

Strengthening voice: mobilising patients, Healthwatch and the voluntary sector

Resource Guide

Drawing on Sutton's experience of commissioning Healthwatch to develop Patient Participation Groups

Developed by Sue Ritchie, Mutual Gain, on behalf of the South East Commissioning Support Unit

This resource guide will provide you with additional information on the theory and practice of working with the voluntary and community sector to build on the Case Study Master class that explored the example of Sutton CCG.

Commissioners across London explained that they didn't have time to research the variety of techniques, approaches and examples of meaningful engagement that they knew were 'out there'. They asked the CSU to compile a snapshot of material that covered the different aspects of their work, and support them in having a shared peer dialogue to explore and learn together. This document provides the pre- and post-reading for the master class session.

Background and Context for Master class

NHS England's 'Transforming Participation in Health and Care' Guidance (2013) has provided renewed focus on Patient and Public Participation for CCGs. The guidance provides clear and practical opportunities for healthcare commissioners to:

- Provide a wide range of opportunities for the public to influence commissioning decisions
- Achieve better outcomes for patients by listening and responding to their needs
- Offer a range of participation methods that encourage dialogues within diverse populations

To successfully achieve these aims, there is recognition that the voluntary and community sector (VCS) is well placed to deliver much of this through their long established relationships with the community. The Sutton CCG Case Study is one example of how patient and public participation through the voluntary sector has enabled the CCG to achieve core aims of Transforming Participation without direct delivery of the programme by its staff.

The following resources provide further information on key themes informing the Sutton Case Study:

- Working with the Voluntary and Community Sector
- Working with Volunteers - Best Practice
- Commissioning the Voluntary Sector
- Supporting Patient Voice
- Measuring the impact of participation
- Additional considerations:
 - Equality and Diversity
 - Making the business case to engage the voluntary sector
 - Managing your programme

As you look further into implementing your own approach, you might find materials that are particularly useful, or find practitioners who have worked with the VCS and/or Healthwatch in new and innovative ways to support the patient voice. When you do, please share with the CSU so that these resources can be updated.

Working with the Voluntary and Community Sector

NAVCA – National Council for Voluntary and Community Action

The national umbrella organisation for almost 200,000 support and development organisations in the UK. NAVCA provides clear policy guidance to its members and useful resources for commissioners, including information on:

- Social Value Act
- Voice and Influence
- Working with communities

NAVCA follows health and public policy agendas and can provide a useful temperature check on how new policies impact on the sector and areas of concern they pursue with Central government.

LVSC is a central resource for knowledge and policy for the London voluntary and community sector. They hold a list of all the Directors of CVS organisations across London. To find yours open the link on this page. You may also find it useful to access their databases of who's who in the NHS – local lists of contacts to help locate the right peers.

Every Borough has a VCS group to support local groups and organisations. As a key partner of local authorities, every CCG has an obligation to work with the voluntary sector and abide by the local Voluntary Sector Compact. A local Compact is an agreement between the local authority and its partners on how it will work with, and support, the voluntary sector. You can read the Sutton Compact here. You can also visit the Sutton Centre for the Voluntary Sector

Healthwatch

Every local borough (or rural area) has a local Healthwatch organisation. The role of Local Healthwatch is to be the consumer champion for patients: they seek and collect examples of patient experience, and provide opportunities for patient involvement. Healthwatch was established in 2013 (taking on the role of the former Local Involvement Networks).

Many Local Healthwatch organisations sit on Health and Well Being Boards, CCG Committees and Quality Review Groups. Your local Healthwatch is a statutory independent organisation that reports to Healthwatch England the national body that provides guidance and national influence for the local Healthwatch groups.

Local Healthwatch organisations are contracted by the local authority.

Read the articles...

Article published in the Guardian '[How the NHS Can Work with the Voluntary Sector](#)'

Regional Voices have produced a [Guide for Health and Well Being Boards Working with the voluntary and community sector](#)

The Voluntary Sector Studies Network at Bristol University produces journals and research on the sector

Watch the videos...

[How Healthwatch can make a difference to consumers of health and social care](#) – provides an overview of their role, and series of topic films including complaints, young people, service redesign and personal responsibility.

[Patient Stories](#) are a collection of personalised individual patient experiences that are useful for provoking debate and use in developed PPGS and PRGs.

NAVCA has [a video channel](#) that has limited films of their conferences

Working with Volunteers

Those who can, do. Those who can do more, volunteer.

~Author Unknown

The Institute for Volunteering Research provides national evidence, research, guidance and statistics on volunteers. There are useful resources to support commissioners, including barriers to volunteering and volunteer management. Most local boroughs and areas will have a Volunteer Centre. Generally, these organisations will provide best practice advice, volunteer recruitment and management for local authorities.

The Sutton Volunteer Centre has useful information on Time Banks and services to support your volunteer needs.

Watch the videos...

- Time Banks – video from Sutton Shares
- Trustees of Sutton Volunteer Centre
- Celebrating Volunteers Week 2013 – Sutton Volunteer Centre

There are a number of approaches to paying Volunteer expenses – both Involve and NAVCA can provide you with advice; but also look at your own internal policies. You might also want to watch the following film from **Richmond** experience: <http://vimeo.com/112078851>

Commissioning the Voluntary Sector

The National Council of Voluntary Organisations provides useful guides for community organisations on Commissioning. Their guide to Commissioning and Procurement can be read here.

It also produces a Guide to Commissioning for Maximum Value, which brings together an outline of Social Return on Investment (SROI) and the Social Value Act.

The Nuffield Trust has produced a report on the Role of the Voluntary Sector in providing Commissioning Support. The Report identifies the opportunities and challenges in commissioning the voluntary sector and gives useful advice for CCGs, CSUs and NHSE on how the VCS role can be better defined.

The Kings Fund has a Commissioning Reading Room – packed full of reading resources and links to useful information for commissioners

Watch the video...

The Centre for Social Justice discusses the Voluntary Sector in its Breakthrough Britain 2015 programme.

The Rainbow Haven in Manchester has produced a video of service providers and service users talking about 'What happens when voluntary groups are listened to'

The Voluntary Sector role in Commissioning is explained by a service provider to a service user from the Refugee Council

We are the Champions is a video of mental health service user involvement champions talking about their role and impact of involvement in shaping their service.

Supporting the Patient Voice

Patient Participation Groups are directly commissioned by NHS England's Primary Care Contract with GP Practices. A useful FAQ has been produced by the British Medical Association.

The National Association for Patient Participation provides guidance and useful information on developing patient voice through PPGs. Resources and videos available with detailed information for member organisations.

The NHS England Patient Online programme promote multiple channel access for patients, focussed on frontline service delivery – but gives an indication of the digital growth in primary care.

Read the articles...

Transforming Participation was preceded by Everyone Counts; Planning for Patients which adds some technical commissioning context to the patient public participation agenda.

Involve has a significant resource and evidence database that is searchable through their website. Funded by the the **National Institute for Health Research** (NIHR) to support public involvement in NHS, public health and social care research.

The Kings Fund Patient Voice and power in the new NHS Conference presentation and documents provide analytical views on how participation is integral to transformation.

Watch the videos...

Patients in NHS Nottingham West CCG talk about the importance of patient involvement at the local and national level.

How Patients are helping Doctors is part of a series of films from the National Patient Association that provides practical guidance from perspectives of patients and clinicians.

Volunteering England has a selection of videos on Volunteers and the Law, Employment Rights and DBS Checks

Measuring the impact of participation

The Kings Fund and Picker Institute (Europe) distributed a research paper in 2010, The quality of patient engagement and involvement in primary care, that reviewed different types of involvement in primary care, including service redesign and early thinking on shared decision making. On page 18 you will find a useful list of measurement questionnaires that can be referred to for local adaptation. These measurement tools pre date the more common approach of today with widespread use the Patient Activation Measures (PAM) – this licensed product is available at a cost of around £10,000 to undertake 2000 PAM scores in a year.

Read the Blogs from the Health Foundation – Measuring the impact of patient engagement is hard; but we must do it

The National Institute for Health Research has a number of annual event publications from 2009 onwards, from its work across northwest London.

Watch the videos...

A Canadian perspective can be seen in the film 'All aboard for patient engagement; a resource kit for patients, leaders and providers'.

The NHS Networks film, 'No engagement, no CCG' provides the socio political reasons for patient and public engagement. A good range of patients, managers, GPs and other specialist clinicians make the case for transforming participation.

Not everything that can be counted counts.

Not everything that counts can be counted.

William Bruce Cameron

Additional Considerations

Equality and Diversity

Before replicating this programme, you will need to consider and include the equalities and health inequalities needs of your borough or area. Much has been written about barriers to participation, particularly among groups known not to engage in traditional methods. The Consultation Institute offers a Training Course, Equalities Now that addresses equalities and our legal obligations within engagement. There are many publications about accessing seldom heard groups – we'd recommend that you consider 'snowballing' as a recruitment methodology in this type of programme and to make sure you consider a range of appropriate engagement methods available to you or the providers your commission and work in partnership with.

You will also need to ensure that there are steps in place to meet additional needs – such as communication and access for individuals. Healthcare Standards are being introduced in Wales to ensure that the communication needs of hearing and visually impaired patients and the public needs are met by health and care services. There are also discussions taking place for such standards in England.

The Equality Delivery System (EDS) is an NHS England tool first developed by the Department of Health in 2011. In November 2013, a refreshed and streamlined 'EDS2' was formally launched.

The EDS2 is an assessment framework which allows NHS commissioning and provider organisations to:

- Understand their performance against equality and diversity standards
- Collect robust evidence and good practice examples to inform service and workforce developments
- Support the development of accessible and equitable services, which promote higher levels of patient experience
- Develop patient and public and staff engagement mechanisms, and utilise the patient voice in service improvements
- Supports the reduction of health inequalities and positive outcomes for protected groups
- Demonstrates compliance and mainstreaming around the Equality Act 2010

The four Goals of the EDS:



The nine steps used to implement the EDS are:

1. Governance and partnership working
2. Identify local interests
3. Assemble evidence
4. Agree roles with the local authority
5. Analyse performance
6. Agree grades jointly
7. Prepare equality objectives
8. Integrate equality objectives in mainstream business planning
9. Publish grades and equality objectives

Making the Case – the business case

As described earlier, measuring the value of engagement is difficult and often based on evidence not easily accepted by finance teams. Social Return on Investment Figures can be found to support your case. This [Cabinet Office paper](#), SROI for Commissioning has a very useful bibliography that can provide further evidence to strengthen your business case to gain funds to replicate this programme. Training courses in SROI are available through [Social Value UK](#).

Managing your programme

Some Voluntary and Community Organisations operate with low numbers of staff and minimal infrastructure, systems and support. This can make it challenging for them to translate what they are very good at doing with patients and the public, into a health policy dialogue. We recommend that you:

- spend adequate time briefing and preparing organisations to work with you
- show them examples of what good looks like
- explore opportunities to support them
- seek opportunities for groups to work together
- be clear on reporting and measurement
- maintain ongoing contact with them
- set realistic goals and timeframes for them to succeed
- invest in the programme – so that voluntary and community groups can manage realistic budgets – and are not consuming costs on your behalf
- encourage their wider participation in the health and care economy

You can read more about successful partnership working with the voluntary sector in the Kings Fund Publication [‘Working Together to deliver the Mandate’, 2013](#)

Appendix: Sutton CVS/Healthwatch Toolkit Contents Page

For more information on this toolkit please contact prg@suttoncvs.org.uk

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