



Northern Health
and Social Care Trust

Involvement Annual Report

1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023



Contents

Foreword	3
Governance and Assurance	6
Monitoring	10
Patient Client Experience	13
Opportunities and Support	19
Knowledge and Skills	22
Involvement in practice across the Trust	26

Foreword



Welcome to our Involvement Annual Report. We are excited to share this report which provides information on how we have worked in partnership with service user, carers, communities and staff to develop and improve services.

There have been a number of successful achievements over the last year, in particular the extensive consultation on acute maternity services, which we believe will allow us to continue providing the highest standard of inpatient maternity care and births at one, dedicated site, with a safer, more sustainable staffing model. Our consultation demonstrated the critical role our local communities have in responding to major health challenges and in helping to shape how services are delivered.

Over the next year we will continue to strengthen and improve the range of ways people can work together with the Trust and we are always keen to listen to suggestions on how to make this more accessible. We know that people share our ambition to continually improve services into the future.

Our intention is to demonstrate the difference you can really make, by being involved in shaping services. As the needs of our local communities and population change, we will continue to work together to establish how best to meet new challenges.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who has worked with us over the year: the service users, carers, communities and staff who have brought their fresh eyes, insights and challenge to our work.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Welsh".

Jennifer Welsh
Chief Executive

Foreword



I am passionate about having the best health and wellbeing for everyone in our communities, and this can only be achieved by putting people at the heart of the Trust's work. Over the years, I have worked with the Trust to build strong foundations for service user and carer involvement. Understanding what matters most to local communities is really important, particularly given the diverse rural and urban differences in the Trust area. Partnership working with the voluntary and community helps provide vital insight into groups across our communities so that our services are accessible and responsive to all.

For effective involvement, people need to feel supported and for their contribution to be valued, respected and have an impact. There are already excellent examples of service users, carers and communities working in partnership with the Trust. People with lived experience are working in clinical settings and joining in with collaborative projects but we need to build on this and create further opportunities for involvement. If you have experience of using our services, or care for someone who does, you can become involved in the Trust's work, have your voice heard and take part in joint working on a wide range of projects and activities. By using your experiences, enthusiasm and ideas you can bring a whole new point of view to the planning and delivery of those services.

Thelma Dillon
Trust Service User Representative

Background

Effective involvement is a priority outlined in the Department of Health's (DOH) Health and Wellbeing 2026 – Delivering Together Strategy. Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) has been a statutory requirement since 2009 and has been further enhanced by the DOH Co-Production Guidelines which were published on 2018.

PPI is the term used to describe the concept of involving people and local communities in the planning, commissioning, delivery and evaluation of health and social care services.

Patient and Client Experience (PCE) standards have been in place since 2009. Overall the outcome of PCE is to ensure the voices of the service user and carers, and their experience, results in change and improvement. Understanding patient experience is a key step in moving toward patient-centred care.

Our [Integrated Involvement Plan](#) sets out our vision, commitment and integrated approach to PCE, PPI and Co-production activities. Within Northern Trust, this includes Patient Experience Standards, Real Time Feedback and 10,000 More Voices, Personal and Public Involvement and Co-Production.

The creation of this central Involvement Team supports a consistent, coordinated approach to involvement.

Governance and Assurance

Governance and Assurance



Wendy Magowan
Director of Operations
chairs the Trust's
Engagement, Experience,
Equality and Employment
Group (Quad EG),
providing assurance to
Trust Board that we are
abiding to our statutory
duty to fully engage our
service users and carers.



Suzanne Pullins
Executive Director of
Nursing and User
Experience and
responsible for patient
and client experience
(PCE) including 10,000
More voices and Trust
implementation of the
online user feedback
platform of Care Opinion.



Neil Martin
Divisional Director of
Strategic Planning,
Performance and ICT
and responsible for
service user and carer
involvement, public
consultation and co-
production.



Glenn Houston
Non-Executive Director
continues to be the
Non-Executive
Involvement lead and
plays a key role in
embedding involvement
into the culture and
practice of the
organisation.



Alison Irwin
Head of Equality and
Trust lead for service
user and carer
involvement including
patient client
experience, personal
and public
involvement and co-
production.

Involvement Team

One of the main resources for enhancing service user involvement across the organisation is the **Involvement Team**, who provide support, advice and guidance to staff, along with training and support for service users, carers and the public as required.



Lynda Elliott,
Service User Involvement Co-Ordinator



Sarah Arthur,
Patient Client Experience Facilitator

Governance and Assurance

We have a range of governance, management and reporting mechanisms in place to support our involvement work. Our Engagement, Experience, Equality and Employment Group (Quad EG), chaired by the Director of Operations seeks assurance that the Trust is compliant with its statutory requirements. Membership includes all divisional directors, non-executive directors, Patient Client Council and a service user representative. The Quad EG is part of the first line of assurance within the Trust's Integrated Governance and Assurance Framework. The Quad EG reports directly to the Trust's Assurance and Improvement Group, then through to Trust Board. Quad EG meets quarterly and is provided with an update on involvement work across the Trust.

Trust Divisional Directors are responsible for ensuring appropriate service user involvement within the work of their Divisions. Trust Board has responsibility for ensuring that the organisation is compliant with PPI Legislation and PCE standards. The Non-Executive Directors ensure the Board acts in the best interests of service users, carers and the public and hold the Board to account by challenging its decisions and outcomes and ensuring due process is followed.

The Engagement Advisory Board has been established as an advisory body to ensure the Trust approaches engagement in a way that meets the needs and interests of all communities and to quality assure the Trust's approach to engagement throughout the lifecycle of service change projects. Members of the Engagement Advisory Board include service users and carers, selected following an expressions of interest, to represent the communities we serve. Each member has demonstrated links with local communities and support the Trust to engage in a meaningful way. We have 14 members on the Engagement Advisory Board and met four 4 times over the last year.

Monitoring

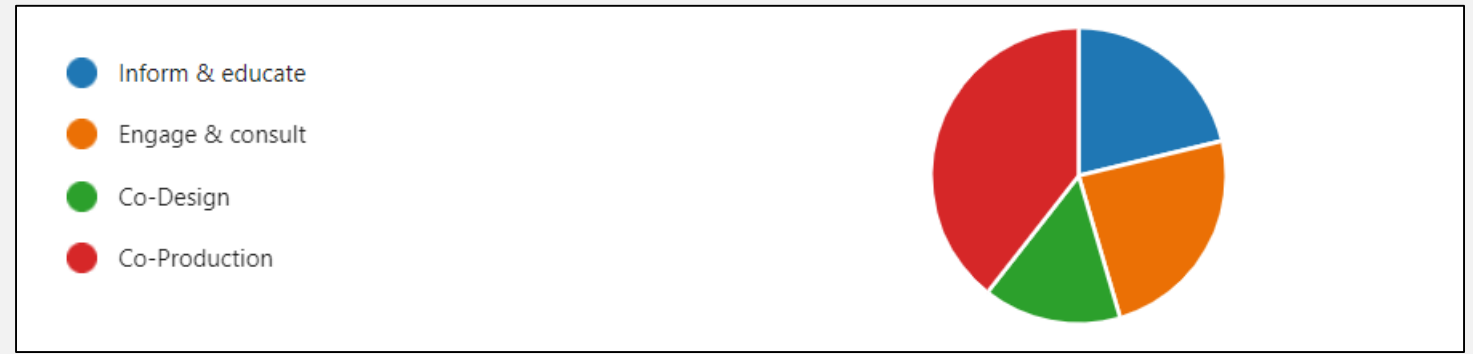
Monitoring

The Trust has been actively involved in the PHA Monitoring Task Group to co-design the bi-annual PPI monitoring process. The first PPI monitoring process was completed in September 2022. Our second submission was submitted on 19 April 2023.

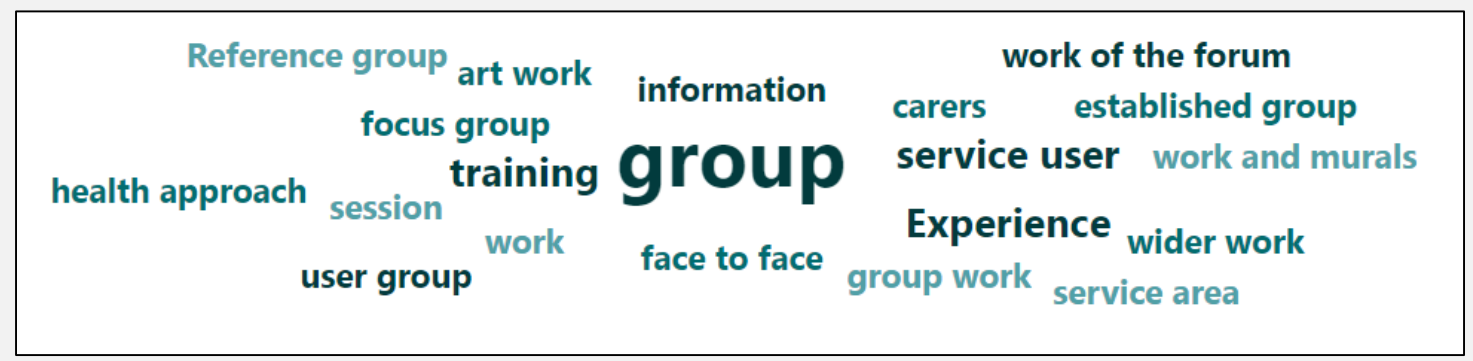
This monitoring data gives assurance that we are meeting our statutory obligation to involve service users and carers.



Level of involvement



Methods used to involve service users and carers

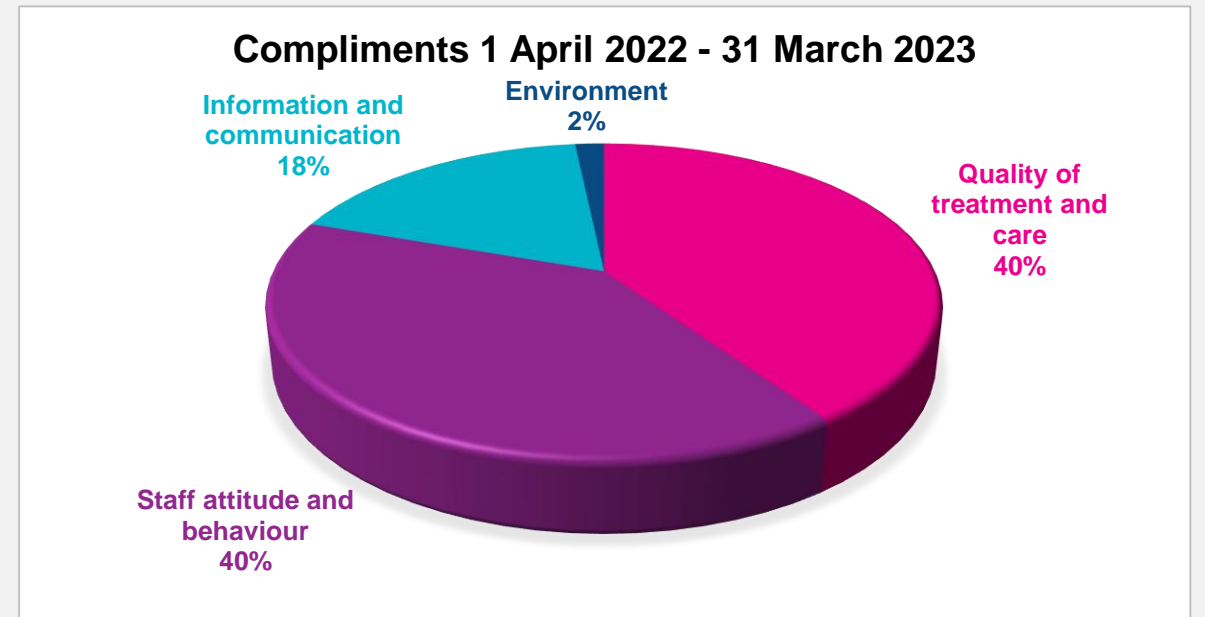
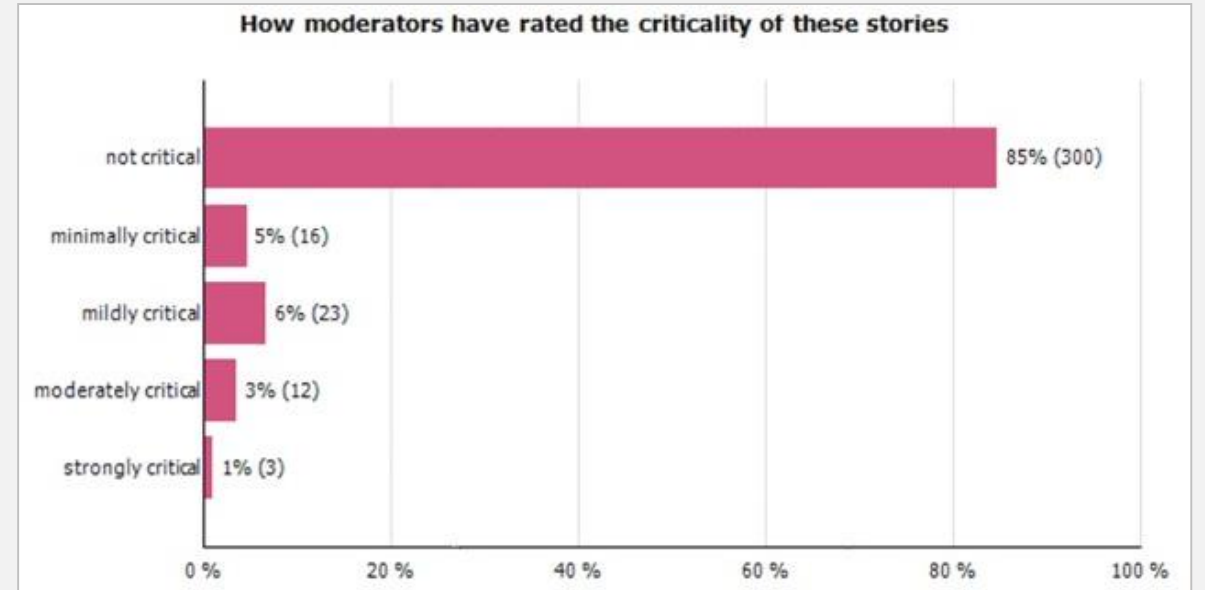


Monitoring

Over the past year Care Opinion has published 354 stories of experience of healthcare shared by patients, service users, their families and carers.

The Trust's commitment to Care Opinion is monitored by the PHA with the submission of monthly and quarterly reports. The Trust also ensures an accountability framework is submitted to the PHA annually.

These reports highlight the criticality of the stories, response timeframes, themes of what is good and what can be improved, as well as any planned changes resulting from stories.



Patient Client Experience

Service User Feedback

The Trust encourages complaints, enquiries, comments/suggestions and compliments and views them as a positive opportunity for learning and improving services. The total number of formal complaints received this year was 840 (including 112 follow on complaints). Services across the Trust receive many compliments; these can range from written letters and thank you cards, verbal feedback and donations to our Charitable Trust Funds in recognition of the service provided. This year the Chief Executive received a total of 3404 compliments.

Feedback from our service users, carers and members of the public/visitors using our services or facilities helps us to identify areas where high quality care is being provided, and where this is not the case we will make changes to improve service quality and safety.

Feedback can be given directly to the service involved either verbally or in writing or by sending your feedback directly to the Chief Executive. **Complaints, enquiries, comments/suggestions and compliments can be sent in writing, by email telephone or calling in person to Complaints/Service User Experience Office**, Northern Health and Social Care Trust, Bush House, 45 Bush Road, Antrim, Co Antrim, BT41 2QB , Tel: (028) 9442 4655 Email: user.feedback@northerntrust.hscni.net



10,000 More Voices



10,000 More Voices promotes meaningful engagement with patients, clients, service users, carers and their families. The method used to gather views focuses on the person's personal story. This form of engagement values the voice of the respondent, providing the opportunity to express what mattered most to them throughout their journey.

The Experience of Social Work project completed at the end of March 2023. We received 101 stories shared through the website, over the telephone and face to face. These stories reflect mixed experiences, this information is to be analysed at a Social Work Workshop in May 2023.

YOUR EXPERIENCE OF SOCIAL WORK

A Strategy for Social Work

Improving and Safeguarding Social Wellbeing in Northern Ireland

Share your experiences of social work services through our 10,000 More Voices project.

You can access the survey at www.10000morevoices.hscni.net or request a printed version and stamped addressed envelope by contacting us:

☎ **02895 362868**
✉ **10000morevoices@hscni.net**


SHARE YOUR STORY, SHAPE OUR SERVICE

The flyer features a central illustration of six diverse people (a woman in a wheelchair, a man, an older woman, a man, and a child) holding a sign with the '10,000 More Voices' logo. To the left is a circular diagram with the text 'A Strategy for Social Work' in the center, surrounded by the words 'Prevention', 'Support', 'Intervention', 'Protection', and 'Care'.

Care Opinion

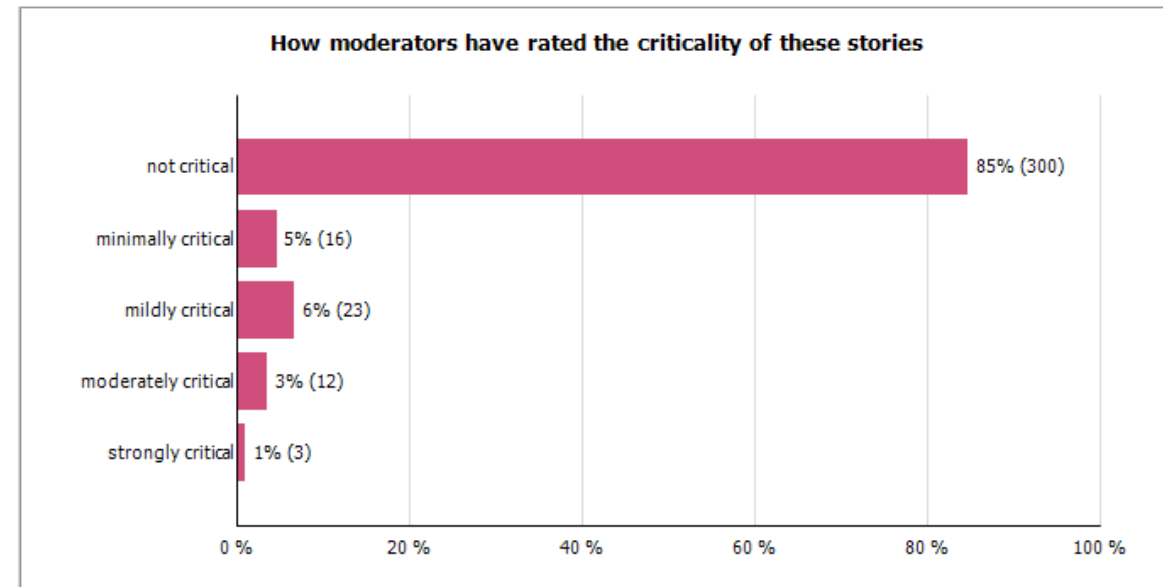
Care Opinion was launched in Northern Ireland in August 2020, providing a platform where patients, service users, families and carers can share their experiences of health and social care. The overarching aim of Care Opinion is to enable impactful engagement with patients and the public in a fully open and transparent way and drive sustainable and measurable service improvement.

This year:

 **354 stories have been told**

Overall 83% of stories were submitted online via the Care Opinion website, 8% in leaflet form, and 7% using the kiosk link and 1% over the phone.

Each story submitted through Care Opinion is assessed by a moderation team to identify the most negative statements contained within the story and apply an appropriate criticality score.



The majority of the stories (85%) published on Care Opinion rated their experience as 'not critical'. This positive feedback is shared with staff and provides both encouragement and motivation to continue to ensure a high standard of care. Stories rated as critical provide an opportunity for change and improvement.

During the year a small number of stories identified opportunities for learning and improvement. Services have used this information to plan and make change, such as:

Offering patients the opportunity to shower as part of their rehabilitation

Exploring the opportunity of further dementia training for staff in Ward C7 and of a Dementia Companion in Ward C7

Implementation of process to contact patients /update them regarding status of bed availability when waiting for bed for 'same day' admission to the gynae ward

Providing patient information in paper copy as well as email, when attending clinics

Reviewing patient's information letter and leaflet for Ultra Sound Scan

Opportunities and Support for Involvement



Involvement Network

Our Involvement Network has continued to grow. It is made up of over 300 service users, carers and representative organisations who work in partnership with the Trust to develop health and social care services. The Network is a key resource to help shape and design services, and contribute to the development of service information. Over the last year, members have received 69 involvement opportunities and 331 members have attended more than 38 engagement events. Our service users and carers have helped to shape and develop number of service improvements. We continue to advertise membership of our Involvement Network through our website and regularly on social media. In addition the Involvement Team regularly attend networking events to promote the Network. If you would like more information or to become a member of our Involvement Network, please contact InvolvingYou@northerntrust.hscni.net or phone (028) 2766 1453.

Service User Panels

Over the years the Trust has established and supported a number of service user panels in partnership with service users, carers and the community and voluntary sector. These partnerships ensure an effective network for on-going stakeholder involvement and coproduction in our work. Our Carer Pathway Steering Group and Disability Consultation Panel are both user led, chaired by a carer and service user. This year our Carer Pathway Steering Group developed a Carer Hub promotional video and the Disability Consultation Panel coproduced a disability equality training video for staff.



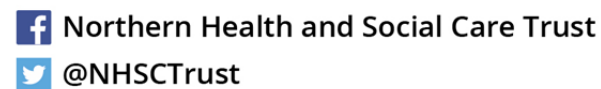
Support and Resources

The Trust is committed to providing training to make sure staff have the skills and expertise to involve service users and carers effectively. Our Involvement Team provides support, advice and guidance to staff, along with training and support for service users and carers as required. We have a range of resources available to support staff and raise awareness of involvement on our staffnet site and our website. This includes information for service users and carers on how to share their experiences and get involved. Engage is a regional website, which provides those with an interest in Involvement, including Health and Social Care (HSC) staff, Service Users, Carers and the Public with information, opportunities and resources in PPI, Co-Production and Partnership Working.

Get Digital

Tweet, message, post and comment; there are loads of ways you can connect with us. We continue to use our Facebook page and Twitter account to circulate any opportunities for involvement to over 35,000 people. We use YouTube as a platform to provide service users, carers and the public with a variety of information including informative videos and audio interviews.

You can follow us on Facebook and Twitter as follows:



Northern Health and Social Care Trust

@NHSCTrust

Knowledge and Skills

Knowledge and Skills

It is important that service users, carers and staff have the appropriate training and support to achieve effective involvement. Specialised training is delivered throughout the year and staff continue to be provided with the information and resources required to mainstream effective involvement activities.

Renewing our Vision

On 21 September we held a specialised training workshop with Trust staff leading on reform projects.

The aim of the workshop was to ensure that the leads have the knowledge and skills to involve staff, service users, carers and communities in their projects. We used part of the workshop to support each Renewing our Vision work stream to develop an involvement plan.

Engagement Advisory Board

On 1 November 2022 we held a half day in person workshop with the members of our Engagement Advisory Board (EAB). The aim of this workshop was to encourage the Engagement Advisory Board members to learn more about each other and start working on live engagement issues which the Trust's Senior Management Team prioritised for community engagement.

A very valuable and additional outcome from the workshop, was our conversations with members and hearing their suggestions to what support and information they felt they needed to be effective in their roles, such as providing EAB members with more detailed information about future Trust projects and reforms.

Knowledge and Skills

Responder Training

Care Opinion is an open and transparent online service user feedback system. Responder training equips staff with the knowledge and skills to provide a timely, meaningful response to feedback shared by the patient, service user, their family or carer. 49 members of staff completed Responder Training. All responses to feedback, whether positive or less positive, should be personal, empathetic and understanding. Dialogue between the service user and provider helps to build confidence and trustful relationships with the recognition that patient experience is a valued contributor to service improvement and change.

Plain English Training

Due to the popularity of this training last year we decided to run a few more sessions of our specialist Plain English training to help staff engage more effectively with service users and carers. This training provides knowledge of what Plain English is and why it is so important when communicating with service users and carers. The training is designed to help staff think about the language they use and how to simplify it when writing letters and reports. 26 members of staff completed this training.

Facilitation Training

To ensure our staff have the skills to facilitate and plan service user involvement we held four sessions of our specialist facilitation training. 94 members of staff completed this training. These sessions were designed to create a safe and interactive space, to provide guidance on facilitation tools and meeting designs that would work best in different situations. The sessions also looked at the use of technology to support facilitating discussions as we are still in a hybrid working situation with in person and online events.

Knowledge and Skills

Appreciative Inquiry Training

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is a unique engagement approach for stakeholder conversations. AI believes that positive change comes from harnessing the gifts and assets people, organisations and communities already have building on what's strong, not what's wrong.

We held a workshop to support staff to understand how to use Appreciative Inquiry (AI) concepts and tools as a model of engagement for real discussion and exploring change/improvement.

25 staff were trained on the practical facilitation techniques and tools of AI.

Involvement Training

The Trust is committed to providing training to make sure staff have the skills and expertise to involve service users and carers effectively. From April 2022 – March 2023 a total of 756 staff have taken part in our involvement training programme. We continue to raise awareness and promote involvement at every opportunity.

Citizen Space

Citizen Space is an online tool which we use to design questionnaires and surveys. It continues to be very popular as a method of engagement and feedback. 313 accounts have now been set up and staff have received the relevant training and support. Citizen Space was designed in collaboration with government, specifically for public sector use.

Engage

We continue to work in partnership with staff, service users and carers in the ongoing development of Engage to ensure there is a wide range of tools available to effectively involve service users and carers.

Engage is accessible by everyone to find out about involvement opportunities and training. Check out Engage at <http://engage.hscni.net>

Involvement in practice across the Trust

The following pages highlight some of the involvement projects carried out over the last year

Causeway Acute Ambulatory Hub

On 19 December 2022, service users and Medicine and Emergency Medicine staff got together to look at proposals to develop an Acute Ambulatory Hub on the Causeway Hospital site. This service would provide ambulatory care to suitable medical patients, helping them receive same day care and avoid admission to hospital. Overall, there was support for the ethos of ambulatory and same day care. It was suggested that GPs should access the service as soon as possible and that the service should quickly develop to manage more than 4-6 patients per day, which is the suggested pilot throughput. The service users highlighted the importance of effective communication, sharing some of their experiences. The emphasised that communication between staff and the patient needs to be clear. Moreover, information on how the service works also needs to be provided to the patient.

This session was extremely beneficial, highlighting what is important to service users in relation to this proposed service. The suggestions and guidance from service users will help design this service. This will include increasing throughput as quickly as possible, ensuring GP referral and the development of communication materials for service users.



Direct Assessment Unit Antrim

We have recently been developing communication materials for promoting the Direct Assessment Unit in Antrim Hospital. This promotional campaign explains how the DAU provides Same Day Acute Care and outlines the benefits of this. Service users who have been managed through this unit were engaged with to take part in filming. Hearing their experience and story has a powerful impact, helping to really convey the benefits of this service.



Phone First

A consultation survey was carried out in relation to the Phone First service. This was promoted on social media and ran for 5 weeks. 96 responses were received. The survey results have now been collated and work is already underway to ensure that the feedback from this consultation is utilised to inform future service development of Phone First.

Key feedback included that some service users were not aware Phone First existed, its purpose or its operational hours. Action taken to address this includes the development of a new Phone First poster and infographic. These materials will be used to promote use of the service through social media and display in Trust buildings.

A further piece of key feedback was that it would be beneficial to have face to face appointments available for service users that need to see a medic without attending the Emergency Department. As a response to this feedback and other factors we are developing a new role - a 'Phone First Doctor' will be based on the hospital sites.



Brain Injury Service

WELCOME TO BRAIN INJURY SERVICE



(VERSION 4)

#teamNORTH

16 members of Brain Injury Service - Service User Forum worked with staff to produce a virtual 2 session programme "Welcome to Brain Injury Service".

Service Users decided what information is important for those who are recently referred and are new in the brain injury rehabilitation journey.

This information includes

- common problems after brain injury
- understanding recovery
- goal setting
- impact on family and friends

The plan is to pilot the programme in 23/24

Carer Grants Governance Framework

This year, through the Carer Pathway Steering Group, we have worked in partnership with carers to examine how the Trust can make sure carer support grants reach more carers fairly. The Carer Pathway Steering Group is made up of informal, unpaid family carers and Trust staff with both the Chair and Deputy Chair being carers. A carer grant is one outcome that can be considered following a conversation at a carer assessment between a carer and their named worker. Grants are designed to promote carer well-being, encourage their personal responsibility in taking time to look after themselves, whether physically or socially or for an unmet need in the caring role.

A focus group of carers members of the Carer Pathway Steering Group was held to review the criteria for the grant process and to ensure that in developing a governance framework for the process that carers are supported effectively. Carers advised on the many situations of the caring role and applied this expert insight to the benefits of the grant and advising on support they really need.



Carer Hub promotional video

A video for the Carer Hub was co-developed to promote support available to informal, unpaid family carers. Working with the carer members of the Carer Pathway Steering Group it was agreed that an animation would be suitable to ensure privacy of the carers involved whilst using their stories and experiences for the characters. Carers shared their experience pieces of information on what caring is like, how you can feel and their different experiences of being a carer. The carer stories were included into the [animation](#) which was promoted during Carers Week.



Therapeutic Team for Looked After and Adopted Children (TT-LAAC)

The Therapeutic Team for Looked After and Adopted Children (TT-LAAC) is a multi-disciplinary service composed of: Psychology, Social Work, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Administration. TT-LAAC is a service provided by the Northern Health and Social Care Trust for Children Looked After and Adopted Children aged 0-18. TT-LAAC aims:

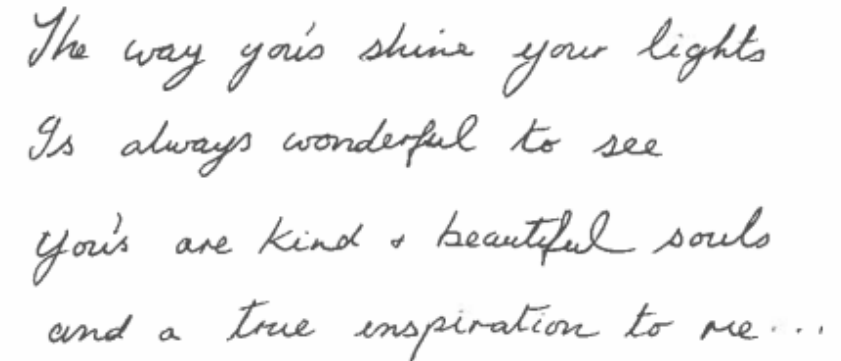
- To assist in reducing placement instability and disruption for children Looked After via fostering, kinship care and residential care and also children whom are adopted
- To promote the emotional and psychological development and wellbeing of these groups of children and young people and their care givers

In 2020, TT-LAAC completed a survey to identify the training needs of Foster Carers. This survey highlighted that Carers would like training to support them in attending to their own well-being and an opportunity to improve knowledge of theory and its practice. In light of these findings, in 2021 TT-LAAC began to re-offer the Foundations for Attachment (FFA) Groupwork Programme developed by the world-renowned, Kim Golding (2017) and informed by the Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP) model developed by Dan Hughes (2011).

The Foundations for Attachment Programme is a therapeutic parenting group for parents and carers who are parenting children who have relationship difficulties; especially children who have experienced attachment problems, trauma, loss and/or separation early in their life; or for parents who are having parenting challenges and who would benefit from help to emotionally connect with their children. It is a 6 session programme with reflective sessions provided post sessional programme. Child and Carer Social Workers attend feedback sessions to hear and offer reflections. With each group, we collect pre and post data to learn about service user experience of the programme. Feedback has been extremely positive: 41% increase in level of knowledge and understanding of therapeutic parenting; average rating of 9/10 for quality of programme and teaching effectiveness respectively; 100% effectiveness rating for group discussions. We also found that service users benefitted from being able to share experiences and build peer connections.

This is a quote written by a Grandfather who recently attended a FFA group.

TT-LAAC aim to continue to roll out this training on a cyclical basis.



The way you's shine your lights
Is always wonderful to see
you's are kind & beautiful souls
and a true inspiration to me...

Connect North: Your Pathway to Wellbeing

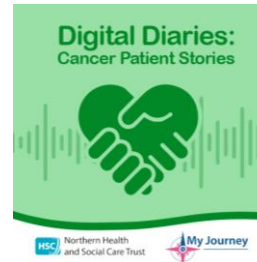
Service users continue to be actively involved in the design and development of the Connect North Service. Connect North (named by service users) is an integrated service for social prescribing, navigation and signposting in the Northern Trust area. Over the last year service users have been integral to:

- The concept, development and design of our logo
- The development of supportive resources (leaflet, calling card)
- Further developing the logo into a graphic to explain the service
- Testing a number of wellbeing assessment tools to inform the most appropriate choice for the Connect North service



Thank-you to everyone who has been involved: [Service User Appreciation Event - Watch Video](#)

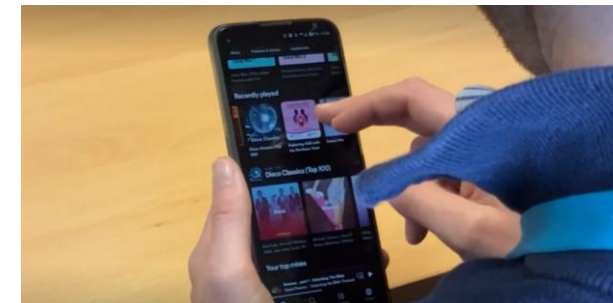
My Journey



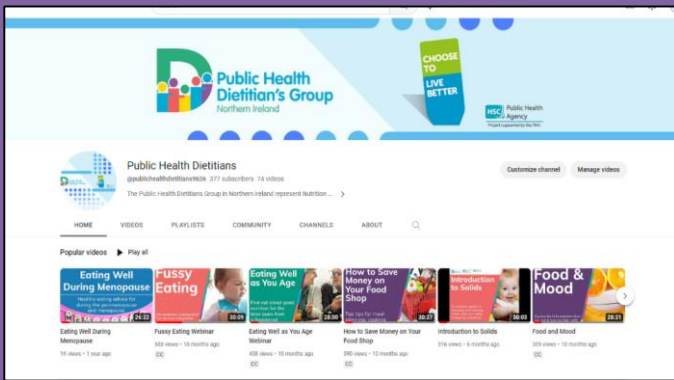
My Journey is an initiative set up in the Northern Trust to help services communicate with their patients and service users using podcasts, webinars and videos. *My Journey* is a pilot now in its second year. The aim of the project is to trial the use of these three forms of

digital media to make educational and clinical information available to patients and service users, in support of, or as an alternative to, existing care pathways for users' healthcare journey. Digital content will be promoted via social media, the Trust website and patient correspondence, as well as being linked to various platforms including Spotify and Vimeo.

More and more *My Journey* projects involving service users and carers. Completed projects by Cancer services [Cancer Services - Northern Health and Social Care Trust \(hscni.net\)](#) have enabled service users to tell their stories and we are currently working with Clinical Psychology, Community Social Work, Cancer & Stoma Care services to produce more content which tells the service user story from their perspective, helping to open conversations to share, learn and impact on the wellbeing of others.



Public Health Dietitians New YouTube Channel



The NHSCT Cook It! and Health Improvement Dietitians work as part of the regional Public Health Dietitians Group (PHDG) Northern Ireland. The new 'Public Health Dietitians' YouTube channel is a partnership between PHDG and the Public Health Agency, (PHA). A whole suite of nutrition webinars and healthy recipe videos are available on the YouTube channel. An online survey asked the public what nutrition topics interested them and webinars were subsequently developed on the most popular themes. This enabled the group to create relevant content which has gone on to be really well received.

As of May 2023, videos on the YouTube channel videos have nearly **10,000** views.

- 95% would recommend webinar to family and friends
- 93% learnt something new
- 99.7% found the webinars useful

I can't recommend the 'Introduction to Solids' webinar enough! It's full of practical advice to make the weaning process easier. As a first-time mum, it's reassuring to know that this is recorded by a dietitian.

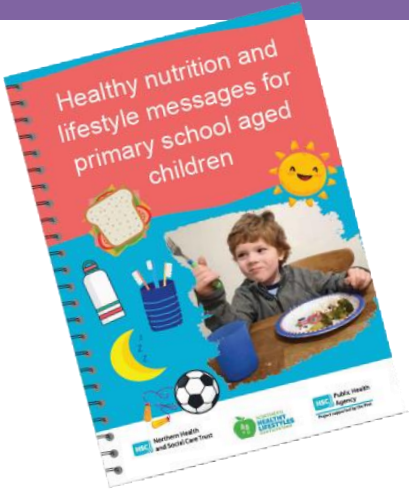
Service user feedback on the channel content was collected via the **Involvement Network**

"WOW... what an eclectic mix...something for everybody...brilliant to hear the videos produced locally."



Subscribe to "Public Health Dietitians" on YouTube at www.youtube.com/channel/UC_-f5E0ehqIR3z-cQdUvkCQ

Paediatric Health Improvement Dietitian's New Resource



Healthy nutrition and lifestyle messages for primary school aged children is a brand new resource created by the NHSCT Paediatric Health Improvement Dietitian, commissioned by PHA and funded by Northern Health Lifestyle Partnership. This resource has been developed in response to a need for having all the key messages in one easily accessible place.

An online survey was sent out to a wide variety of contacts, targeting those who work with 5-11 year olds. We received 26 responses from a wide range of job roles, from school nurses to physiotherapists, foster carers to teachers. They told us that GPs, childminders and other Allied Health Professionals would also benefit from this resource. The feedback we received on what type of resource would be best (handheld or online) and what topics should be included and this shaped the resource.

The involvement of service users will continue as we plan to pilot the resource, evaluate its use and make improvements before another print run. We hope this resource will ensure that accurate, evidence based nutrition and lifestyle messages will be more accessible to those working with primary aged children.



New Disability Equality online training resource

On World Quality Day, 10 November 2022, The Northern Trust launched a new Regional [Disability Equality Training Video](#) resource. The training content was coproduced and the video was co-delivered by people with disabilities – led by Tori Tennant, Chair of the Trust's Disability Consultation Panel. The training provides staff with the knowledge and confidence to identify access issues, to interact with people with a range of disabilities and to provide support where required. The video has been developed for use by Trust staff and can also be used by partner organisations as well as the community and voluntary sector.

“Think Family” has been developing regionally since 2008 with the introduction of “Think Child, Think Parent, Think Family” (SCIE 30) and the Think Family Champion model. Over the last year we have had a great opportunity to develop and shape “Think Family” locally in the Trust area and a key element of this has been collaboration and co-production.

Three Community Mental Health Teams have been working on scaling up use of the Think Family Social Work Assessment with families where parents experience mental ill health. These parents are amongst the most stigmatised individuals using mental health services. Research suggests that they are less likely to seek support from services and are less likely to remain in services, minimising the possibility for early intervention. We know the language used by services can exacerbate this stigma and negative experience of services. We have been collaborating with experts with lived experience of mental health, addictions, and statutory childcare services, to develop resources which engender the Trust values of working together, excellence, compassion, openness and honesty.



The project group developed a leaflet for parents using community mental health services, explaining the family focused approach and the social work assessment being offered within the team. This leaflet was co-produced with two parents with experience of mental ill health and services as well as a third partner with lived experience of having parents with mental ill health. After this, the leaflet was shared with the Trust’s Involvement Network for further feedback and another five voices responded from the Involvement Network with advice and guidance.

This feedback was invaluable, and we are indebted to everyone who contributed. The leaflet which was produced together was truly collaborative and the process has further stoked the enthusiasm of the group to continue working together on other projects, all seeking to embed family focused practice in mental health services and to improve outcomes for all family members.

Draft Equality Action Plan and Disability Action Plan

Our draft Equality Action Plan and Disability Action Plan was informed by engagement with a range of stakeholders including service users, carers, staff and trade unions representatives. Regional listening events were held to ensure that the measures in the plans are relevant and responsive. The purpose of our listening events was to reflect on progress, learn from diverse stakeholder perspectives and share ideas. We gathered feedback from people with a disability during an engagement event on 25th October 2022, facilitated by Disability Action. We have drafted our Plans based on the feedback from those affected.

We remain committed to working in partnership with disabled people and their representative organisations and look forward to working collaboratively on our actions during the lifetime of this five-year Plan.



The Northern Area Autism Forum

The Northern Area Autism Forum, chaired by the Trust's Director of Mental Health, Learning Disability and Community Well Being Services includes a wide range of organisations, departments and service users who work closely together to deliver the targets in the regional Interim Autism Strategy at local level.

The Northern Area Autism Reference Group are a group of parents/carers and autistic adults who are committed to encouraging best practice and continuous service improvement, and are involved in all 6 working groups attached to the forum.

Examples of work taken forward through the Northern Area Autism Forum working groups over the last year include the following.

- Development of three webinars for autistic individuals and/or their family members focused on support to get into work, support with career planning and support whilst in work
- Development of a guide for employers to support them to create a better understanding of autism and a better awareness of reasonable adjustments.
- Three online listening events were held in November and December 2022 to help better understand the issues facing carers in their caring role and what needed to change to improve carer support.
- Development of a guide for autistic individuals to support them with their housing needs and find a suitable home.



Working with you to Transform Acute Maternity Services



On 25 November 2022 we commenced a 14 week public consultation on the future of acute maternity services in the Northern Trust area. The consultation closed on 3 March 2023 with 273 responses. The consultation was an opportunity for interested parties and members of the public to comment on the clinically deliverable options being considered and to share experiences, knowledge or ideas that help to inform decision-making.

Engagement and discussion with internal stakeholders shaped our two clinically deliverable options for future services. Staff identified and highlighted some of the risks inherent in our current service and that has also shaped the case for change. Involving and listening to staff, particularly those in close contact with services users, are in a great position to know what is and is not working and to suggest ways forward.

We used several methods of engagement to encourage interested groups and individuals to provide feedback. To raise awareness of the consultation process we publicised the consultation documents and information about the listening events through our regional consultation list, made up of 445 organisations and representative groups and through 689 local groups and organisations including all Trust service user and carer groups. MLAs, MPs, Councils and GPs were also sent information about the consultation and listening events. The consultation was posted on the Trust's website and we regularly posted on social media. We held two virtual listening events on 18 January 2023 and 8 February 2023. We also held an in person public meeting in Portrush on 22 February.

Following the close of the consultation, after considerable review of all feedback received, Trust Board approved a recommendation that all hospital births should take place at Antrim Area Hospital.



Respiratory Health Seminar

Northern Trust in partnership with Inter Ethnic Forum and Stronger Together invites you to a

Respiratory Health Seminar

Wednesday 2 November 2022

10 am – 11 am via Zoom

Join us to find out how you can support Minority Ethnic communities to protect their lungs.

Speakers include:

Dr Wendy Anderson, Consultant Respiratory Medicine and Northern Ireland Respiratory Lead, 'How to protect your health this winter'

Dr Darshan H Kumar, Consultant and Clinical Lead Acute medicine, 'It's not always faulty genes'



To register please email info@strongertogether.ni.org



On Wednesday 2 November 2022 the Northern Trust, in partnership with Inter-Ethnic Forum and Stronger Together, held a virtual awareness seminar for ethnic diverse communities to engage with them on good respiratory health. The seminar was co-designed and based on the feedback received from service users and carers. The seminar also provided information on lung function and practical advice for healthy lungs.

Acknowledgement

We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to everyone who continues to be a champion of Involvement. Your commitment will help shape our future services.

Please contact the Involvement Team for further information on our work or if you wish to join our Involvement Network.

Tel: (028) 2766 1453

Email: InvolvingYou@northerntrust.hscni.net

