



Working Together – Learning Together

What we will do

Nottinghamshire County Council’s Adult Social Care, Health and Public Protection (NCC ASCH&PP) Department will put into practice co-production, known as Working Together – Learning Together when we are planning, developing and reviewing services, because of the benefits that are achieved when all stakeholders are included in making decisions.

The term ‘**stakeholders**’ includes the following groups of people:

- People who currently use care and support services; have done in the past; or may do in the future; and their family/unpaid carers. These people are also described as ‘experts by experience’.
- The Council’s staff.
- Representatives of provider and partner organisations.

Working together and learning together is not an activity with a clear start and end point. It is an approach that celebrates and promotes stakeholders working together as equals, every day, all valued members of a single team. There is the shared goal of developing and reviewing services, to ensure that we succeed in effectively meeting the current and future needs of the residents of Nottinghamshire.

Principles

We will work together with stakeholders to develop policies and services while being open and honest about what is possible given our statutory duties and responsibilities.

To achieve this we will:

- Value and draw upon stakeholders' skills, knowledge, experience and interests to improve and enhance services.
- Work together with stakeholders to ensure they can be involved in all stages of the development of services and share all relevant information whenever possible.
- Take positive action to ensure that any person or group of people that wants to be involved is included.
- Make language, meetings and information accessible to all.
- Promote mutual respect amongst stakeholders by respecting people's views and wishes and value everyone's contribution equally.
- Create a work environment where stakeholders' input is central to all service developments and reviews.
- Work in accordance with national best practice principles [Think Local Act Personal Coproduction Toolkit](#).
- Make time to respond to feedback on how well we are doing, by reviewing and changing our approach where necessary.
- Create an environment where the spirit of Working Together, Learning Together can be fully embraced through honesty, mutual respect, trust and providing clear objectives.

Mutual commitments and expectations

- To have a clear understanding of what needs to be achieved and if it is not clear, ask for clarification.
- To share responsibility for what is achieved.
- To prepare for and attend meetings and to participate whenever possible.
- If stakeholders are representing an organisation, to keep work colleagues up to date and give them opportunities to contribute their views and ideas.
- Stakeholders will participate in and be involved with, every area of ASCH&PP work.
- Sometimes information cannot be shared. This is unusual, but if this happens an explanation will be shared.
- All stakeholders are valued members of the work team and will contribute to all projects at every stage.

- Where decisions have to be made quickly due to deadlines, this will be made clear to those involved.
- Where a piece of work results in a requirement for a committee decision, the outcome will be shared with all stakeholders promptly.
- If a piece of work is delayed, all stakeholders will be notified as soon as possible.
- Meetings will be arranged at times and in venues which support the needs of experts by experience.

Staff Guidance:

Working Together, Learning Together - The Co-production toolkit

7 things to consider to help your co-production activities be a success

1. Asking people to be involved?

Have you thought about how you are inviting people? (For example, if you are planning a meeting, is just an email sufficient or would it be better to send hard copy invitations, or to phone someone? Have you asked experts by experience what they would prefer?)

If you are having a meeting or workshop, have you encouraged everybody to tell you about any additional requirements they may have, that need to be met in order to help them be involved? To ensure meeting members' additional requirements are met, it is helpful to state on meeting invitations: *'Please contact (meeting organiser) with any additional requirements you may have prior to the meeting in order for necessary arrangements to be made'*.

2. Venue choice

Always hold meetings in venues that are accessible for attendees. This will mean different things for different groups but things that are useful to consider include:

- Is the room large enough for wheelchair users?
- Are the toilets accessible?
- Are door frames wide enough for a wheelchair to comfortably move through?
- Have emergency plans been thought through (e.g. evacuation in the event of a fire/ allocation of identified buddies)?
- Can people find the room/venue easily – do you need to put up signs? Have you sent out a map with clear directions?
- Is there enough parking?
- Is the venue at a central location and on a bus route?

3. Time of meetings

Is the time of the meeting suitable for people who have caring responsibilities or use public transport with a bus pass (consider the associated time restrictions)? Where possible try to schedule meetings between 10am and 3pm. Try to avoid school holidays and religious holidays. If you are inviting parents, then make sure your meeting is scheduled around school pick-up and drop-off times, or have childcare/crèche facilities available on-site.

4. Information

If you are sending out paperwork, is this presented in an accessible format for everybody?

Does your information need to be presented in Easy Read, Braille or large print?

Does it need to be printed on coloured paper?

Do you need to use pictorial or other formats?

Do you need to organise someone appropriately skilled to interpret for your meeting (including British Sign Language)?

Have you sent it out in enough time for additional support to be given?

5. Creating the right environment

Make the environment welcoming and inclusive; first Impressions are important.

Consider whether the room is laid out in a way that will encourage conversation.

Make sure you have refreshments and adequate breaks.

Remember you want everybody people to feel equal. Where possible try to avoid things that indicate someone has a higher status than someone else i.e. identity badges or use of titles such as Councillor or Chair.

6. Expenses

Remember volunteers will need to be reimbursed for their expenses.

Have you checked the policy on who can and cannot claim expenses and what can be claimed?

You can usually claim expenses if you are **not** being paid to attend a meeting.

Have you checked whether you need to provide forms for volunteers to claim expenses at the meeting?

7. Follow up

Have you checked to identify whether a follow up / debrief session after the meeting is required?