



## Volume 1: **What Is Engagement?**

# Introduction

Engagement is the process of reaching out to people—service users, staff, and partners—to make sure they can give their feedback, thoughts, and ideas. The Health and Social Care Partnership is legally required to have clear, accessible engagement routes in place. This series of guides aims to support engagement with communities specifically, but the principles can equally be applied to engagement with staff or partner organisations.

Community engagement works best where there is already an element of ongoing dialogue with service users, carers, communities and staff. Building positive relationships doesn't happen quickly, trust is built up and strengthened over time.

There are certain principles (below) for all our engagement, to make sure we're giving people the best possible chance to have their voice heard.



# Key Guidance & Legislation

## CEL4 (2010)

- Relevant policy to involve the public in service change.
- Decision-making process for major service change.
- Independent scrutiny and the role of the SHC.

## The Patients Rights Act

- Supporting patients to be more involved in their health.
- Acknowledging the important role of carers
- NHS staff should be treated with dignity, have their views valued, and be supported in their jobs.

## The General Equality Duty

- Countering discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- Improving equal opportunities
- Fostering good relationships between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't

## National Standards for Community Engagement

- Outlining the guiding principles of engagement for public organisations
- Commitment to a common framework of engagement.

## CEL8 (2012)

- Supporting NHS bodies and healthcare providers with feedback, comments, concerns, and complaints.
- Developing a culture that values and listens to users, making people comfortable expressing their views without fear of reprisal.

# The Engagement Framework

The Argyll & Bute HSCP Engagement Framework was adopted formally in March 2019. This framework highlights our commitment to engagement, particularly around changes related to the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan.

A key feature of the Framework is the need for us to be clear on what we intend with our engagement. There are five levels of engagement—**Inform**, **Consult**, **Involve**, **Collaborate**, and **Empower**—which are used for different projects. The meaning of these stages is outlined on the next page

The focus of the Framework is to make sure engagement in Argyll and Bute is meaningful, structured, fair, user-friendly, and responsive.

Engagement needs to be closely linked to quality improvement and service change. This means it should be part of every level of planning, and that it should be consistently recorded, supported, and acted on.

We have also committed to a You Said, We Did approach, which means that when feedback is given and changes result from it, we make the link clear to the public.

## **There are three key reasons to engage:**

- Identifying health and care needs
- Influencing and identifying priorities
- Shaping service improvements or changes

# inform

Giving information out to help people understand the situation or problem.

People's suggestions and opinions are not collected at this level.



# consult

Asking people for feedback, listening to concerns and hopes.

Data informs decisions made at other levels of the organisation.



# involve

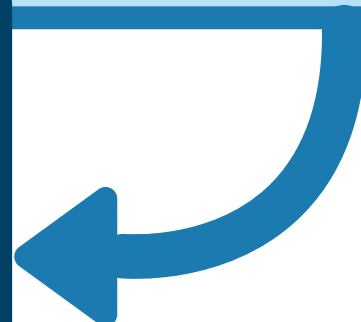
Engaging people all through the process, including responses directly in decisions.

People involved get feedback on how their input impacts services.



# collaborate

Working in partnership with people to develop new ideas and solutions.



# empower

Working with people to coproduce a decision.

This can only be done with people/groups with a formal HSCP role.

# Engagement Structures

## Locality Planning Group

Four Locality Groups - which have representatives for carers, service users, and the third sector - are held regularly in:

- Cowal and Bute
- Helensburgh & Lomond
- Mid-Argyll, Kintyre, and Islay
- Oban, Lorn, and the Isles

## Care Opinion

A website where anyone can anonymously share their stories and experiences of health and social care. The website is monitored by the organisation and gives service providers an opportunity to respond publicly to experiences.

[www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk)

## Community Conversation Cafés

Informal public meetings giving an opportunity for the public to speak directly to service providers.

Cafés are held four times annually in:

- Cowal
- Bute
- Helensburgh & Lomond
- Mid-Argyll
- Kintyre
- Islay & Jura
- Oban & Lorn
- The Islands

## Health & Wellbeing Network

A network of volunteers and groups involved in health and social care.

There are 8 networks in Argyll and Bute.

## Integration Joint Board

The core governance and oversight group of the HSCP, also known as the IJB, has two carer representatives, two service user representatives, and staff and partner representatives.

# Major Service Change

There are additional regulations on the handling of anything which is deemed to be a “major service change”. Major changes are subject to higher-level scrutiny, require a public consultation, and are ultimately the responsibility of the Scottish Government to decide on.

The Scottish Health Council has developed a template for completion which should be used to determine whether a service change is considered major or not.

To determine whether this might be necessary, consider how the proposed change may relate to:

**Impact on service users**

**Public/political concern**

**Changes to emergency or unscheduled care**

**Reduced accessibility**

**Policy**

**Financial effects**

**Related changes**

**Impact on other services**

The Scottish Health Council has a dedicated Service Change Team who can provide advice on using the guidance and completing the template.

Contact the Team

Tel: 0141 429 7545

Website: [www.scottishhealthcouncil.org](http://www.scottishhealthcouncil.org)



## Engagement Guides

**1: What Is Engagement?**

**2: Planning Engagement**

**3: Access and Equality**

**4: Reviewing Engagement**

If you need large print or another format, let us know:  
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