

Part C

Commissioning research

A summary of Part C

Why is Part C important?

Once people have decided to research a specific area they need to gain funds for the project. They submit proposals to research funding groups who have the job of deciding who gets the money. This is called commissioning. In Part C you will learn about the details of this stage and analyse real examples. You will also consider the practical issues of user involvement in commissioning research to help you decide if you would like to do this work.

What will you learn by doing Part C?

At the end of this part you will be able to:

- Understand what commissioning research means - Activity 1
- Understand what happens in the commissioning research stage - Activity 1 and 2
- Discuss the practical issues of user involvement in the commissioning research stage - Activity 3

Skills you will strengthen or develop

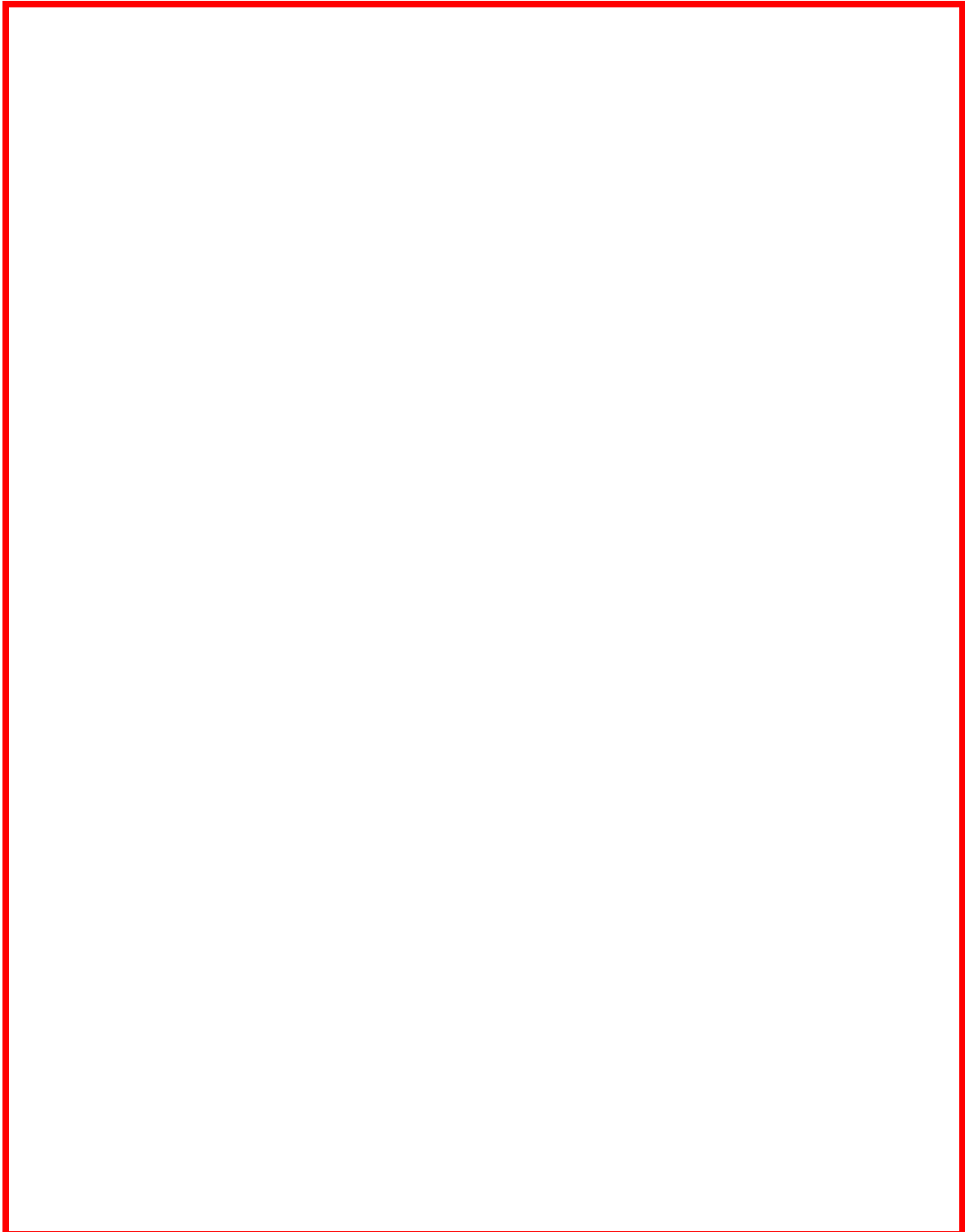
Skills that you will strengthen or develop include:

- Level 2: Further practice with thinking about issues
- Level 2: Further practice with developing and presenting an argument
- Level 2: Further practice with speaking in large groups
- Level 2: Further practice with planning what to do next
- Level 3: Demonstrate ability to think about issues
- Level 3: Demonstrate ability to think about case examples

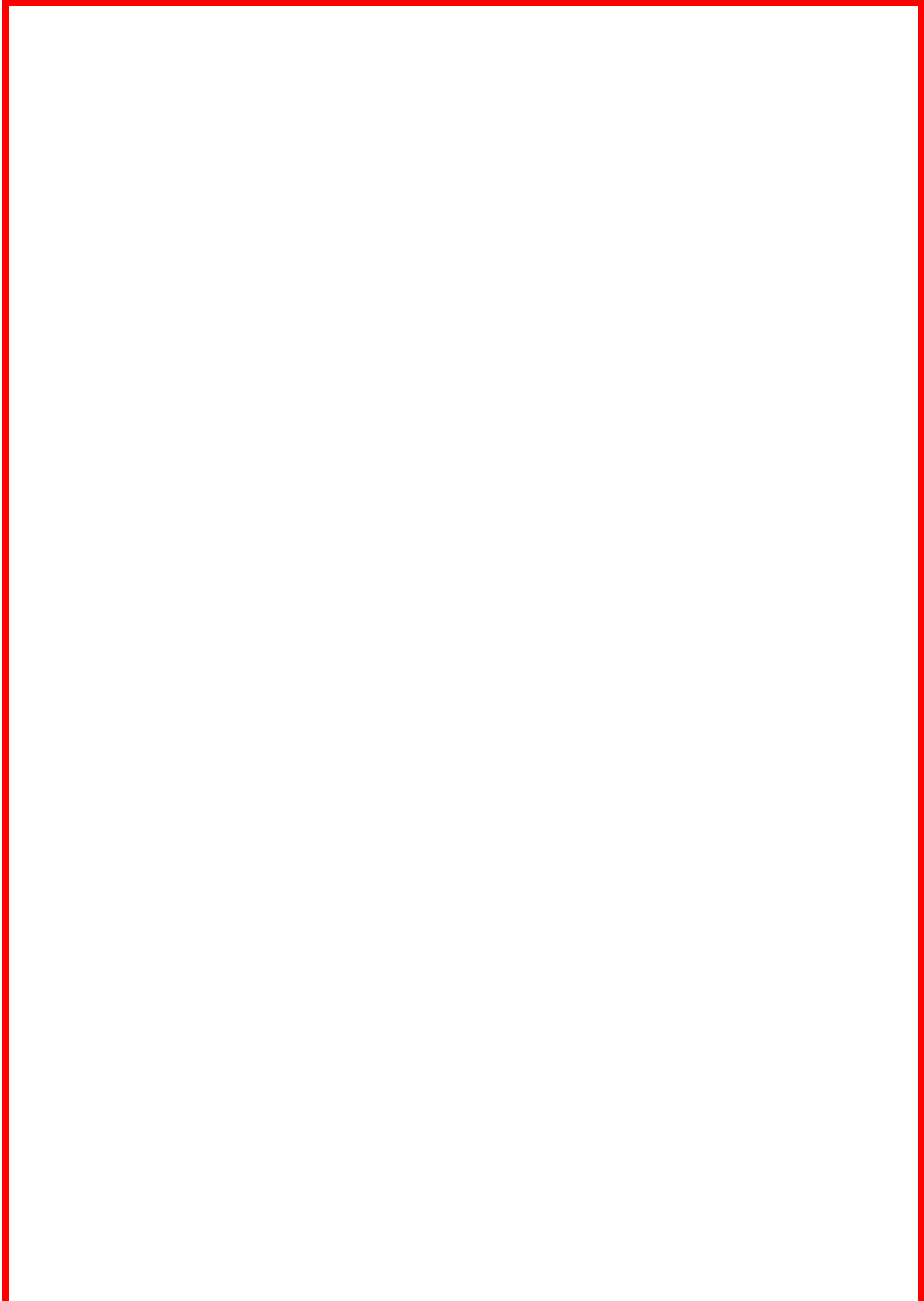
Activity 1

What does commissioning research mean?

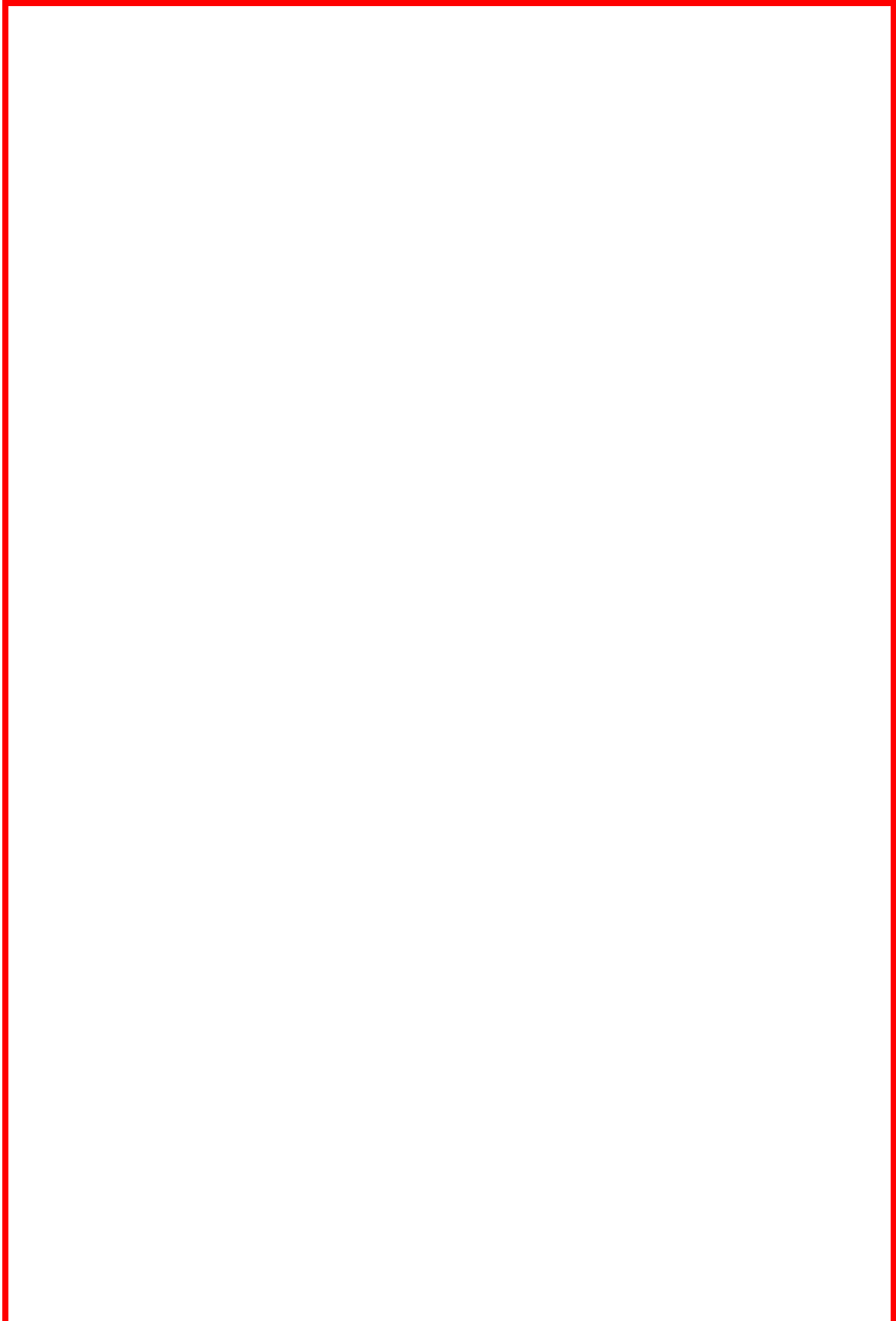
Existing knowledge of commissioning research



What does commissioning research mean? What happens in this stage?



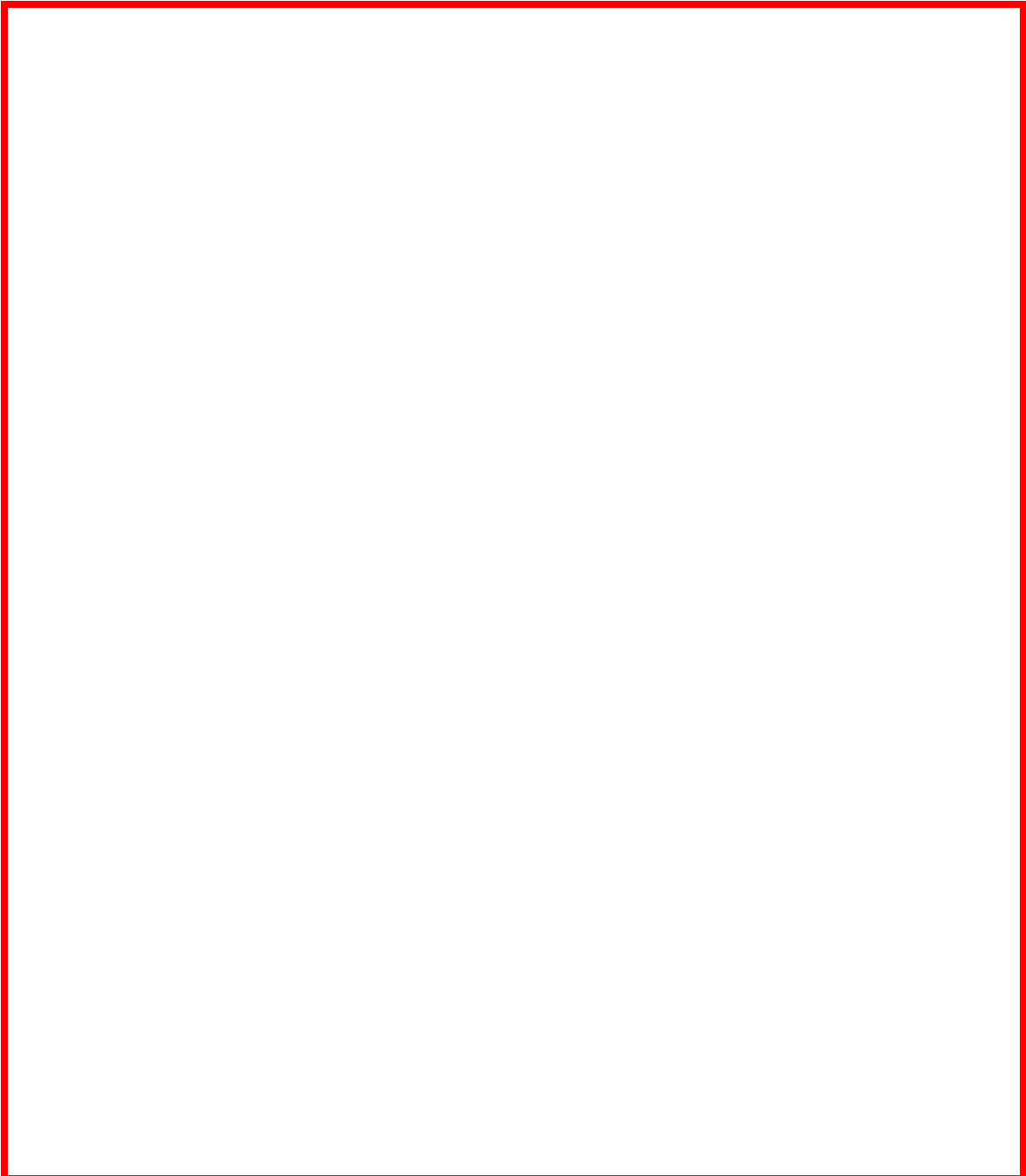
Commissioning research practice

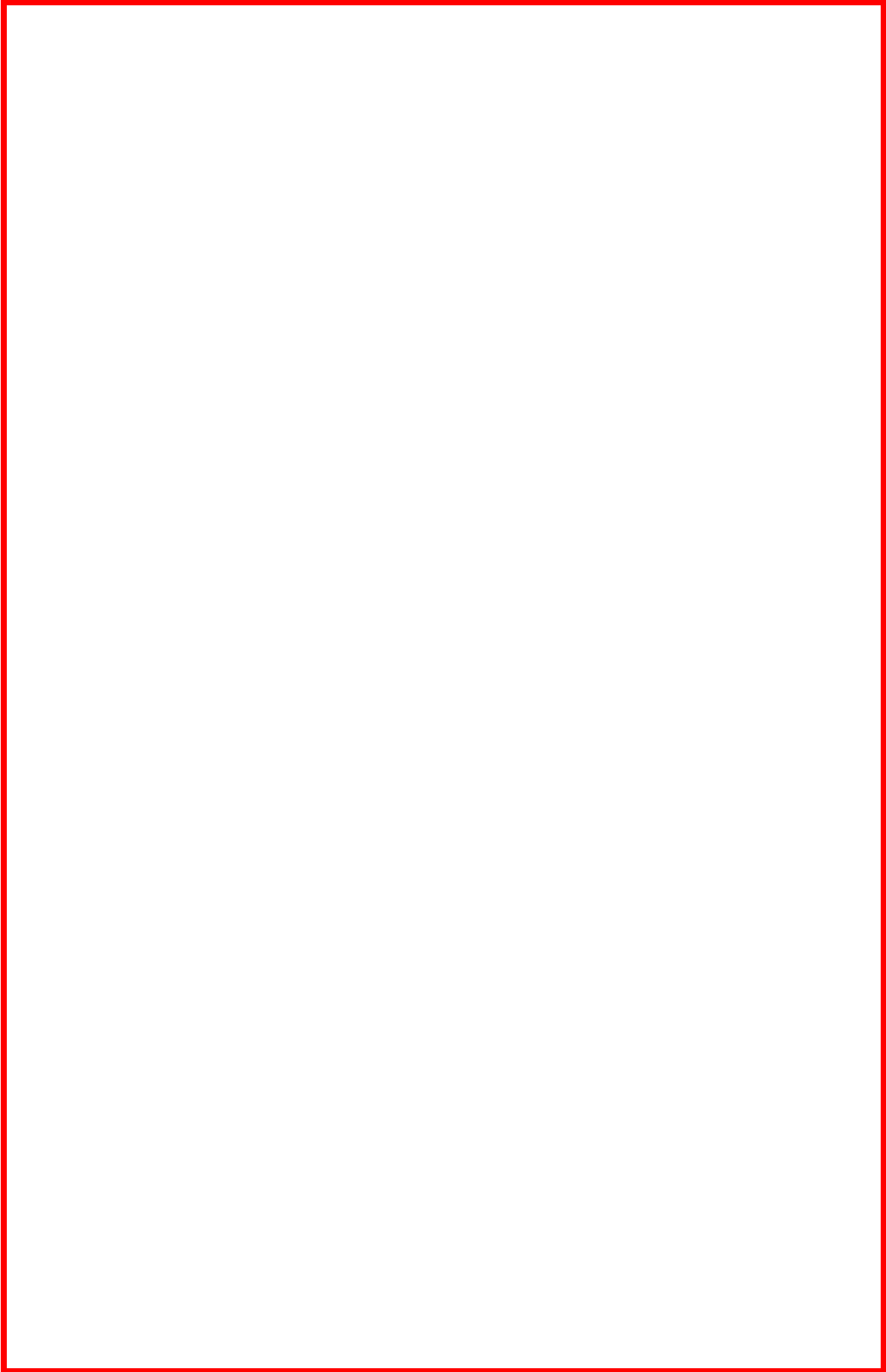


Activity 2

Examples of user involvement in commissioning research

**Analysing case examples of user involvement in
commissioning research**

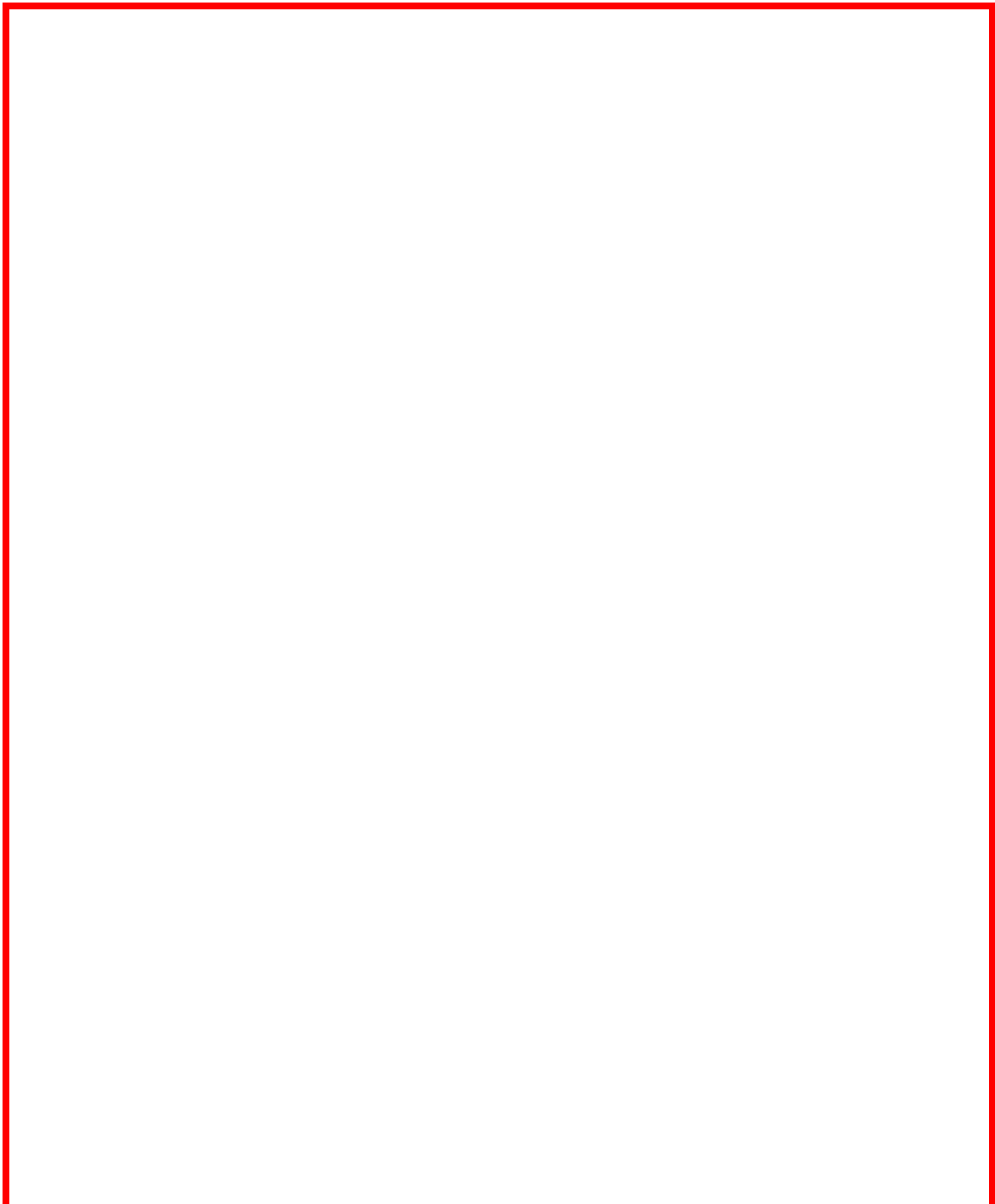




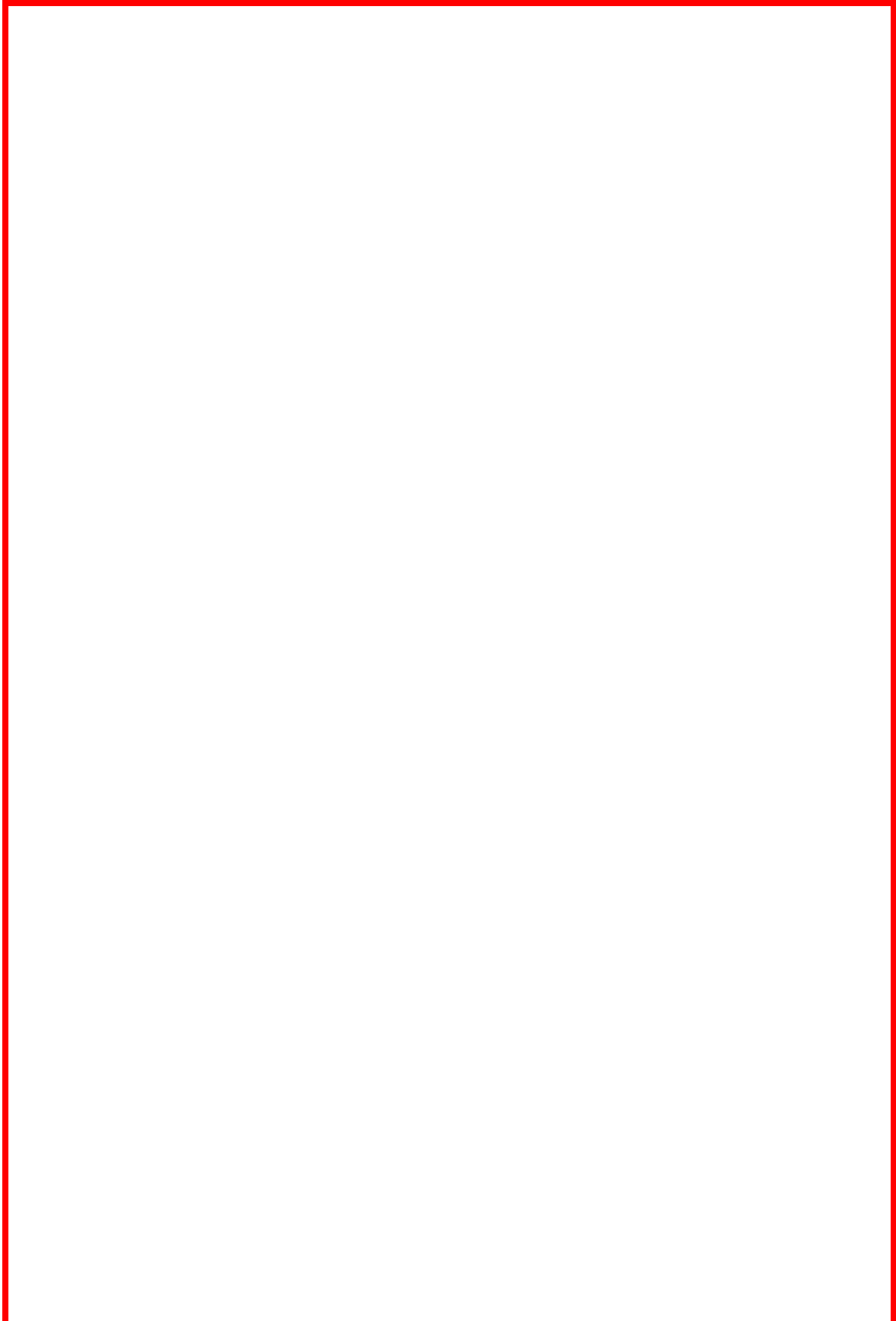
Activity 3

**What could user involvement in
commissioning research mean for you?**

Review practical issues in user involvement work



Plans for dealing with practical issues



Practical issues in commissioning research

Review the practical issues in commissioning research discussed in Activity 3 and answer these questions:

- Identify which of the issues are of most concern to you
- Do you have enough ideas about how to deal with these concerns?
- If no, identify who you can discuss these issues with further to help you plan what you can do about them.

Case examples

1. Health Technology Assessment Programme: Consumers as peer reviewers

Health Technology Assessment (HTA) Programme

Mailpoint 728, Boldrewood

University of Southampton

Bassett Crescent East

SOUTHAMPTON SO16 7PX

Telephone: 023 8059 5586

Email: hta@soton.ac.uk

<http://www.nchta.org/> - Main home page

<http://www.nchta.org/consumers/index.htm> - Consumer home page

The HTA programme is a national research programme funded by the Department of Health. It has developed a system of user involvement in all areas of its activities, including consumer reviewing of research as part of the commissioning process. Consumer reviewers have a job description, receive training, use guidelines for the review process, have access to personal support and, where appropriate, have their costs covered. Also see the papers by Royle and Oliver (in press) and Oliver et al. (2001) in the 'Sources used for the material in this part.'

2. The Alzheimer's Society

<http://www.alzheimers.org.uk>

Tel: 0191 223 2830

Alzheimer's Society

Gordon House, 10 Greencoat Place

London, SW1P 1PH

Tel: 020 7306 0606

The Alzheimer's Society is a user and carer non-government support organisation. It has created a consumer network to lead its research program called the Quality Research in Dementia Network - here is the direct link:

http://www.qrd.alzheimers.org.uk/qrd_advisory_network.htm

The Quality Research in Dementia Network identifies a range of possible research topics and then participates in processes that select the priorities. The Society uses this as the basis for commissioning research. In addition, The Society aims to involve its members in every other aspect of its research program, including commissioning, grant application reviewing, and grant awards, project management, implementation and dissemination. It has won national awards for its commitment to user involvement.

Useful information for participants

Useful websites

INVOLVE (formerly Consumers in NHS Research)

<http://www.invo.org.uk>

INVOLVE believes that members of the public should be involved at all stages of the R&D process. This means users, carers and the public are active participants, not just 'subjects' of research. INVOLVE supports and advocates for this to happen through working with the NHS, and providing training materials and guidebooks for health and social services staff, and users, carers and the public. They also monitor and assess the effects of public involvement in NHS, public health and social care research.

Ease of reading: Good

Folk.us

<http://latis.ex.ac.uk/folk.us/findex.htm>

This is the website of a user/carer and health and social service staff collaborative project. It aims to promote a research culture that is controlled and influenced by service users, disabled people and informal carers, so that research

and implementation reflects the concerns of ordinary folk.

Ease of reading: Good

Health Technology Assessment (HTA) Programme

<http://www.nchta.org/> - Main home page

<http://www.nchta.org/consumers/index.htm> - Consumer home page

The HTA programme is a national research programme funded by the Department of Health. Its job is to ensure that high quality research information on the costs, effectiveness and broader impact of health technologies is produced in the most effective way for those who use, manage and provide care in the NHS. There is a consumer home page for users, carers and the public to learn about how user involvement occurs in the HTA programme. The HTA identifies and prioritises research topics, then commissions research, monitors its progress and evaluates it when finished.

Ease of reading: Good

Useful readings

Oliver S. (2000). *Guidelines for consumers peer-reviewing research 2*. Health Technology Assessment Programme.

Available online at: <http://www.nchta.org/consumers/index.htm>

The specific link is:

<http://www.nchta.org/consumers/importedDocuments/guidelines-2.pdf>

This is a very useful document for anyone who is involved in peer reviewing research proposal to assist with commissioning research. It outlines the skills and abilities that users, carers and members of the public can bring to the review process, and the five main steps in doing a review.

Ease of reading: Good

Royle, J., Buckland, S. & Hayes, H. (2003). *Report of the commissioning workshops*. Winchester: Consumers in NHS

Research Support Unit. Available online at:

<http://www.invo.org.uk/pub.htm>

This report gives a summary of the presentations and workshops that occurred at a workshop on user involvement in commissioning research. User consultant speakers talked about their experience of being involved in commissioning,

what they learned and what needs to be improved. Health and social service researchers and users, carers and the public then took part in workshops to discuss the challenges of user involvement in commissioning, and share ideas for what works and what could be improved.

Ease of reading: Excellent

Royle, J., Steele, R., Hanley, B. & Bradburn, J. (2001). *Getting involved in research: A guide for consumers*. Winchester: Consumers in NHS Research Support Unit. Available online at: <http://www.invo.org.uk/pub.htm>

This is an excellent document with valuable information for users, carers and members of the public who want to become more involved in research. It describes the different stages in the research process and how you can be involved. If you go to the website you will find there is also a document for health and social service staff called 'Involving the public in NHS, public health and social care: Briefing notes for researchers.'

Ease of reading: Good

Sources used for the material in this part

Bowl, R. (1996). Involving service user consultants in mental health services: Social Services Departments and the National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990, *Journal of Mental Health* 5(3), 287-303.

Consumer Focus Collaboration (2000). *Improving health services through consumer participation: A resource guide for organisations*. Canberra: Commonwealth Department of Health & Aged Care. Available online at:

<http://www.participateinhealth.org.au/clearinghouse/>

Epstein, M. & Wadsworth, Y. (1996). *Understanding and involvement: Consumer evaluation of acute psychiatric hospital practice - A project unfolds*. Melbourne: Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council.

Oliver, S. (1999). Users of health services: Following their agenda (pp. 139-153). In S. Hood, B. Mayall & S. Oliver, *Critical issues in social research: Power and prejudice*. Open University Press: Buckingham.

Oliver S. (2000). *Guidelines for consumers peer-reviewing research 2*. HTA Programme. Available online at:

<http://www.nchta.org/consumers/importedDocuments/guidelines-2.pdf>

Royle, J., Steele, R., Hanley, B. & Bradburn, J. (2001). *Getting involved in research: A guide for consumers*. Winchester:

INVOLVE (Consumers in NHS Research Support Unit). Available online at: <http://www.invo.org.uk/pub.htm>