

February 2019

First thoughts from our Chair - 'better late than never?'

Health and social care systems too often engage with the public about a new system or service when they've agreed the options, more or less sorted out the plan and got the pilot at the starting line! They seem nervous about leaving any open ends.



Of course you could say *better late than never* but how about just *better*?

Health is a huge system and, despite local organisation, is centrally driven. But new thinking about participation and democracy is emerging especially as politicians grapple with difficult problems. I wonder how this fresh thinking can enliven local engagement about health.

Citizens' assemblies operate by a randomly chosen but representative group of citizens deliberating on a knotty problem, with support from facilitators, and then making recommendations to decision making bodies or politicians. It was used successfully in Ireland to shape the question for the recent abortion law referendum. Other countries such as Canada and Iceland have used this approach.

Citizens' assemblies and other forms of participatory democracy don't replace politicians or decision makers. They do create a different conversation and a place to find common ground and common purpose.

Maybe it's time to think differently about how citizens' good ideas can shape health & social care...and our democracy.

Judy Robinson
Healthwatch Sheffield Chair

This column is here to encourage debate—all views are Judy's own

The Strategic Advisory Group is concerned about the nitty gritty of health and social care; we are ambitious, too, about engaging people in new ways. So we'd like to hear your comments—get in touch!

The NHS Long Term Plan

Imagine you were in charge of health and social care in Sheffield.

what
would you do?
Have your say on the NHS

What would you do? What would you change?

Now is the time to have your say. The NHS Long Term plan has set out a range of ways in which services are going to change. Each area now needs to work out what these changes should look like for local people.



And you're the expert - what could make the NHS better in Sheffield?

We're going to be out and about to hear your thoughts on a whole range of services, such as maternity care, dementia care, and mental health services.

We will also be offering an online survey so you can share your views at a time and place that suits you. And remember, you can always pick up the phone and tell us what you think.

Find us at:

February
15th—Crystal Peaks shopping centre
16th—IKEA
20th—Moor Market
21st—Fox Valley shopping centre
26th—Boots Fargate

March
1st—Crystal Peaks shopping centre

We're visiting community groups too—get in touch to find out where else you can see us!



Our work with the Accountable Care Partnership (ACP)



The ACP is a local partnership of health and social care services, aiming to work more closely together in planning and delivering care.

Healthwatch Sheffield is working in partnership with the ACP to involve patients, their relatives, carers, and the wider public in the work of the ACP so that local people's voices are included in the plans.

What have we done so far?

The first step was setting up a group of members of the public who will meet regularly to discuss and influence the ACP's plans.

We also led a workshop to improve how we help older people to have their say. We brought together older people and their families/carers, as well as professionals. We shared ideas about how to reach out effectively to older people.

What's next?

We want to hear about the experiences of older people who have had a recent stay in hospital.



If you're 65 or older, or the relative or carer of someone 65 or older, who has had a stay in hospital in the last year, please get in touch to share your views.

Dates for your diary



5th March—VCF Forum, 10am-12noon.

This session will focus on Scrutiny, which holds decision makers to account, examines services provided by the Council and its partners, and carries out reviews into specific service areas.

13th March—Strategic Advisory Group meeting in public, 5-6pm.

You're invited to come along and hear about our investigation into home care, and discuss next steps.

Please get in touch to book a place at these events.

Your Voice Counts: Sheffield Autistic Society



We've heard from adults with Autistic Spectrum Conditions and their families and carers about their experience of health and care services.

They told us about the issues they face, as well as their ideas to improve access to services for people with autism.

Sensory issues: health and social care environments can be



We produced a briefing to share the key things people told us. This will be presented to the local Health & Wellbeing Board and has been shared with Sheffield's Autism Partnership Board as well as the Sheffield City Council team who are working on an Autism Strategy for the city.

By presenting real experiences to the people who make decisions about care in Sheffield, we can ensure **your voice counts**.

Create Autism friendly letters with signs and symbols to let people know what will happen on the day of an appointment.
- A service user's idea for improvement

If you would like to share your own experiences, please get in touch. You can read the briefing on our website or ask us for a paper copy.

Get in touch



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