OUR VOICE

Working together to improve health and social care

December 2017
Our Voice is all about engaging the people of Scotland to make health and social care better.

**Are you:**
a person who uses health and social care services?
a carer?
an organisation?
a member of the public?

Our Voice is for **everyone** who wants to get involved.

Our Voice also helps staff and managers who work in health and social care services, to listen more and make improvements based on what people and communities say.
How did Our Voice develop?

Lots of different organisations came together to develop Our Voice, including the Scottish Government, the NHS, the Scottish Health Council, Healthcare Improvement Scotland, COSLA, the Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland and other third sector partners such as Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland. We worked together to run events where we listened to the views of more than 1,000 people who discussed how they wanted to be heard and included in making health and social care better. All this feedback has helped design and develop Our Voice.

How does it work?

Involving people’s views in health and social care services is not new. Our Voice aims to make this involvement stronger and to make sure that listening improves services for everyone. When individuals and groups take the time to give feedback it is important that organisations and services show how they have listened to, and acted on, the ideas and information given. This is a very important part of Our Voice.

There are lots of different ways to get involved at individual, community and national levels.
As individuals...

You should have the information and support you need to make decisions about your care and treatment. Health and social care staff need support to listen and communicate well so you can be involved in these decisions. You should be supported and empowered to give feedback, whether good or bad, about the care and services you receive – and the feedback can be used to make improvements. Our Voice is helping to make sure there are lots of different ways to do this, such as speaking to staff, completing comments cards or giving views online.

In the local community...

Health and social care providers must involve people and communities in shaping the design and development of local services. Our Voice is supporting this work. There is a growing range of networks across Scotland for people to come together, either in person, online or in other ways to talk about thoughts and ideas. Hearing from others with different viewpoints and experiences can help decisions be made together.

An important part of Our Voice is to reach people whose voices are often missing, such as young people and carers. The wider the range of people that service providers listen to, the better local people’s needs will be met.
At a national level...

There are many ways for people to join in with discussions about national health and social care policy. This includes joining a website discussion forum or attending focus groups.

Our Voice also offers new methods for people to participate and share their views:

The Our Voice Citizens’ Panel is a group made up of around 1,300 people who come from all walks of life from across Scotland. The Panel members have already been recruited and are being asked their opinions on lots of different issues through surveys, discussion groups and workshops.

An Our Voice Citizens’ Jury is bringing members of the public together with experts to talk about and debate an issue then arrive at a ‘verdict’ or conclusion, much like the way a jury would work in court. Experts are people who have lived experience of a particular issue as well as health and social care professionals.

To find out more go to www.ourvoice.scot
What does Our Voice stand for?

The values of Our Voice are about being:

1. **Open**
   Everyone’s views are welcome and should be considered carefully and respectfully.

2. **Flexible**
   Everyone communicates differently and there will be lots of different ways of working together and getting in touch. Our Voice itself will change and improve in response to feedback.

3. **Inclusive**
   Everyone can be included in Our Voice. We all need to work fairly and with consideration and respect to each other.
Find out more

If you would like more information, please contact the national project team:

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