Developing the UK National Allergy Strategy: how to get involved

Introduction

The National Allergy Strategy Group published *"Meeting the Challenges of the National Allergy Crisis"* in 2021 which included a recommendation for a national plan for allergy. The UK National Allergy Strategy will provide a 10-year vision 2025-2035 outlining the key objectives and priority projects focused on improving the lives of all who live with allergy across the UK devolved nations. The NAS seeks to be comprehensive and include all areas of allergy. This includes Anaphylaxis, Asthma and/or Rhinitis, Drug Allergy, Eczema, Food Allergy, Latex Allergy, Urticaria, Angioedema or Mastocytosis, and Venom Allergy.

The UK National Allergy Strategy aims to provide a collaborative approach to improving health outcomes and other unmet needs of the allergic community across the UK. The approach to the development of the strategy seeks to be as inclusive as possible so that all stakeholders have a voice, feel listened to and heard, and have an opportunity to get involved, whilst ensuring we engage leaders in the field of all areas of allergy with the relevant expertise and commitment. Consultation is an important part of developing this strategy, so we ensure it is accurate, evidence-based, and relevant to the daily lives of all who live with allergy in the UK.

This document provides ways to get involved with the National Allergy Strategy.

The main ways to get involved

Stakeholders

Stakeholders are individuals or organisations with an interest in allergy who wish to share their thoughts and views on key objectives and priority projects that they would like to see considered in the National Allergy Strategy.

Wherever possible, stakeholder organisations are asked to combine comments into one response, especially when representing their organisation's position or known collective member views. However, stakeholder organisations may also wish to forward a link to the consultation documents to their contacts, members, or supporters to provide an opportunity for individual views to inform the consultation surveys.

Stakeholders will not be decision-makers, but their comments will be considered as a part of the strategy development process.

Before the development of the National Allergy Strategy
Stakeholders will be invited to send in their top priorities through an online Share Your Voice survey which will be circulated in August 2024 and open for 12 weeks. The closing date for this survey will be Friday 15th November 2024.

The survey will also include a section where stakeholders can advise on evidence that they feel could be useful to be included to inform the strategy development. The NAS working groups will consider all data and evidence listed and contact stakeholders where data/evidence may be felt to be relevant to specific areas of focus.

During the development of the National Allergy Strategy
Stakeholders will be invited to comment on a final draft version of the strategy before a final document is considered and approved by expert commentators.

After the publication of the National Allergy Strategy
Stakeholders will be invited to engage in public awareness campaigns to raise awareness and advocate for the National Allergy Strategy objectives 2025-2035.

Stakeholders may include (but are not restricted to):

- Clinical service providers for all areas of allergy.
- UK-wide and national patient organisations, representing patients, carers, and public.
- Individuals, including those living with, or caring for those living with allergy.
- Members/supporters of patient organisations representing allergy.
- UK-wide and national organisations representing practitioners, for example, Royal Colleges & other Associations.
- Public sector providers and commissioners from all four devolved nations.
- Departments and national statutory agencies across devolved governments.
- Policy advisors across allergy-related areas.
- Healthcare providers such as GPs, Pharmacies, and Public Health.
- Local Healthwatch organisations.
- Academia and other educational institutions, such as schools.
- Organisations that fund or carry out research.
- Manufacturers and commercial organisations, for example pharmaceutical companies or manufacturers of medical treatments, devices, diagnostics or other equipment.
- Food industry representatives.
- Travel industry representatives.
- Food Standards Agencies.
- Civil Aviation Authority.
- Urban planning organisations.
- Housing associations and regulators.
- UK Health Security Agency.
- Climate change and air quality organisations.

Consultees

Consultees are organisations or individuals who are invited to express an interest in participating in the development of the National Allergy Strategy because of the expertise and knowledge that they can bring to the specific areas of focus.

Consultees may be selected to be involved as core WG Members specific working groups, invited to submit evidence or may be invited by the core working groups to provide their expert opinion and views to inform the drafting of the key objectives and priority projects or asked to review stakeholder contributions.

There will be limited numbers for each working group (approximately 10-15), however, invited consultees may be asked to present expert evidence to the working groups or to comment on specific objectives and projects being considered. Core Working Group members may be asked to attend an in-person meeting at least once during the development phases, although most of the engagement aims to be virtual.

Consultees include:

- Experts working in all areas of allergy. This includes Anaphylaxis, Asthma and/or Rhinitis, Drug Allergy, Eczema, Food Allergy, Latex Allergy, Urticaria, Angioedema or Mastocytosis, and Venom Allergy.
- National groups representing patients and carers living with all areas of allergy.
- Bodies representing healthcare professionals.
- Companies connected to the field of allergy or the strategic areas of focus.
- Public or private sector organisations representing industry connected to the strategic areas of focus, such as education, food, and travel.

Before the development of the National Allergy Strategy

Consultees will be contacted and invited to express an interest in being involved in the development of the National Allergy Strategy in the ways outlined above. The Expression of Interest survey will be circulated in August 2024 and open for 12 weeks. The closing date for the expression of interest survey will be Friday 15th November 2024.

Consultees will be asked to provide a summary of their expertise and to share their CVs. There may be a selection process for involvement as a Chair or member of a working group.

Consultees will also be invited to send in their top priorities through the Share Your Voice online survey for all stakeholders which will be circulated in August 2024 and be open for 12 weeks, closing on Friday 15th November 2024.

During the development of the National Allergy Strategy
Consultees may be involved in the activities of specific working groups and discussions, which will involve gathering and reviewing evidence, providing their expert opinions in discussion with other experts, considering data metrics and performance measurements, and reviewing draft versions of the strategy documents. Or consultees may be invited to participate in other ways, such as presenting their expert evidence or comments to a working group. All selected consultees will be invited to comment on draft versions of the strategy at various stages of development. This will include a final comments form.

After the publication of the National Allergy Strategy
Consultees will be invited to engage in public awareness campaigns to raise awareness and advocate for the National Allergy Strategy objectives 2025-2035.

Commentators

Commentators are expert advisors invited by the National Allergy Strategy Group to comment on the various documents produced during the development of the strategy. This role will mainly be provided by the Expert Advisory Group for Allergy who will have a holistic overview of UK-wide national strategy, being able to advise on best practice improvement for related policy areas, services, and systems relating to allergy.

Before the development of the National Allergy Strategy
Specific commentators will be invited to be involved in the Expert Advisory Group for Allergy. Commentators will also be able to personally participate in the online surveys, and the organisations that they represent will also be able to provide their top priorities through an online survey for all stakeholders which will be circulated in August 2024 and be open for 12 weeks, closing on 15th November 2024.

During the development of the National Allergy Strategy
Commentators will review draft documents and provide advice on policy and best practices in discussion with other experts in a holistic oversight role due to their existing knowledge and involvement in key policies, services and systems relating to allergy across the UK. Commentators can also express an interest to be a consultee and be considered for involvement in the working groups.

After the publication of the National Allergy Strategy
Commentators will have an advocacy role supporting and connecting the National Allergy Strategy Group with relevant government departments across devolved nations of the UK to move forward delivery of the strategic objectives of the National Allergy Strategy objectives 2025-2035.

The Expert Advisory Group for Allergy includes representatives such as:

- Co-Chair: Chair of National Allergy Strategy Group.
- Co-Chair: Department of Health & Social Care, Head of Long-Term Conditions and Palliative & End of Life Care, Primary & Community Health Care Directorate, Primary Care & Prevention Group.
- Chair and National Clinical Director of the NHSE Blood & Infection National Programme of Care Board.
- National Specialty Advisor & Chair of Adult Allergy/Immunology NHSE Clinical Reference Group.
- Immunology, Infectious Disease, and Allergy representative of the Specialist Paediatric Medicine NHSE Clinical Reference Group.
- NHSE Lead for workforce planning: TBC
- Royal College of General Practice: TBC
- Royal College of Nursing, Director of Policy, Communications and Marketing
- Royal College of Nursing, Head of Policy.
- Royal Pharmaceutical Society: TBC
- British Dietetic Association
- British Society for Allergy & Clinical Immunology, President
- BSI Clinical Immunology Professional Network (BSI-CIPN)
- Chair of the UK Perioperative Allergy Network (representing BSACI, CIPN, Association of Anesthetists, Royal College of Anesthetists).
- British Psychological Society.
- Chair of the Joint Clinical Immunology & Allergy Committee of the Royal College of Physicians & Royal College of Pathologists.
- British Paediatric Allergy, Immunology & Infectious Disease Group, representing the Royal College of Paediatrics & Child Health, Allergy Leads.
- Medicines Health Regulatory Authority.
- Foods Standards Agency - Food Hypersensitivity Programme.
- Department for Education: TBC
- Medical Schools Council: Senior Policy officers: TBC
- Immunisation, Hepatitis and Blood Safety Department at UK Health Security Agency
- Welsh representative from Cardiff and Vale UHB - Immunology)
- Scottish representative from Children and Young People Allergy Network Scotland (CYANS), Clinical Lead
- Northern Ireland representative: TBC
- PATIENT AND CARER REPRESENTATIVES:
- Allergy UK: Chief Executive Officer.
- Anaphylaxis UK: Chief Executive Officer.
- Natasha's Allergy Research Foundation: Chief Operations Officer.

The Consultation Process

Consultation is an important part of developing this strategy and comments and involvement from all stakeholders will ensure it is accurate, evidence-based, and relevant to the strategic goals and the future needs of allergy services and lived experiences in the UK. The NAS seeks to be comprehensive and inclusive, covering all areas of allergy.

A majority of the ways to get involved with the UK National Allergy Strategy consultation will be virtual and online, with online surveys, downloadable documents, and e-meetings. Documents will be held on the National Allergy Strategy Group website.

Part 1: Share Your Voice Survey

The National Allergy Strategy Group members (British Society for Allergy & Clinical Immunology, Allergy UK, Anaphylaxis UK, and Natasha's Allergy Research Foundation) will circulate an email to their members and other stakeholders and relevant contacts advising of a survey called *Share Your Voice*. Individuals and/or their organisations will be asked to send in their top priorities for each of the strategic areas of focus for the UK National Allergy Strategy.

The online survey will be held on the National Allergy Strategy Group website. The email will be circulated in early August 2024, with the survey open for 12 weeks. The closing date for the initial survey will be Friday 15th November 2024.

Only comments submitted as a part of the survey will be accepted. All comments will be collated and considered during the development of the strategy; however, wherever possible we encourage comments to be made through stakeholder organisations as it will not be possible to acknowledge and reply to every comment individually.

The National Allergy Strategy Group reserves the right to summarise and edit comments received during consultations, or not publish them at all if they are too long, inappropriate, or contain confidential information. A summary of comments will be published on the National Allergy Strategy Group website for transparency and openness but without endorsement by the National Allergy Strategy Group or any other party involved in the development of the UK National Allergy Strategy.

Part 2: Consultees – Invitations to Express an Interest to be Involved

The National Allergy Strategy Group will be sending out a separate invitation to consultees with specific expertise inviting them to *express an interest* in being involved in the development of the UK National Allergy Strategy.

This will be in a survey format and will be circulated in early August 2024 and will be open for a period of 12 weeks. The closing date for the expression of interest survey will be Friday 15th November 2024.

A selection process, and if/where felt needed interviews, will take place to identify consultees to support the core working groups (which will be approximately 10-15 people per group). Other consultees not selected for the working groups will be invited to participate in other ways, such as providing expert evidence or comments on various drafts. The Patient Pathway & Standards of Care Working Group includes Anaphylaxis, Asthma and/or Rhinitis, Drug Allergy, Eczema, Food Allergy, Latex Allergy, Urticaria, Angioedema or Mastocytosis, and Venom Allergy.

Part 3: Developing the draft strategy

Consultee working groups will collaborate, consider the Share Your Voice comments, evidence-based data, their own shared expertise and knowledge on allergic disease, and the lived experiences of patients and carers, to draft short-, medium-, and long-term objectives for each strategic area of focus. All areas of allergy will be included on the NAS. Commentators will meet several times during this part of the development process to provide holistic oversight, advice, and guidance to the consultees as the strategy draft develops.

It is envisaged that this part of the process will commence in November/December 2024 and require a 6–9 month period, which will eventuate in an in-person meeting in June 2025, where working group chairs will meet with core commentators to share progress on draft objectives and priority projects. Outputs of this meeting will inform the final draft strategy.

Part 4: Final comments from stakeholders

In July and August 2025, all stakeholders who have expressed an interest in providing final comments will be contacted to be advised that the final draft strategy will be made available on the National Allergy Strategy Group website, with an associated checklist format for comments to be submitted. This final consultation will be open for 8 weeks.

Commentators will meet in early September to provide a final overview of the draft, with consultee working groups finalising the key objectives and priority projects for a UK National Allergy Strategy by the end of September 2025.

Part 5: Launch of the UK National Allergy Strategy 2025-2035

The National Allergy Strategy Group will have final approval of the UK National Allergy Strategy 2025-2035 in September 2025, with the strategy launch to be held at the BSACI Conference in October 2025.

Part 6: Public Awareness Campaign

The implementation phase for this strategy will then commence with the launch of the public awareness campaign and future advocacy across UK governments to work towards delivering the key objectives and priority projects of the strategy.