



Department of
**Health, Social Services
and Public Safety**
www.dhsspsni.gov.uk



Principles for Service User and Carer Involvement

**Northern Ireland Regional Collaborative for Learning Disabilities
Nursing**

May 2016

1.0 Background

In July 2012 the UK Learning Disability Nursing Review, “Strengthening the Commitment”¹ was released. Since then a Northern Ireland Action Plan has been developed to take forward its recommendations. Following a period of consultation the Action Plan was officially launched by the Chief Nursing Officer June 2014. The NI Action Plan is available at:

http://www.nipec.hscni.net/RegionalCollaborativeforNIActionPlan_NOTES.aspx

The Northern Ireland Action Plan for Learning Disabilities Nursing sets out a clear direction of travel and proposed priorities for registered nurses - learning disabilities in Northern Ireland for the next three to five years.

2.0 The Northern Ireland Collaborative

In September 2014 the Northern Ireland Collaborative was convened to lead drive, support and monitor the delivery of the Action Plan. The Collaborative comprises representation from; the Independent/Voluntary sector; the five Health and Social Care Trusts, Pre and Post registration Learning Disabilities Student Nurses, Education Providers, NIPEC, the Health and Social Care Board, Public Health Agency, RQIA, RCN and ARC

3.0 Introduction

The principles and intentions outlined within this document reflect the commitment of the Collaborative to have service users and carers contributing to its overall objective, which is “to set a clear direction of travel for registered nurses - learning disabilities in Northern Ireland, one that is sustainable and one that has quality, safety and inclusion at its heart”. These principles and intentions are just the beginning of the process to develop and improve service user involvement in the work of the Collaborative in reviewing, remodelling, planning and developing learning disability nursing services.

Learning disabilities nursing services are delivered in a wide range of settings, organisations and contexts and as a result, the Collaborative needs to carefully plan how users and carers can be actively involved. This document has been produced to guide the regional Collaborative in the process of engagement and to ensure that we can demonstrate adequate and appropriate service user and carer engagement and will monitor progress on proposed actions.

¹ **The Scottish Executive** (2012). *The Report of the UK Modernising Learning Disabilities Nursing Review: Strengthening the Commitment*. Edinburgh; Scottish Government.

4.0 Purpose

The intended objectives of these principles are:

- To ensure the involvement of service users and carers in the work of the Collaborative in the reviewing, remodelling and development of learning disabilities nursing services in Northern Ireland.
- To facilitate representation of service users and carers at the regional Collaborative steering group in order to champion the service users' and carers voice
- To ensure that service users are given meaningful opportunities to influence decisions at a local and regional level.

4.1 Principles for Service User and Carer Engagement

The following principles are what any service user or carer can expect from the work undertaken by the Collaborative and its members:

- We will be open, clear and transparent about the need for, purpose of and benefit of involving service users and carers in aspects of our work.
- We will work with service users, their carer's and other advocates for service users to agree the best way for them to be involved.
- We will recognise and try to overcome barriers to service user and carer involvement.
- We will try to involve the widest possible range of people in aspects of our work.
- We will use what we hear and what we learn from service users and carer's to influence and inform the ongoing work of the Collaborative.
- We will value the contribution and time of service users and carer's to the work of the Collaborative.
- We will provide feedback about the outcome of service user and carer involvement in our work.

4.2 Our intentions/standards

The Collaborative intends to make use of the wide range of existing service user and carer groups and initiatives within those organisations that are represented on the regional Collaborative and to ensure that

there is a systematic process for gathering views and opinions and feeding them into the Collaborative decision making processes. This flexible approach will reflect the variety of circumstances in which service users and carers find themselves, and enable service users to engage at a level and a time that best suits their needs.

All members of the Collaborative will commit to actively engaging with local service user and carer groups to support the work of the regional Collaborative.

We will ensure that the membership of the Collaborative has access to expert advice and guidance with regard to service user and carer engagement.

All discussions and proposed actions suggested by the Collaborative will consider the service user and carer perspective and where relevant, seek active involvement before final decisions are made.

Service User abilities will be taken into account when planning and undertaking meetings / events to ensure all individuals are able to participate fully including, for example, jargon free language and easy read information

No one should incur financial costs as a result of getting involved in the work of the Collaborative.

Feedback will let people know what has been done as a result of their involvement.

These principles and intentions will be shared with all relevant service user and carer groups and other key stakeholders in the region.

5.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

The intentions and impact of this document will be subject to on-going monitoring, and will be evaluated and reported annually in line with the accountability requirements of the Collaborative into the office of the Chief Nursing Officer.