

03

Bite-size guides to patient  
and public participation

# Planning for participation

Publications gateway reference: 00988

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# Why planning for participation?

The NHS must be more responsive to the needs and wishes of the public, all of whom will use its services at some point in their lives. We need to ensure that public, patient and carer voices are at the centre of our healthcare services, from planning to delivery. Every level of our commissioning system will be informed by listening to those who use and care about our services.

These guides aim to support clinical commissioning groups and others to plan and deliver good patient and public participation. We should work jointly with communities to improve our NHS together.

This 'Bite-size guide' sets out some principles and practical steps you can take to ensure you build participation into your programme plans from the outset. It should be read in conjunction with Bite-size guide 4: Budgeting for participation.

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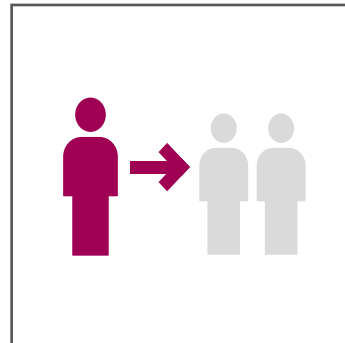
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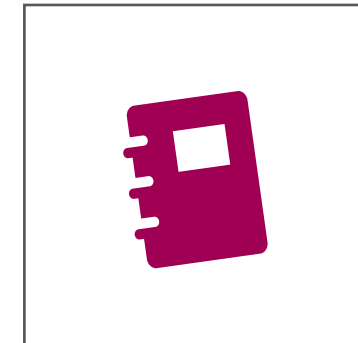
# Core principles



Good public and patient participation enables the design and delivery of services and programmes that are grounded in reality, and better reflect peoples' needs.



Meaningful public and patient participation builds trust, creates a partnership approach, and leads to improved planning and early identification – and addressing – of potential problems.



Participation activities should be embedded in your programme, including timescales and milestones for delivery, with sufficient time to plan and deliver robust participation approaches.

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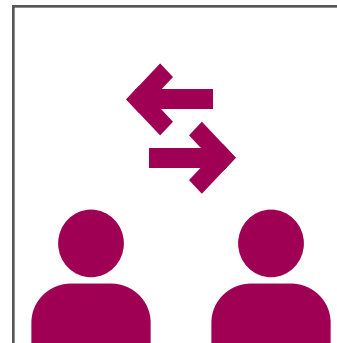
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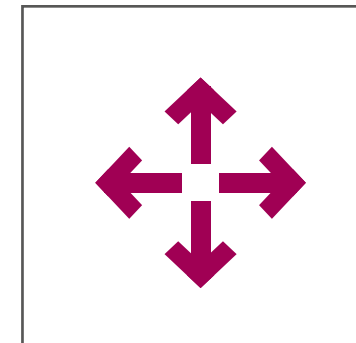
### Core principles



Understand who will be affected by your programme of work: these are the communities and individuals you should engage with.



Those who experience the greatest disadvantage and exclusion often experience the poorest health outcomes, and are more vulnerable. They are often missed in mainstream participation activities. It is vital to work proactively with these communities.



Encourage inclusive participation by making use of multiple and diverse approaches, and learn from previous participation activities.

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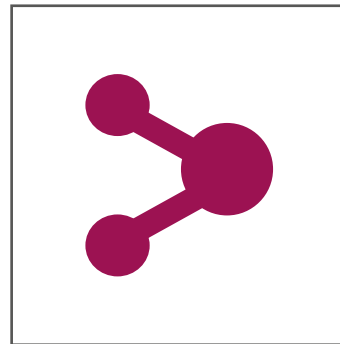
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## Core principles



Make use of existing networks to build on community strengths and avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and demand placed on those involved.



Good engagement seeks and acts on people's views and ideas, but also feeds back how things have changed as a result of participation.

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# Practical Steps

1. Use the attached [Planning for Participation prompt sheet](#) and the [Participation planning template](#) to help plan your engagement work.
2. **Map out all of your key stakeholders, and think through how you will make contact and work with them.** Identify your core stakeholders, and develop your participation plan jointly with them.
3. **Discuss your participation plans with voluntary sector organisations – often they can help you to access existing patient and public networks, especially more marginalised groups.**
4. **Bite-size guide 4: Budgeting for participation sets out the budgeting principles for embedding patient and public voice (PPV).** Consider i. events/ workshops; ii. recruiting PPV members and their support needs; iii. providing accessible information; v. resources to support good communication.

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## Practical steps

- 5. If you are going to undertake a formal consultation, plan in advance for wide-reaching and effective participation.** Allow for a pre-consultation phase to alert stakeholders to the forthcoming consultation; 12 weeks of formal consultation; and publishing a feedback report outlining the consultation responses and resulting changes.
- 6. Consider at the start how you will report the outcomes of participation activity to the public.** This might include a 'You said, we did' report. Acknowledge people's contributions (e.g. 'thank you' letter) and explain how their contribution has made a difference.

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# The ‘Ladder of engagement’

The ‘Ladder of engagement’<sup>1</sup> is a framework for understanding different forms and degrees of patient and public participation. It can be useful to consider when planning the types of engagement required for different programmes of work.

<b>Devolving</b>	Placing decision-making in the hands of the community and individuals. For example, Personal Health Budgets or a community development approach.
<b>Collaborating</b>	Working in partnership with communities and patients in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives, and the identification of the preferred solution.
<b>Involving</b>	Working directly with communities and patients to ensure that concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered. For example, partnership boards, reference groups, and service users participating in policy groups
<b>Consulting</b>	Obtaining community and individual feedback on analysis, alternatives and / or decisions. For example, surveys, door knocking, citizens’ panels and focus groups.
<b>Informing</b>	Providing communities and individuals with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding problems, alternatives, opportunities, solutions. For example, websites, newsletters and press releases.

<sup>1</sup> Sherry R. Arnstein, ‘A ladder of citizen participation’, *Journal of American Planning Association*, Vol. 35, No 4, July 1969, pp. 216 - 224.



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## Want to Learn More?

[Transforming participation in health and care](#) (NHS England, 2013) is the statutory guidance for commissioners on this subject. It includes a range of resources and case studies demonstrating good practice.

The government's consultation principles and guidance can be found [here](#).

NHS Networks' [Smart guides to engagement](#) series provides straightforward advice on all aspects of patient and public engagement, in an easily digested format. Their [Commissioning zone: working with patients and public](#) offers links to resources and good practice.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission website includes a range of useful [advice and guidance](#).

The [Engagement cycle](#) is an online resource to help commissioners undertake meaningful patient and public engagement, for maximum impact, hosted by InHealth and the Centre for Patient Leadership.

The Equality Delivery System for the NHS – EDS2, is a facilitative tool that helps NHS organisations to improve their equality performance, in full collaboration with their patients, communities and staff. More information about the Equality Delivery System can be found [here](#).

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[Compact Voice](#) offers a range of useful resources and voluntary sector information.

[Voluntary sector health and care: strategic partners portal](#) is a source of news, events and resources for and about the sector.

[Planning and delivering service changes for patients](#) is a good practice guide for commissioners on the development of proposals for major service changes and reconfigurations.

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## Other Bite-Size Guides

Click on the links below to download each of our '[bite-size guides](#)' to participation. Additional guides are in development.

[Bite-size guide 1 – Principles for Participation in Commissioning](#)

[Bite-size guide 2 – Governance for Participation](#)

[Bite-size guide 3 – Planning for Participation](#)

[Bite-size guide 4 – Budgeting for Participation](#)

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NHS England's series of 'Bite-size guides' aims to help colleagues plan and deliver the best possible patient and public participation, in line with Transforming Participation in Health and Care.

For further information, please contact [england.nhs.participation@nhs.net](mailto:england.nhs.participation@nhs.net)

***Produced by the Public Participation team at NHS England.***