



Your community
Your care

Developing Buckinghamshire together

Buckinghamshire Integrated Care System

Engagement toolkit

**A practical guide
to engaging with your
local stakeholders**

Contents

	Page
Section 1: About the ICS	3
Section 2: Engagement and why we need it	4
Section 3: The planning process	6
Section 4: Identifying your participants	8
Section 5: Deciding on your method of engagement	9
Section 6: Strengths & weaknesses of different methods of engagement	10
Section 7: Your communications & engagement team	14
Section 8: Acknowledgements	15

Section 1

About the ICS

Everyone working together so that the people of Buckinghamshire have happy and healthier lives.

Buckinghamshire integrated care system aims to deliver health and social care based around the individual, closer to where people live, keeping them out of hospital and encouraging self-care and prevention.

An integrated care system is a way of working. It will integrate, or bring together, the expertise of health and care professionals from our partner organisations to look after people's physical, social and mental health needs.

Patients, local people and communities will be at the centre of our work and our decision making. This means we need to work with people – including staff, residents, patients, community groups and local charities – to make sure they play their part in helping shape where and how care will be delivered.

This toolkit is a practical guide to helping engage with the right people at the right time.

Section 2

Engagement and why we need it

Engagement is about encouraging productive relationships between communities and the people who provide services to them. It is about developing and sustaining working relationships which help both groups to understand and act on issues they face. To be effective it must be honest, transparent and open.

Engagement works best when it is an ongoing and cumulative process that allows for trust and relationships to build.

Engagement is about knowing who your stakeholders are, understanding them and knowing how to involve them. Stakeholders are the people who are interested in, or affected by, the work you are doing. They will vary depending on your project but will include local residents, patients, service users, carers, community groups and staff.

Engagement covers a whole spectrum of activities; from informing people of what is going to, through to working with communities to co-produce services.



Benefits of engagement:

- Positive impact on stakeholders as they are seen and heard
- Gives stakeholders the opportunity to see the productive impact they've had
- Builds confidence in the system
- Offers the system insight into communities
- Services are better when all stakeholders are involved in developing them

Section 3

The planning process

Planning your engagement at an early stage will help you ensure expectations are set out and met. Before you start thinking about the method and tools you're going to use to engage with your stakeholders, take a step back and think about:

- What is the objective of the engagement?
Why are you doing it and what do you want to achieve?
- Who are the stakeholders and what are their needs? What do they want from you and what do you want from them?
- What stage of development are you at?
- What resources and limitations apply?
Realistically, what can you do?

9 step guide to planning your engagement

1 Purpose & scope

This will help identify the engagement objectives, anticipated outcomes and help define the scope and depth of engagement. Why are you engaging? What information are you trying to get and what will you do with it?

2 Outcomes

What specific outcomes, linked to your purpose, do you want to achieve? What other outcomes might be achieved such as improved relationships and awareness?

3 Outputs

What will be produced as a result of the engagement? For example, will you prepare a report to share with your stakeholders?

4 Participants

Who needs to be involved? Who are your stakeholders? These will include local residents, patients, community groups as well as staff.

5 Current stage of engagement process

What engagement has already taken place? What do people already know? What do you know from what your local communities have already told you?

6 Resources

Engagement methods need to be based on resources available. You should consider:

- budget
- staff
- venue, equipment, printing etc.
- skills (facilitation, analysis, interpreters etc.)

7 Methods

Decide how you'll reach the participants and how you'll invite them to take part.

8 Timely feedback and next steps

Identify how you'll feedback to participants and make sure you do.

9 Monitoring and evaluation

Carry out regular evaluation of how you're delivering against your original objectives as well as using feedback from participants to learn and refine future engagement.

Section 4

Identifying your participants

As well as thinking about who you want to work with in your engagement, you'll need to decide what level of participation you hope to achieve.

Your stakeholders will be various and will depend on your local communities. However, they are likely to include:

- local residents
- patients, carers
- communities of interest
- faith-based groups
- racial, ethnic, cultural groups
- local community or voluntary groups
- web based or virtual groups
- clinicians and other members of staff

You will probably also want to think about who influences their opinions. You may also need to think about people who don't live in your area but do access your services.

Once you've identified your stakeholders you'll need to consider the characteristics of those groups and make sure you have tools in place to support them.

- The capacity and ability of different stakeholders to participate
- Have you factored in any groups in your community which are seldom heard (young people, older people, minority groups, socially excluded people etc.?)
- How will you deal with rural isolation?
- What are the literacy and numeracy levels of your stakeholders?
- Are there any language barriers?

Section 5

Deciding on your method of engagement

When deciding on your method of engagement, it is important to remember that one size doesn't fit all and you'll probably need different types of engagement for different groups and individuals.

Where you can, take advantage of pre-existing activity arranged by partners, stakeholders or individual groups. These are likely to be more successful because they already have their target audiences and relationships in place. Alternatively, you could consider a joint engagement event with a local partner or community group which will give you wider reach into communities, give a better joined up approach and will save money and time.

Before you agree your final engagement plan it might be useful to use some of your local contacts as a sounding board. Do they think your proposal will be effective? Would they want to get involved?

Regardless of the methods you decide on, don't forget to keep up communication with people; keep them in the loop so they know what is happening, how their feedback will be used and the difference it has made.

Section 6

Strengths & weaknesses of different methods of engagement

Paper-based questionnaire

- Strengths:
 - good for large numbers of people and allows a large number to contribute
 - anonymous
 - gives all participants an equal voice
 - specific questions therefore easier to analyse
- Weaknesses:
 - handwriting can be hard to read
 - needs resource to record and analyse
 - excludes people unable to complete a written questionnaire

Online questionnaire

- Strengths:
 - allows large numbers of people to contribute
 - can reach people who wouldn't respond to a more traditional questionnaire or engagement method
 - anonymous
 - no print costs
- Weaknesses:
 - excludes people with no internet connection or appropriate digital skills
 - needs resource to analyse

Face to face

This can take a variety of forms, but face to face contact can have a bigger impact than questionnaires or digital channels. For example; holding drop in Q&A sessions in venues around your local area, participating in existing local events, or having an information stand in your local shopping area.

- Strengths:
 - face to face time and personal contact with local people
 - allows for free-flowing conversations
 - demonstrates commitment to meeting and hearing views of local people
- Weaknesses:
 - time consuming
 - may require venue/equipment costs

Focus groups

A guided discussion of a small group of people, normally run as a one-off event.

- Strengths:
 - encourages contributions from all attendees
 - allows for in-depth discussion of the issue
- Weaknesses:
 - needs skilled facilitation
 - staff time in preparation and note-taking
 - some people can be nervous to express opinions
 - can be dominated by one or two strong personalities

Visits

Visit local groups and organisations with an interest in health and care. Aim to meet people who may be affected.

- Strengths:
 - face to face time with experts and local people
 - talk to people in their own environment where they feel comfortable
 - allows for good visibility of the team working on the local integrated care system
 - good for relationship building
- Weaknesses:
 - can be hard to arrange
 - time consuming

Workshops

Can take a variety of forms but normally around 6-12 people. Workshops are used to gather opinion from specific individuals/groups about a particular issue. Normally, members are selected to ensure a balance of representatives.

- Strengths:
 - allows groups and organisations to learn about the process before taking part
 - focused
 - allows for in-depth, open discussion
- Weaknesses:
 - takes time to plan the activities
 - requires skilled resource to facilitate discussion
 - can take longer for discussion than a focus group

Social media

The ICS partners have their own social media channels which might be appropriate for you to use to engage with your local residents. Any new social media accounts must be authorised by your communications team. To find out how you might be able to make use of existing social media contact your communications team.

- Strengths:
 - good for sharing messages and information quickly
 - can reach a large number of people
- Weaknesses:
 - posts on some social media channels have a limited life

Newsletters

A monthly ICS newsletter is produced and sent out to interested stakeholders. If you would like to include news from your area contact your communications team.

Media

Using local media can be an effective method of communicating and engaging with your communities. All contact with local media must go through your communications team, so if you want to work with radio, print or online media contact your communications team.

Section 7

Your communications team

Your communications team are experts in communications and engagement. They are also responsible for many of the channels of communication you may find useful, such as your organisation's website, social media or intranet.

Contact your communications team if you want advice or support on how to conduct your engagement.

Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust
communications@buckshealthcare.nhs.uk
01494 734959

Buckinghamshire CCG
Kim Parfitt, Assistant Head of Communications
kparfitt@buckscc.gov.uk

Buckinghamshire County Council
Kim Parfitt, Assistant Head of Communications
kparfitt@buckscc.gov.uk

South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust
Nick Smith, Marketing & Communications Manager
nick.smith1@scas.nhs.uk
07880 471403
01869 365094

Communications Team
communications@scas.nhs.uk

Fed Bucks
Amanda Harris, Marketing Manager
amanda.harris24@nhs.net
07398253578

Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
communications.team@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk
01865 902225

Section 8

Acknowledgements

New Care Models: A guide to communications and engagement for vanguards.

May 2016
NHS England

Engaging Local People. A guide for local areas developing Sustainability and Transformation Plans

September 2016
NHS England

Public Engagement Toolkit

2014
National Assembly for Wales Assembly
Communications

New Conversations: LGA guide to engagement

February 2017
Local Government Association

Community Planning Toolkit – Community Engagement

2014
Community Places

Ensuring Effective Stakeholder Engagement

March 2016
Department for Business, Innovation & Skills

