

**August 2016**

## Health and public engagement: an overview

*“STPs will need to be developed with, and based upon, the needs of local patients and communities... We cannot develop care integrated around the needs of patients and users without understanding what our communities want. That is why we are asking for robust local plans for engagement as part of the STP process.”* [NHS England, 2016<sup>1</sup>](#)

NHS England’s advice on Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) makes it clear that a debate with the public must be at the heart of the process. But anyone who has had a go at public engagement will know that it is more easily said than done - especially when the discussion is about potentially large scale service changes.

This overview is for commissioners, patient experience leads, local Healthwatch and others aiming to engage the public in NHS planning and service change. Some important points to note are as follows...

- People involved in Sustainability and Transformation Plans should, first and foremost, have regard to NHS England’s guidance<sup>2</sup>, along with any accompanying local guidance<sup>3</sup>. This document does not in any way replace official guidance.
- The documents listed below are not specific to Sustainability and Transformation Plans. They cover public engagement in health and social care from various angles, as explained in our short synopses. We have picked them because we believe that they could be helpful to people organising public engagement in STPs.
- Most of the documents listed below are recommendations for good practice, rather than instructions - whether for STPs or any other NHS initiatives where

public engagement is sought. The exception would be the guidance on legal requirements - but we strongly recommend that anyone wanting clarification on the legalities of public engagement and consultation should seek their own legal advice and should not rely on this summary document.

- Finally, the guidance is not exhaustive - we have tried to cover a number of bases, while keeping this document

relatively concise. We have stuck mainly to documents published within the last two to three years, but have included some older documents that seem to us to still have some relevance. For wider ranging guidance on public engagement in health and social care, you can subscribe to the Patient Experience Library and take full advantage of the library's extensive content and powerful search functionality.

# Principles and practicalities for public engagement in health and care

**Please note:** All publications mentioned below are accessible via the [Patient Experience Library](#) or directly from the relevant websites.



Six principles for engaging people and communities: Definitions, evaluation and measurement.

Six principles for engaging people and communities: Putting them into practice.

PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES BOARD, WITH NATIONAL VOICES, JUNE 2016

These two companion documents are closely linked to the proposed new relationship with people and communities set out in the NHS Five Year Forward View. People writing engagement strategies linked to STPs might want to draw on the Measures of Success set out in “Definitions, evaluation and measurement”.



To guide implementation of engagement strategies, “Putting them into practice” offers lists of the types of interventions that might be appropriate, with prompts for the kinds of questions to ask, and very concise case studies to illustrate tried and tested approaches



Choosing and Buying Services Together: A framework for good practice and a step-by-step guide to Patient and Public Engagement in Commissioning

WESSEX COMMUNITY VOICE, MAY 2015

A handy guide showing how to translate commissioning jargon into analogies that may help the general public to understand complex processes. Contains some good checklists, including Patient and Public Engagement Principles, Methods and Techniques for Engagement, and Supporting Patient and Carer Representatives.



## Smart Guides to Engagement

NHS NETWORKS 2012-14

The Smart Guides series offers useful notes on fifteen different engagement topics. They were published a little while ago, so some are starting to go out of date. But they are worth a quick browse, and some of the hints and tips are still relevant.



## Bite-size guides to support patient and public participation in the NHS

NHS ENGLAND 2014

Another set of brief guidance notes - this one covering topics such as governance, planning and budgeting. Could be helpful for people writing engagement strategies.



## Involvement Cost calculator

INVOLVE/NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH RESEARCH (ONLINE TOOL, UNDATED)

This on-line tool was designed to support budgeting for public involvement in research studies. But it could be adapted for public involvement in consultations around service change. An “Add Your Own Item” button means that you can customise the calculator to your own requirements.



## National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2014) Community engagement to improve health. LGB16. Manchester: NICE

This guidance was written largely with Health and Wellbeing Boards in mind. It gives an informative rationale for the strategic value of public engagement, as well as covering legal angles, the policy context and equality issues. There are plenty of hyperlinks to take you through to further detail if you want it. Have a look at this if you are needing to explain to local authority councillors, NHS Trust governors etc why they should be supporting public engagement.

# Engaging with specific communities and/or service users

There is a wealth of literature on equality and diversity in public engagement, and on hearing from “seldom heard” groups. Here we have picked out just a few publications that offer guidance that is harder to come by, or which describe novel approaches.



## Public engagement, not just about the public

INVOLVE, APRIL 2014

This document starts with the statement that “The engagement of the public is just one aspect of effective public engagement; the commitment and support of government officials and relevant stakeholder groups are also critically important to its long-term success.” A helpful reminder that engagement is not just a one-way street, but a multi-lateral process.



## Service user involvement, A guide for drug and alcohol commissioners, providers and service users

PUBLIC HEALTH ENGLAND, 2015

## Men’s Outreach: Giving seldom heard men a voice on local health and social care

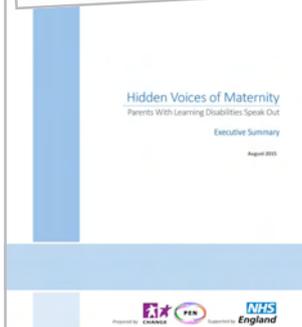
HEALTHWATCH BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN, MAY 2016



## Hidden Voices of Maternity, Parents With Learning Disabilities Speak Out

PATIENT EXPERIENCE NETWORK & CHANGE PEOPLE FUNDED BY NHS ENGLAND, AUGUST 2015

These reports look at types of service users that are less often considered in case studies and “how to” guides. These are helpful reference points for people considering more closely targeted types of engagement.





## Commissioning for an improved patient experience for children and young people

FUNDED BY NHS ENGLAND, FEBRUARY 2015

There is plenty of literature on youth engagement. But this one is particularly concise - and it comes from NHS England. Worth a look.



## This is me! Using the arts to engage with older people

HEALTHWATCH WILTSHIRE (IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE WILTSHIRE AND SWINDON USERS' NETWORK AND ELEVATE), DECEMBER 2015

Public engagement does not just mean public meetings. This write-up describes an approach that used tea parties, skilled artists and film to draw out people's views in ways that might not have worked in more conventional settings.



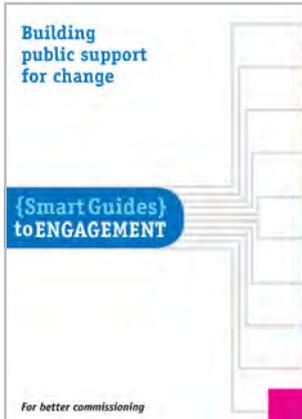
## Social media: building community engagement

LOCALITY (UNDATED)

As well as considering communities of place and communities of interest, today's engagement plans also need to address online communities. This slide presentation offers a useful overview - although in the fast moving world of social media, some aspects may already have changed.

# “Difficult decisions” and legal issues

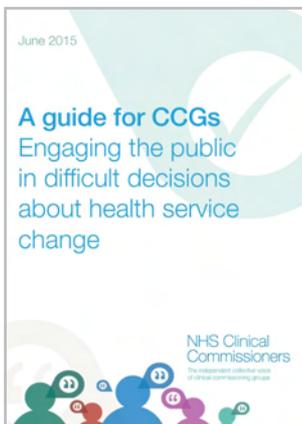
As stated previously, we strongly recommend that anyone wanting clarification on the legalities of public engagement and consultation should seek their own legal advice.



## Building public support for change

SMART GUIDES TO ENGAGEMENT FOR BETTER COMMISSIONING, 2012

“Traditional public consultation is not an effective way to achieve consensus about change” according to this guidance note. It goes on to say that “What appears to health professionals as a well-evidenced case for change can be regarded with suspicion or hostility by people in the community and those who use services”. Much of this document is about how CCGs need to get their own house in order before trying to build support among the general public.



## A guide for CCGs. Engaging the public in difficult decisions about health service change

NHS CLINICAL COMMISSIONERS, JUNE 2015

This publication draws on three real-life case studies in “difficult decisions”, before setting out some valuable “top tips” on getting service redesign right.



## Transforming Participation in Health and Care

NHS ENGLAND SEPTEMBER 2013

Official guidance on how to involve the public in commissioning processes and decisions. Covers legal duties, the policy context, and measuring participation. Look out for a revised version scheduled for later in 2016.



## Reconfiguring services, when must NHS bodies consult the public? How do they go about doing it? And how can they protect themselves from legal challenge?

PHILIP GREY, MILLS & REEVE, OCTOBER 2013

The authors state that “Service changes are always likely to be controversial and even the best run consultation will not prevent that. Social media can quickly whip up a storm and local politicians often find there are votes in proclaiming their outrage about proposed changes.” The document “draws out the central principles from the case law and from published guidance, setting out the ground rules for a lawful consultation and pointing out the ‘elephant traps’ to avoid.”

# About the Patient Experience Library

The Patient Experience Library offers a comprehensive overview of the UK's collective intelligence on patient experience. We're here to make it easy for people to get a patient's-eye view of service quality, and to help people understand the principles and practice of patient and public involvement.

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- 1 NHS England: FAQs on Sustainability and Transformation Plans. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/futurenhs/deliver-forward-view/stp/faqs/>
- 2 Examples of NHS England guidance on STP's are as follows:
  - Developing Sustainability and Transformation Plans: Preparing for 15 April and beyond. <http://www.local.gov.uk/documents/10180/5572443/health++integration++S+TP+April+submission+support+and+template+15+March.pdf/26f3601e-043d-4740-9ac8-310939f0e12f>
  - Delivering the Forward View: NHS planning guidance 2016/17 - 2020/21. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/planning-guid-16-17-20-21.pdf>
  - NHS Shared Planning Guidance. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/futurenhs/deliver-forward-view/>
  - Frequently asked questions - STPs <https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/futurenhs/deliver-forward-view/stp/faqs/>
- 3 For sources of local guidance, see the NHS England list of local STP Leaders: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/2016/03/leaders-confirmed/>