- ensure people understand what we do.
- prompt action or influence behaviour and perceptions where necessary.

Effective communications plans and activities aim to improve or influence:

- **Awareness** (e.g., to prompt knowledge, build understanding, or gain recognition);
- **Action** (e.g., to influence/ask people to join, visit, sign up to, attend, disseminate, accept, or support something); and
- **Engagement** (e.g., create information *exchange*, change practice internally and externally, or to change behaviour or beliefs).

'Communications' can be thought of as: getting the right information to the right people, in the right way, at the right time, to influence – or get them to take – some action for the organisation.

For example:

- *Getting an event invite to a person likely to be interested and benefit from it, and them booking a place.*
- *Producing a clear policy brief on a topic and getting it to the decision makers capable of influencing local behaviours around that topic at a time when the research is ready, and the policy maker is asking for input.*

Good communications require transparency and an organisational willingness to share information to be able to develop timely and relevant communications activities and plans, without which the benefits of effective communications is much diminished.

## **The current situation (as of March 2021)**

See [appendix 3](#) for a complete SWOT analysis

Still in its early days, the ARC OxTV is currently in an excellent position to meet its stated objectives:

- Operationally, it is supported by a strong and experienced core team overseeing day-to-day operations as well as defined organisational strategies in public health and social care, implementation, and Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE). This provides a strong ground for focussing communications activities and resources to achieve organisational objectives.
- ARC OxTV is closely aligned with major regional health and care organisations, including the University of Oxford and the NHS (local trusts) working with internationally recognised leaders in their fields. This provides a firm base of credibility upon which to build ARC OxTV communication, but also risks the ARC being ‘lost-in-the noise’ of its partners.

Challenges the ARC is facing:

- The potential current primary internal risks to the ARC OxTV are the level of understanding amongst members (e.g. funded and supported researchers and clinicians) of the ARC OxTV’s purpose, mission, offers, and how it differs from other organisations in the region (in particular the Oxford AHSN). A sound understanding of the distinct purpose, activities and successes of the ARC will support effective engagement and advocacy from members and partners.
- The primary external risks to some degree mirror the internal ones: a lack of clear understanding or awareness of the ARC OxTV’s role in the greater Thames valley landscape. Incorrect or confused perceptions could impact how, when and if people decide to engage with us, both those we need to work with to carry out applied research and those who might apply its findings. Additionally, the ARC needs to better capture, demonstrate and be open to how it works with partners from across the Thames Valley region and beyond, not just Oxford.

**ARC OxTV Primary objectives and communications objectives:**

Based on the ARC application.

<b>Operational Objective<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Communications Objective</b>
Improve patient health and care outcomes across the Oxford AHSN region	1. To ensure researchers/clinicians have the tools, training, and support needed to engage with or clearly share their messages and findings/ evidence with the right people to implement new findings, enact change, and realise improved outcomes based on ARC OxTV work. Working <i>with</i> Oxford AHSN where appropriate.
Lead evidence-based implementation nationally	2. To support the ARC OxTV Implementation strategy (see below)
Provide high quality evidence of clinical and cost-effectiveness	3. To work with researchers and clinicians to develop and share high-quality case studies of ARC OxTV research, outputs, and impact through multiple media (both digital and offline) 4. To prepare and share news, blogs, and media releases. 5. To provide advice and communications support (e.g. help with advertising etc) to the PPI Manager to meet to the PPI Strategy objectives.
Develop new services addressing key NHS and public health priorities	6. To support the planning, sharing and running of events and other stakeholder engagement activities needed to inform, evidence, and enact new services or research findings. 7. To support the sharing of findings from engagement activities with appropriate audiences (e.g. preparing and sharing of reports).
Improve the region's capacity to conduct high quality world-class applied health and social care research.	8. To support equitable, professional, and timely communication of ARC OxTV and partner events and opportunities that are aimed at building research or implementation capacity in the region.

See [Appendix 2](#) for a breakdown of stakeholder / audiences and key messaging.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from the objectives stated in the ARC OxTV's revised bid, Feb 2019

## Priority activities for 2021-22

These activities are based on organisational priorities for the year as well the SWOT analysis in [Appendix 3](#). Individual activities, where necessary, may also be supported by a more formal communications plan outlining specific activities, goals, and measures of success.

1. Increase awareness and understanding of the ARC OxTV among existing – and potential – internal and external stakeholders in the Thames valley region and clarify its position in the research and implementation landscape of the region.
2. Facilitate better access to the ARC OxTV website for key audiences by developing audience / application specific website sections:
  - a. PPIE
  - b. Implementation
  - c. Public health and social care
  - d. Training / capacity development
3. Redevelopment and further expansion of impact case studies and information on the ‘Snapshots’ website as a repository of information and to demonstrate the success of the ARC OxTV, as well as capture future developments from the Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care Oxford (CLAHRC Oxford) and ARC OxTV work (the ‘story’ is not over...).
4. Continue to support the collection and sharing of ARC OxTV outputs with relevant audiences through relevant mechanisms, and by capturing the stories of the ARC’s key assets – its people. For example, who are they, how do they drive change in health and care in the region, how can the efforts and contribution of active and engaged partners in the community partners be celebrated?
5. Promotion of the Snapshots website amongst partners and other potential partners or users of our work in the region.
6. Creation of an ARC ‘welcome’ pack for researchers, containing all info needed and expected of them, as well as who to talk to about what, and guidance on what the ARC / NIHR can do for them.
7. Support awareness raising and audience development by producing a standard “About the ARC OxTV” PowerPoint slide for all members to include in their presentations.
8. To work with Oxford AHSN to facilitate implementation activities and plans.

## Additional Recommendations

Additional recommendations for the ARC OxTV, as a whole, to consider that should help communications underpin organisations objectives.

- The undertaking of a stakeholder survey / engagement event mid-life (2022-23) of the ARC to further understand perceptions of the ARC as well as more operational aspects (e.g. are we seen by partners as doing what we said? Are we still working on the priority areas needed, and so on).
- Generate a set of two or three simple questions about people’s understanding of the ARC OxTV added to all events and seminars as part of their evaluation, to provide an ongoing measure of perceptions of the ARC OxTV.

- Increase efforts to improve equitability of ARC OxTV opportunities, e.g. new funding calls, training and other opportunities. (Mainly focussed on transparency of processes, timeliness of communication and broader focus across the Thames Valley).

## Transparency and openness

The ARC OxTV is publicly funded through the Department of Health and Social Care, via the NIHR. As such key documents and information produced and held by the ARC OxTV can be subject to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests.

All operational policies and documents should be made publicly available on the ARC OxTV website, unless strictly confidential.

## Plain English policy and People First language

All audiences should have equitable access to publicly funded research and its findings. It will therefore be the policy that all official ARC OxTV communications should be in plain English, irrespective of their intended *primary* audience.

Additionally, people first language should be used. People first language places the focus on the *individual* and not the *issue* they may have. For example, someone might say, "they're ADHD" to describe a child with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. Using person-first language, this would change to "the child who has ADHD".

Guidance and support on how to write in plain English and 'people first language' will be provided and made available on the ARC OxTV website resources section.

The ARC OxTV will, where practical and necessary, make use of the Nuffield Department of Primary Care's plain English review panel.

Examples of simple changes for plain English:

- Instead of "fatigue," use "feeling tired and weak"
- Instead of "chronic," use "long term"
- Instead of "acute," use "short term"
- Instead of "oedema," use "swelling"
- Instead of "contraindication," use "dangerous to give" or "wrong"
- Instead of "anterior" and "posterior," use "front" and "back"
- Instead of "hypertension," use "high blood pressure"
- Instead of "embolism," use "blood clot"
- Instead of "persistent," use "there all the time" or "doesn't go away"
- Instead of "proximal," use "near to" or "closer to the centre of the body"
- Instead of "analgesic," use "pain reliever"

**Appendix 1: How communications can support strategy objectives**

How communications can support the individual objectives outlined in the Implementation, PPIE and public health and social care policies. These are not objectives in and of themselves. Instead, these are intended as versions of the overarching objectives with language tailored to show how communications can support the specific policy goal.

<b>Implementation Pledge</b>	<b>How communications can support these objectives</b>
Implementation of research outputs locally, regionally, and nationally.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To support the evidencing of impact for research 'ready' for implementation (e.g. through producing summaries of research for targeted audiences, ARC bites, NIHR Centre for Engagement and Dissemination, and policy briefs).</li> <li>2. Facilitate engaging with relevant stakeholder groups to help capture and share strategic / systems level changes and their impacts.</li> </ol>
Develop regional capacity for implementation.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. To support equitable, professional, and timely communication of ARC OxTV and partner events, resources, and opportunities that support development of knowledge, experience and confidence in implementation science and implementation practice in the region.</li> <li>4. Work with Oxford AHSN to capture, develop and showcase key impacts which 'tell a story' from research to implementation.</li> </ol>
Evaluation of implementation of research outputs.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. To collate and disseminate evaluation outputs to the relevant audiences, where relevant. (e.g. through policy briefs or events aimed at key decision makers capable of influencing wider implementation of research)</li> </ol>
Establish a joint approach to real world evaluation.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. To develop and monitor a web-funnel that clarifies and supports the ARC OxTV's triage process for evaluation requests and support.</li> </ol>

<b>Public Health and Social Care Objective</b>	<b>How communications can support these objectives</b>
Greater research capacity within the public health and social care workforce	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To facilitate co-development of resources or events that aid appraising and applying evidence to plan the delivery of effective public health interventions.</li> </ol>

Further collaboration between the public health and social care workforce and ARC OxTV Researchers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. To clarify and publicise the ARC OxTV's vision and mission,</li> <li>3. To help evidence how the ARC OxTV can collaborate with public health and social care work forces.</li> <li>4. To improve understanding, in both directions, of the roles of researchers and public health and social care professionals.</li> <li>5. To facilitate / enable engagement between public health and social care and ARC OxTV researchers.</li> </ol>
Implementation of ARC OxTV research findings regionally and nationally	As per implementation section.

<b>PPI Objective</b>	<b>How communications can support these objectives</b>
Provide inclusive involvement opportunities throughout the research process with particular focus on implementing evidence into practice.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To ensure that our communications take into account potential barriers for access (e.g. timely communications of events) and provide materials in the most accessible format possible to inform and inspire as many people as we can.</li> </ol>
Ensure individuals from all sections of society are heard, focusing particularly on reaching ethnic minorities, disengaged and vulnerable groups, to build relationships and create opportunities for a two-way dialogue.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. To use the expertise of the individuals and groups who work with us from underrepresented communities. To understand how the communities want to receive information and opportunities about research. Taking into account the dissemination method.</li> </ol>
Work in partnership with our key community contacts, patients, stakeholders, and researchers.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. To support monitoring and feedback activities (e.g. dissemination and delivery of surveys etc)</li> </ol>
Increase the capacity and confidence for PPIE across the ARC amongst researchers, staff, patients, and communities by offering training and supporting learning from each other.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. To support communication of activities that encourage knowledge exchange, collaboration and resource sharing between researchers and staff in the ARC OxTV and all professional and public stakeholders across the Thames Valley (e.g. raising awareness of events in an equitable, professional, and timely way across the region)</li> </ol>
Create a culture of inclusive, accessible, and engaged research by using governance to enhance and embed PPI activity across all levels of the ARC programme.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. To promote transparency in our PPI and research activities and build trust with the public, including equality monitoring information. Share information about the level of our</li> </ol>



	public involvement, and evidence of its impact on our work across the ARC Programme.
Communicate our research outputs and opportunities to increase awareness for involvement, engagement, and participation, particularly in those populations who are most likely to benefit.	6. To work with PPIE and Implementation managers to identify, communicate and engage with populations and groups most likely to benefit from research outputs. (May include, for e.g. translations of existing materials, co-developing materials with other partners)
Add to the evidence base for Patient and Public Involvement, enabling us to learn what is effective PPI and use these findings to refine our future strategies in the .	7. To facilitate outreach, collection, and dissemination of ARC OxTV PPIE impacts published evidence from PPIE research but also examples of best practice and research experiences from public contributors and researchers through blogs, case studies and training materials.
Ensure that planning, priority setting, fund allocation and reconfiguration of the ARC's projects and activities is driven by the needs, views and preferences of the region's population.	8. To support equitable, professional, and timely communication of ARC OxTV opportunities for PPIE involvement in planning, priority setting, fund allocation and ARC projects to all potentially relevant audiences. 9. To help collate, evidence, and disseminate the needs, views and preferences of the region's population.

**Appendix 2: Stakeholders and messaging**

Key messages in **bold** are ‘trickle-down’ priority messages from the NIHR Communications strategy (2017-2022).

<b>Strategic Partners:</b> <i>The most important groups we hope to influence or who can influence us in achieving our objectives</i>	
<b>Stakeholder group</b>	<b>Key message/s</b>
ARC OxTV Strategy board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme successes and exceptions</li> <li>• Decisions required</li> <li>• Being a part of the ARC can also aid your organisations mission</li> <li>• The ARC is about improving people’s health, wellbeing, and care, by working together with all involved.</li> </ul>
Commissioners – Local trusts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'This works, will benefit your patients and save you money'</li> <li>• ARC OxTV is carrying out research into cost-effective real-world research for local priorities</li> </ul>
Commissioners – ICSs / CCGs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You can get involved with and influence the ARC OxTV’s activities to compliment your organisations objectives</li> <li>• Research active institutions have better patient outcomes</li> <li>• The ARC is about improving people’s health, wellbeing, and care, by working together with all involved.</li> </ul>
County councils/local authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Your local communities want and value health and social care research</b></li> <li>• ARC OxTV is carrying out research into <i>cost-effective</i> real-world health and social care for <i>local</i> priorities</li> <li>• Research active institutions have better patient outcomes</li> <li>• The ARC is about improving people’s health, wellbeing, and care, by working together with all involved.</li> </ul>
Funders (partner funders, e.g. charities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The NIHR offers world-class infrastructure to support charity-funded research to bring better treatments to patients</b></li> <li>• Being a part of the ARC can also aid your organisations mission</li> <li>• Programme successes</li> <li>• The ARC is about improving people’s health, wellbeing, and care, by working together with all involved.</li> </ul>
The NIHR as our funder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ARC OxTV is meeting or exceeding all required operational criteria</li> <li>• The ARC OxTV is having a demonstrable impact on health, social care, public health, and wellbeing.</li> </ul>
Oxford Health NHS FT (Host organisation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme successes</li> <li>• Being a part of the ARC can also aid your organisations mission</li> </ul>
Partner University Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ARC OxTV is a funder and supporter of research within your departments</li> <li>• The ARC OxTV works with a range of stakeholders to help raise your profile and increase the impact of your work</li> <li>• The ARC is about improving people’s health, wellbeing, and care, by working together with all involved.</li> </ul>

<b>Internal ARC OxTV members:</b> <i>Keep informed and engaged, they can be/are our ambassadors</i>	
Stakeholder group	Key message/s
Researchers (clinical and non-clinical)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>You are part of a valuable community of researchers that are making a positive difference to patients' lives</b></li> <li>• The ARC is there to support your development in your clinical or research careers and support leveraging external funding and sources.</li> <li>• The ARC is about improving people's health, wellbeing, and care, by working together with all involved.</li> <li>• The ARC OxTV is about putting knowledge into practice</li> <li>• Working with wider stakeholders through the ARC OxTV can raise your profile and increase the impact of your work</li> <li>• Working with a wider range of stakeholders through the ARC OxTV can help to generate new research avenues and projects</li> </ul>
Non-research professionals (e.g. clinicians, doctors, nurses)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Research active institutions and care teams deliver better quality care</b></li> <li>• The ARC is about improving people's health, wellbeing, and care, by working together with all involved.</li> <li>• Research helps you to improve practice through being better informed</li> <li>• Research is good for your patients and they like taking part</li> </ul>
ARC OxTV Staff/members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ARC is about improving people's health, wellbeing, and care, by working together with all involved.</li> <li>• ARC OxTV successes and challenges</li> <li>• Admin things (housekeeping info, reporting deadlines etc)</li> <li>• Any ARC OxTV policy changes</li> </ul>
Existing PPI groups and personnel (Primarily role of PPI co-ordinator, but supported by comms)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The NIHR exists to improve your future care and well-being</b></li> <li>• The ARC is about improving people's health, wellbeing, and care, by working together with all involved.</li> <li>• Research funded by the NIHR provides us with important evidence to improve NHS treatments</li> <li>• The ARC OxTV is producing important, practical, worthwhile research ready for implementation</li> <li>• Patients can get involved in shaping research – both the what and the how – regardless of whether they wish to participate in it.</li> </ul>

<b>External</b> <i>Reaching the people who need us and we need</i>	
<b>Stakeholder group</b>	<b>Key message/s</b>
Public, patients/Service users and carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The NIHR exists to improve your future care and well-being.</b></li> <li>• You can get involved to help shape research around your needs.</li> <li>• The ARC is about improving people’s health, wellbeing, and care, by working together with all involved.</li> <li>• Patients can get involved in shaping research regardless of whether they wish to participate in it.</li> <li>• This works for these people and could work for you.</li> </ul>
Researchers (clinical and non-clinical)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>You are part of a valuable community of researchers that are making a positive difference to patients’ lives</b></li> <li>• The ARC is about improving people’s health, wellbeing, and care, by working together with all involved.</li> <li>• The ARC OxTV is about putting knowledge into practice</li> <li>• Working with wider stakeholders can raise your profile and increase the impact of your work</li> <li>• Working with a wider range of stakeholders can help to generate new research avenues and projects</li> </ul>
Third sector / charities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The NIHR offers world-class infrastructure to support charity-funded research to being better treatments to patients</b></li> <li>• The ARC is about improving people’s health, wellbeing, and care, by working together with all involved.</li> <li>• 'This works for your clients / patients / patrons'</li> <li>• the ARC OxTV has evidence-based research to you help you demonstrate impact</li> <li>• We can partner with you for funding bids</li> <li>• Signal the ARC OxTV is 'open for business' for mutually beneficial partnerships</li> </ul>
Industry/life sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The NIHR (and the UK) offers the most integrated health research system in the world with internationally leading experts, infrastructure and support services needed to deliver trials successfully and cost effectively</b></li> <li>• <b>We can assist you through the regulation process and help you to reduce levels of failure</b></li> <li>• The ARC is about improving people’s health, wellbeing, and care, by working together with all involved.</li> <li>• 'This works for your clients'</li> <li>• The NIHR is your natural partner for high-quality independently evaluated research</li> <li>• We can link you with organisations that can support you reaching your goals (e.g. AHSN, AHSC)</li> <li>• The NIHR can help you improve your patient and public involvement</li> <li>• (FOR SMEs) The NIHR can help you get funding or support for your research</li> <li>• The ARC acts as a conduit to our partners to support implementation of novel technologies or services, helping you get your solutions / technologies into practice faster.</li> </ul>
Press/wider public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broadcast ARC OxTV and partner successes</li> <li>• Challenging misinformation and providing balanced [another word] perspectives</li> </ul>

- Generate interest in ongoing research
- Raise awareness of new healthcare developments

**Appendix 3: SWOT Analysis**

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis (April 2021)

		<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<b>Internal</b>	<b>1</b>	<p><b>Host/Partner brands: Oxford University</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Strong brand recognition and credibility associated with academic and clinical excellence (e.g. Oxford university and NHS), both with public and other stakeholders. Can be capitalised on in order to add gravitas to some messaging.</li> <li>– But need to exercise caution so we don't exclude or alienate other partners.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Unclear processes for those engaging with us (Internal and external)</b> e.g. who to contact for what, when and how</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– can lead to confusion or mixed messages to people engaging with the ARC OxTV, both internal and external.</li> <li>– need to clarify how we attract people to engage with us, what we can offer, and a triage process to get the right people connected.</li> </ul>
	<b>2</b>	<p><b>Historical examples (CLAHRC, snapshots website) of collaborative work/pathways to impact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Can show where 'our' work has had real impacts or will have (e.g. publications, influencing guidelines, use in the NHS) for both ARC and its partners.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Visible engagement beyond Oxford or the University of Oxford (i.e. the rest of the Thames Valley/ our region)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– difficult to meaningfully engage (i.e two-way interaction, not just broadcast) further with others in the region if all project spending has been assigned, and themes are rarely directly engaging with such people as part of their running.</li> <li>– Need to better capture and show how we're working with the wider region / communities.</li> <li>– This needs to be a sustained effort</li> </ul>
	<b>3</b>	<p><b>ARC OxTV staff/collaborators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the researchers/clinicians we work with are well-known in their fields and, as ambassadors, are an asset for sharing our findings or providing reliable comment.</li> <li>– Important to maintain and cultivate these internal relationships if we hope to benefit from them.</li> <li>– Strong PPI support and engagement.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lack of clear (internal) understanding of the ARC's role/what it does</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– General feedback indicates that even members of the ARC OxTV would struggle to explain the ARC's purpose and what it aims to achieve. This risks us losing out on opportunities for people to act as ambassadors for the ARC and it's outputs and possibly also opportunities to link with new partners and projects.</li> <li>– Opportunity to focus our vision and mission messages, and put them front and centre of communications materials (e.g. email footers, website homepage, twitter banner, presentations etc)</li> <li>– Lack of clear understanding of how we differ from the Oxford AHSN in mission.</li> <li>– This needs to be a sustained effort.</li> </ul>
	<b>4</b>	<p><b>Well established communications channels</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– @ARC_OxTV Twitter (~2100 followers)</li> <li>– @NIHRARCs twitter (1453 followers)</li> <li>– ARC OxTV website</li> <li>– National ARC's newsletter (&gt;700 subscribers)</li> <li>– multiple partner communication channels (e.g. Oxford BRC twitter, OUH and Oxford Health NHS FT internal newsletter / updates etc)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Balance of workstreams vs individual defined projects</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Individual projects easier to track and share progress on, workstreams more difficult to explain and demonstrate outcomes or progress against objectives due to their less defined nature.</li> <li>– Whether a 'project' or a 'workstream' (probably need some degree of definition), there should be a clear explainable path for the actions or milestones expected to be reached in order for a workstream to meet its objective/s.</li> </ul>
	<b>5</b>	<p><b>Dedicated Communications Officer and support 3 days / week.</b></p>	<p><b>Lack of a process to capture research / study impacts both <i>during</i> and after a study completes</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– helps to ensure consistent branding across all channels and studies</li> <li>– can focus on specific organisation communications objectives</li> <li>– provide strategic support to individual ARC themes / projects as needed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– will be important to demonstrate to all flavours of stakeholder (including NIHR) that the ARC was a worthy investment and is meeting or exceeding the objectives it set out for itself.</li> <li>– If there a process is developed, this process and expectation needs to be communicated with researchers / partners</li> </ul>
6	<p><b>Well established routes to media engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Via University press office and NIHR media centre, as well as good existing trade (e.g GP Online, Pulse) contacts</li> </ul>	<p><b>Funding mostly tied up</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The ARC OxTV may lack flexibility (i.e ability to financially support) and processes to respond to shorter term (months to a year, for example) regional concerns and projects, which could risk the ARC OxTV being perceived as though it is 'not doing much' from an external perspective.</li> </ul>
7	<p><b>Strong, well-structured and experienced Core team with defined roles and strategies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Clear demarcation of members responsible for core activities and areas, including implementation, PPI and public health, as well as dedicated theme managers and organisational strategies for each area.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Scepticism about some of the ARC OxTVs objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– There's some informal evidence to suggest that some members don't see some ARC objectives as achievable or, for example implementation, aren't achievable in reality, or that the ARC cannot really influence this. This reduces people's 'buy in' to the ARC and the likelihood of them acting as positive ambassadors for us.</li> <li>– Clearly and transparently demonstrating ARC success or not across its objectives should help to allay concerns.</li> </ul>
		<p><b>Seen as only one of many funders feeding into Oxford</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Seen as a relatively smaller funder (in this location) we might not always be at the forefront of people minds, people are happy to 'take the money and run', but not engage with us to help us achieve some strategic goals or obligations.</li> <li>– we need to be clear with our researchers / members what their obligations to us are and what is expected of them, operationally, both ahead of being funded (for prospective partners) and whilst funded (existing partners).</li> </ul>

	Opportunities	Threats/Risks
External	<p><b>Diversity of partners / collaborations</b></p> <p>1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– opportunities for working together/co-branding events where content or missions overlap</li> <li>– reduces costs while increasing/broadening reach</li> </ul>	<p><b>Only one of many funders feeding into Oxford</b></p> <p>1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– As a relatively smaller funder (in this location) we might not always be at the forefront of people minds, people are happy to 'take the money and run', but not engage with us to help us achieve some strategic goals or obligations.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Potential to improve relationships with key stakeholders</b></p> <p>2</p>	<p><b>Strength of partner brands</b></p> <p>2</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– e.g. Oxford Health NHS FT, BRC(s), CRN etc</li> <li>– can we 'pull together' in a more visible manner to exploit these in line with ARC OxTV and partner aims?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– the ARC OxTV risks being overshadowed by the power of the brands it works with (e.g. in news stories, easier to say 'University of Oxford' or 'Oxford Health NHS FT')</li> <li>– poorer media profile</li> <li>– NIHR guidance for media work is to refer to NIHR, not the individual unit (i.e. ARC OxTV).</li> </ul>
3	<p><b>More effective working with other Oxford-based NIHR infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– already work quite closely with many partners on communications issues</li> <li>– need better flow of information on projects which overlap with us, or feed into/out from ours – better relationships with researchers or (e.g. BRCs) at an operational level?</li> <li>– help to ensure opportunities for involvement, training, and key messages (operational or otherwise) are better spread</li> </ul>	<p><b>Lost in the noise (internal / operational communications)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– For 'internal' audiences the ARC OxTV must compete with a range of communications and obligations from departments, universities, professional groups and/or NHS trusts.</li> <li>– As such ARC CORE-to-member communications should be kept relevant and useful to members. Targeting of specific groups should go some way towards this so not all communications are 'global' in nature.</li> </ul>
4	<p><b>Location: Strong focus on science and health-related sciences in particular in the ARC OxTV region</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– both clinically, academic, and commercially</li> <li>– more opportunities to engage stakeholder groups than other areas</li> <li>– more opportunity to co-resource and co-brand initiatives where priorities overlap</li> <li>– Potentially more opportunities to drive real national change</li> </ul>	<p><b>Overall complexity of health research landscape in the Thames Valley area</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– how and where do we differentiate from BRC's, CRN, AHSN, Trusts, Uni's, etc...</li> <li>– consistent messaging with and between these groups, e.g. the AHSC - unclear what it is or does. Do we work with them, or are they more of an oversight/networking committee/idea sharing platform?</li> <li>– We can work with partners through the applied Health communications network to clarify roles</li> </ul>
5	<p><b>Wider Thames Valley partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– opportunity to engage with partners more closely across the region and outside of Oxford to raise the profile of the ARC, and to</li> </ul>	<p><b>Don't know status of the ARC, as an organisation, relationships with stakeholders</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– no concrete information on how we are seen and how to manage that at present. Though still early days.</li> <li>– sensible to perform a stakeholder survey mid ARC for informing and actioning communications and core activities in the 2–3-year phase of the ARC.</li> </ul>
		<p><b>Lack of clear (external) understanding of the ARC's role/what it does</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– General feedback indicates people don't understand what we do, nor why, when and if they should come to us and what, if anything we can offer them</li> <li>– Opportunity to focus our vision and mission messages, and put them front and centre of communications materials (e.g. website homepage, twitter banner, presentations etc)</li> <li>– Lack of clear understanding of how we differ from the Oxford AHSN in mission</li> </ul>



**Version control change log:**

Editor Name	Version # amended	New version #	Changes made (brief description and reason)	Date

	Name	Role	Date
Current version Author	Gavin Hubbard	ARC OxTV Communications lead	
Approved by	Paula Wray	ARC OxTV Senior Manager	
		<b>Version:</b>	0.9
		<b>Active Date:</b>	