



Putting People First –
NHS Grampian's approach
to how we listen to and
involve people

March 2024 - The Journey Begins





“We want engagement to be about how communities can work with us to lead and test solutions to issues and take an active role in making things better.”

- External stakeholder.

“We have real challenges that we can only meet by engaging with patients about services and expectations.”

- NHS Grampian staff member.

“We need to recognise people with long-term conditions as experts in their own health and wellbeing and how we maximise their opportunities to genuinely co-produce the pathways of care.”

- NHS Grampian clinical board participant.

Putting People First – NHS Grampian’s new approach to how we listen to and involve people

“We need to invest our time and efforts in creating a different conversation and relationship with the people of Grampian, to ensure we deliver good quality care and provide sustainable health and care services for the future.”

Plan for the Future



The Plan for the Future articulates an ambition to work in equal partnership with colleagues and citizens to develop a more preventative and sustainable system in Grampian. To achieve this ambition, it is recognised that effective engagement cannot belong solely to the remit of a specialist engagement team but requires commitment and action at all levels within the organisation.

The new *Putting People First* approach begins a systemic shift in how we welcome, involve and invite all colleagues and citizens to contribute to improving services and help shape the future of health and care in Grampian.

The new approach is underpinned by an evidence base review, highlighting the link between listening and engaging well to quality and safety of care provided, staff satisfaction, patient satisfaction as well as financial performance. The approach is also evidence-based of what works in terms of involving people and communities to create more preventative responses, a clear ambition in Plan for the Future.

The *Putting People First* approach was informed by conversations with a diverse range of people to understand where we are now and to help identify tangible steps to help us make progress. Quotes from these conversations are included in this report.

It recognises that this is a long-term commitment and to succeed, this must be done collaboratively with Community Planning Partnerships, Health and Social Care Partnerships, third sector, staff and all of our communities.

NHS Grampian – our *Putting People First* ambition

Our ambition is for NHS Grampian to lead the way in how we welcome, involve, and invite all people to contribute to improving services as such, and to improve the health of our population.

This requires us to nurture relationships between all NHS colleagues and the citizens we serve, valuing the expertise of people seeking care as much as those providing it.

We will grow conditions for participation in care where we start with what is strong, not what is wrong, and seek to build trusting relationships between people, engages with the talent and expertise which exists within staff teams, the wider community and the third sector.

In taking a *Putting People First* approach, we will see more feedback and insights being used to help improve existing services, and we will see more opportunities for communities (communities of place or communities of shared identity) to connect with health to shape more preventative approaches.

“It’s a good idea to involve the community more – we know what we need and have ideas which could help.”

– Community member

“Don’t take a single approach to engagement. A lot of engagement is happening in communities link together where possible.”

– Engagement specialist

“Bring relevant third sector voices into decision making. Be bold enough to trust third sector to deliver.”

– Third sector partner



The *Putting People First* Guiding Principles are:

1. We Put People First

We strengthen the voice and expertise of lived experience within existing services and support local staff to act on what they hear.

We start with what is strong, not what is wrong and seek to build trusting relationships between people.

2. Collaboration always

We are clear on the unique role and expertise offered by NHS Grampian and collaborate within the local system to agreed shared priorities, working within Community Planning Partnerships arrangements, with General Practice, Health and Social Care Partnerships, third sector, communities and, all staff.

Where we focus on place and connect pathways of care to communities.

Where we connect to and build community capacity and see communities as an integral part of our system, leading and participating in decision making.

“Never underestimate the power of a cup of tea and some informality in engagement settings.”

– External stakeholder

“We need to be reaching the whole demographic not just the loudest voices.”

– Community member

3. We value each other as equals

We celebrate our diversity and are flexible in approaches to how we involve and engage people to ensure all are included and heard, including embracing the opportunities that digital approaches offer.

Where we equally value the expertise of people seeking care and our third sector partners alongside the expertise provided by clinicians.

We recognise that this new approach may challenge established behaviours and attitudes and that colleagues and the wider public will need to be supported to make the change.

4. We care about our purpose

Where we are all proud to be part of the Grampian system and have a clear focus on helping all people live their best lives, in good health for as long as possible.

Where we focus on learning and developing together and we elevate the value of human stories to rebalance a target-focused NHS culture.

How do we listen to and involve public now?

NHS Grampian has many ways of listening to and involving the public as outlined by the many examples in the diagram below. Currently, the majority of our methods of listening and engaging are at the informing/involving end of the spectrum.

Whilst there are many pockets of good practice around listening and involving people, much of the activity operates in siloes with limited opportunity for cross system learning to spread good practice or to identify gaps or areas which require targeted action.

As illustrated in the diagram, there is a gap in how NHS Grampian connects on an ongoing and meaningful way with communities to create equal partnerships with communities.

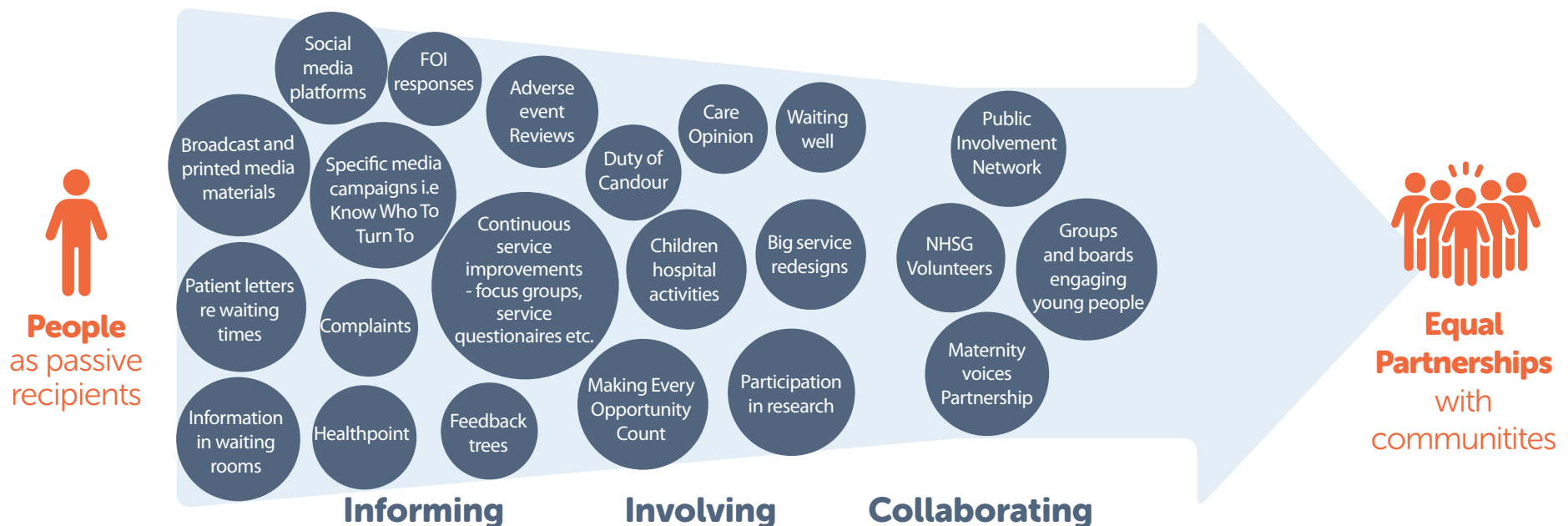
"Engagement to be the responsibility of all services (not just the engagement team), but they need the tools confidence and time to do it."

- NHS Grampian staff member

"As a public involvement network member - I feel genuinely listened to and my contributions are well received."

- Community member

How we listen to and involve people now



Our Putting People First ambition - setting the foundations

Our ambition is to create more activity towards the collaboration/working as equal partners end of the arrow. The areas in the orange circles are the priority areas which we need to develop to start to make this shift and are detailed in the action plan. The areas in grey are ideas which will be developed in detail as part of the Horizon 2 work.

We also want to make how we listen to and involve people more visible, creating more spaces to to learn together, identify themes, gaps and challenges across the system. This will reduce siloed working and make better use of what we are hearing from lived experience, collaborating across teams to drive improvements. Action to support this is detailed in the action plan.

“We need good examples, preferably local, that can help to illustrate the benefit of engagement - THIS is the sort of (positive) change you can be part of.”
- NHS Grampian staff member

“We need to give up (some) control so communities have more responsibility and sense of agency.”
- Engagement specialist

Priorities for 24/25



A long term cultural change and commitment to working differently

For this *Putting People First* approach and principles to be embedded across the organisation, large cultural change is needed and this will not be achieved in a short time period. McKinsey's three horizons model will underpin the work focusing on setting the foundations in the next 1-2 years, with the 3 horizons outlined below:

Horizon 1

Setting the foundations

- Build a shared approach which has senior leadership support.
- Increase tools and support for staff to engage with the public locally.
- Develop a movement of people to share good practice and spread the approach.
- Use existing expertise to develop Community Appointment Day approaches.
- Use existing expertise to test Rapid Cycle Feedback loops.
- Develop the infrastructure so we can more easily identify gaps/collaboration opportunities for engaging across the system.

Horizon 2

Putting People First as an agreed shared approach

- Create a movement - building culture, competency and capacity.
- More services doing regular engagement with the public.
- More third sector involved in development and delivery of care pathways.
- More care delivered in community settings, wrapped around people.
- Frontline staff more involved in improving care and innovating.
- Clear infrastructure which connects the work across Grampian.
- Improved staff and public satisfaction.

Horizon 3

We are Putting People First

- Everyone can contribute to shaping services and to the health of the population.
- All care pathways have third sector and community involvement.
- More people are able to self-manage and take an active role in their health and wellbeing.
- We have a highly motivated workforce who have autonomy to innovate to improve outcomes.
- We have reduced health inequalities and improved health outcomes in our communities.

Years 1-2

Years 2-6

By 2032

Setting the foundations for the *Putting People First Approach* – priorities for 2024/2025

“Unity is strength...when there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved.”

Mattie Stepanek

The *Putting People First* approach aims to work collaboratively across existing teams towards agreed priority areas for the next 1-2 years using existing staff. This will require staff from Wellbeing, Culture and Development (WCD), Specialist Engagement Team, Quality Improvement, Transformation, Planning Innovation and Programmes (PIP), Public Health, Corporate Communications and other stakeholders collaborating on agreed shared priorities as outlined on the following pages:

“We need to consider how we support people to have conversations and engagement - training around effective conversations.”

– NHS Grampian clinical board participant

“Great idea to progress - culture/engagement and conversations are so important. Keen to be part of an organisation which achieves a strong balance both ways.”

– Staff member





“We need to create awareness and understanding of leaders and decision makers about the value of listening and acting on what we hear.”

– External stakeholder

“Must be inclusive and aware of not just geographical community groups, but also communities of interest and demographic communities.”

– External stakeholder

“Sometimes feedback can be raw and leaders need help to be able to absorb this, avoid being defensive and still act on findings.”

– Engagement specialist

Putting People First – setting the foundations to becoming a place where everyone can contribute to shaping services and to improving the health of the population.



Recommendations for 2024 - 2025

Priority area People The Why	Recommendations	Lead and supported by
<p>Senior leadership support to making listening to and involving people a visible strategic priority will be critical if we are to make progress.</p>	<p>Carry out individual audits of chief executive team development needs and how individuals can contribute and develop a program of leadership support based on this.</p>	<p>Public Health, Wellbeing Culture and Development, and Engagement Team.</p>
<p>Staff will need support to aid people to routinely listen to patients/service users locally to help shape services.</p> <p>Skills in having courageous, empowering conversations and being able to receive negative feedback is highlighted as an area for development.</p>	<p>Creating accessible tools and training/support for staff and communities.</p> <p>Develop Horizon 2 priorities to increase reach and impact.</p>	<p>Engagement team in collaboration with Public Health, Wellbeing Culture and Development and Transformation.</p>
<p>Local leaders will need to be supported to nurture and grow a listening culture. How we involve and engage staff has a heavy reliance on people opting in or relies on local leaders to innovate and prioritise listening and involving people.</p>	<p>A review of current management and leadership training opportunities will be undertaken to ensure training available which meets current requirements.</p> <p>CWD resource is being brought into teams as part of the Rapid Cycle feedback work, removing need to opt-in.</p> <p>Develop Horizon 2 priorities to increase reach and impact.</p>	<p>Wellbeing, Culture & Development, supported by Engagement team, Public Health.</p>

Priority area Pathways The Why	Recommendations	Lead and supported by
<p>There is a particular gap in relation to how NHS Grampian connects on an ongoing and meaningful way with communities. Local experience suggests this is most effective when there is a targeted approach with communities, involving trusted third sector, local services and focussing on issues which really matter to people.</p> <p>New approaches to working with people and communities to reshape the narrative and deliver more preventative approaches will be tested.</p>	<p>Community Appointment Day (CAD) approaches will make progress in this area.</p> <p>We will use data to identify where this is likely to have most impact and build in robust monitoring and evaluation.</p> <p>We will also create a network to help CAD events grow organically across the system.</p> <p>Learning from this experience, public health will facilitate different ways of working and relationship building (using a learning system approach) between communities, third sector and other health services (such as GPs) to support the development of more resilient communities.</p>	<p>Public Health with support from Wellbeing Culture and Development, QI, transformation, engagement, PIP and corporate communications.</p>
<p>We want to increase feedback we receive from patients and support staff to act on what they hear.</p> <p>NHS Grampian currently does not receive feedback from the majority of people who access care, either during or after an episode of care.</p> <p>Experience from elsewhere demonstrates approaches which empower local teams to listen to and act on what they hear is effective in terms of staff and patient satisfaction.</p>	<p>Areas within the organisation will be identified to test rapid cycle feedback loops to support local staff to gather, to listen to and act on feedback. Initially this will be offered in a small number of service areas. This approach, if successful and with investment, can be spread across the organisation, providing a systemic approach to routinely gathering and acting on feedback at a local level.</p>	<p>Lead Wellbeing Culture and Development with support from QI, transformation, engagement, PIP, public health and corporate communications.</p>

Priority area Places The Why	Recommendations	Lead and supported by
<p>Current good practice is in silos and not visible to the system. We do not have read across themes from complaints/engagement/other sources of feedback to enable targeted action.</p> <p>We will make <i>Putting People First</i> a visible priority across the system and create spaces for sharing as well as using existing structures to develop the approach.</p>	<p>Engage with the research community to build in robust evaluation to ensure learning is captured and spread.</p> <p>Create communities of practice on specific topics as they emerge.</p> <p>Support Grampian Engagement Network to develop and connect with the North East Population Health Alliance.</p> <p>Review the current Engagement and Empowerment Oversight Group membership to allow read across the organisation and create spaces to drive collaborative action and improvements.</p> <p>Use existing platforms such as staff forums, the Culture Collaborative to spread the approach and make <i>Putting People First</i> a visible priority.</p>	<p>Public health, Wellbeing Culture and Development, and engagement team.</p>
<p>The Public Involvement Network (PIN) and NHS Grampian volunteer network will be developed. We need to grow the diversity and range of people actively engaged with NHS Grampian.</p>	<p>Training and support to existing groups to be more self-sustaining and locally focused.</p> <p>'Group membership' of PIN to provide more visibility for staff around how to access groups such as young people and people on low incomes to be explored.</p> <p>Develop Horizon 2 priorities to increase reach and impact.</p>	<p>Engagement team, in collaboration with public health, Wellbeing Culture and Development and transformation.</p>



“I understand there is a huge shortage of staff so I can’t be totally unfair, but good engagement would be giving someone the time and space they need, and actively listening to them and taking on board what is being said.”

– Young person

“Keep listening (active listening) and ensure there are opportunities for truly collaborating that are as inclusive as possible.”

– Engagement stakeholder

Governance and Finance

A more detailed action plan will underpin these priorities and a monitoring framework will be implemented.

The *Putting People First* framework will be updated every 6 months based on learning and feedback with a full review annually.

Given the financial position of the board, it is anticipated the 1-2 year priorities will be delivered from within existing teams. Funding opportunities will be explored for non-recurring costs. However, to achieve whole organisation spread, board investment will be required in years 2-6.

Progress on the *Putting People First* approach will report to the Population Health Committee of the NHS Grampian Board.

“Good engagement to me is a sense of feeling valued and appreciated as a partner, being invited to contribute and add to discussion(s), communications are managed on a two-way basis and ultimately evidence that meetings, and all the discussions and contributions make a difference.”

– Community Member



Cover Image - **Matt Kinghorn and his girls**

*"It has now been two years since the beautiful people at the NHS had helped me get home to my girls.
I think of the people and the work they do every single day."*

Grateful thanks to members of the public, staff and stakeholders who so generously shared their knowledge, skills and experience to help shape the *Putting People First* approach.

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