Introduction
The Scottish Medicines Consortium (SMC) issues advice to NHSScotland on the clinical and cost-effectiveness of all new medicines. SMC works with patient groups (organisations that support and represent patients and carers such as charities) to ensure the views and experiences of patients, their families and carers are a key part of SMC decision-making.

A stakeholder review, undertaken in 2014, highlighted areas of public involvement which would benefit from being strengthened. SMC has since undergone a public involvement improvement programme and developed a new partnership approach in working with patient and carer representatives.

Methods
• An SMC Public Involvement Network (PIN) Advisory Group was established. Membership includes patient group, public and SMC representatives.
• A new simplified Patient Group Partner registration and submission process was introduced.
• Improved information, training and support for Patient Group Partners.
• A new proactive approach to encourage Patient Group Submissions to SMC was introduced.
• Involvement of patient representatives at SMC Committee meetings was introduced.

Results
Increased patient group involvement
There has been a significant increase in the number of medicine appraisals which have incorporated a Patient Group Submission.

Improved patient group satisfaction
In 2017, through an online questionnaire, Patient Group Partners expressed satisfaction with the level of support and information provided to them, with 93% rating it as ‘excellent’ and 7% as ‘good’ (n=24).

Of those patient representatives who responded to an online survey about participating at SMC meetings, 100% rated their experience as ‘extremely positive’ with the support received from the public involvement team as ‘excellent’.

Conclusions
Conducting the stakeholder review provided valuable insight to improve and develop public involvement activities. SMC was then able to create a number of changes in their approach, which significantly improved the quantity and quality of Patient Group Submissions (Figure 1) and allowed effective participation of Patient Group partners at SMC meetings.

Furthermore, it improved stakeholder satisfaction in how SMC captures and presents the patient and carer voice in the Health Technology Assessment decision-making process for new medicines.

Reference:
www.scottishmedicines.org/Public_Involvement/Our_commitment_to_continuous_improvement

www.scottishmedicines.org.uk