

A Guide to:

Annual Reporting on the Legal Duty to Involve Patients and the Public in Commissioning

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This guide is intended for Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) and NHS England. It supports NHS England's Annual Reporting Guidance, [Transforming Participation in health and care guidance](#) and the [Department of Health Manual of accounts](#). This guidance is the fulfilment of Section 14Z2(5) of the NHS Act 2006, as amended.

For further information, please contact england.nhs.participation@nhs.net

Produced by the Public Participation team at NHS England.

“Patient and public involvement should be reflected throughout the annual report. As a core part of the day job it’s everyone’s business and our business is all about people.”

Graham Prestwich, CCG PPI Lay Member for Leeds North CCG

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The [NHS Constitution](#) and the [Five Year Forward View](#), set out a clear message that the NHS should put patients and the public at the heart of everything it does. The NHS must be more responsive to the needs and wishes of the public, all of whom will use its services at some point in their lives. We need to ensure that public, patient and carer voices are at the centre of our healthcare services, from planning to delivery, to how involvement is reported and communicated.

Participation helps us to understand people's needs, and to prioritise those people who experience the poorest health outcomes – enabling us to improve access and reduce health inequalities. Participation provides opportunities to see things differently and to be innovative, leading to a better use of our limited resources.

NHS England has outlined its approach to strengthening participation in all of its

programmes of work in its [Patient and Public Participation Policy](#).

In [Transforming Participation in Health and Care, 2013](#), NHS England committed to providing guidance to CCGs and NHS England staff on how to report on the legal patient and public participation duty.

Building on existing best practice in reporting, this guide has been co-produced with representatives from CCGs, local Healthwatch, and local and national voluntary sector organisations. It will help to ensure that annual reports meet the needs of patients and the public, CCGs, NHS England staff and relevant stakeholders. Together we have looked at CCG annual reports from the last two years and identified some of the key features that help to best demonstrate how CCGs and NHS England are meeting the legal duty.

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This guide has been produced for CCGs and NHS England. It sets out the organisations' responsibilities to report annually on how they meet their legal duties to involve the public.

What the law says you must do:

NHS commissioning organisations have a legal duty under the National Health Service Act 2006 (as amended) to 'make arrangements' to involve the public in the commissioning of services for NHS patients ('the public involvement duty'). For CCGs this duty is outlined in [Section 14Z2](#) of the Act and for NHS England the duty is outlined in [Section 13Q](#). To fulfil the public involvement duty, the arrangements must provide for the public to be involved in (a) the planning of services, (b) the development and consideration of proposals for changes which, if implemented, would have an impact on services and (c) decisions which,

when implemented, would have an impact on services. As part of their governance arrangements, CCGs and NHS England are required to prepare annual reports, which must explain how the public involvement duty in the previous financial year has been fulfilled.

In addition:

- Each CCG must consult with its local Health and Wellbeing Board in preparing its annual report.
- Each report must be published and a meeting held to present the report to members of the public.

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There is no single way to produce a good annual report on patient and public participation. Organisations take different approaches. Some incorporate details of their participation activity into their overall annual report, and others produce separate annual reports dedicated to the subject of patient and public participation and provide a link to this in their overarching annual report.

Annual reports are just one way in which CCGs and NHS England can showcase their public involvement work. It is unlikely that you will be able to capture everything you do in your annual report but you can highlight key elements and also reference and link to other resources which highlight patient and public participation such as reports, websites and publications.

The following sections include some best practice suggestions for your report.

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Governance and assurance information

- An overview of the structure, processes and assurance methods in place to support patient and public participation.
- Details of how participation works at different levels of the organisation. For example this could be how the work of Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) in GP practices feeds into CCGs. For NHS England this could be how the work of local offices and regions feeds into work at national level.
- An outline of the organisation's participation principles (for CCGs the law requires that these principles are stated in the organisation's Constitution), and a statement of the value that the organisation places on involving patients and the public. A good example of an involvement model is given in the North East Lincolnshire CCG report referenced in the best practice section ([page 10](#)).
- Details of how you enable and support those who want to get involved.

Examples of the impact of participation

- Details of key involvement activities which have taken place and what the outcome has been. Annual reports provide an opportunity to demonstrate step-changes from one year to the next.
- Examples of how patient and public participation is bringing about positive changes in service delivery and health outcomes.

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- Information both about the improvements you are seeing and how your experience of what works well is influencing the future.
- If you are reporting patient and public participation within the organisation’s overall annual report, consider including examples of the impact of participation throughout the document, not just in the participation section. For example show how people’s views have helped to shape new services.

Patient feedback and relevant data

- Show what data sets you have used in commissioning, for example GP surveys, the Friends and Family Test, Patient Participation Groups’ comments, etc.
- Include data that demonstrates an understanding of the population and its health needs. CCGs could use their Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for a baseline and NHS England colleagues could use the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) [indicator portal](#) which contains indicators from the key health and social care outcome frameworks together with the Compendium of Population Health Indicators.’
- Infographics help to present data in a way that is easy to understand and clearly shows changes.

How you reach diverse, potentially excluded and disadvantaged groups

- Explain how you reach out to different groups and diverse communities within the population group covered, so that their voices are heard. For example, potentially excluded and disadvantaged groups may include homeless people, those with learning disabilities and those whose first language is not English.

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- Celebrate connections with partner organisations (notably in the voluntary and community sector) and community leaders, who may be uniquely placed to engage with particular groups to advocate on their behalf.
- Include examples of what you are doing to encourage inclusive participation and to target communities who face health inequalities. You might need to refer to the [NHS Equality Delivery System](#).
- Explain how you are meeting accessibility principles, for example how you make sure public events and information is accessible so that everyone can get involved in your work.

How you work with partner organisations

- Include details of partners you work with, for example the voluntary sector and local Healthwatch.
- Explain how your work with partners has influenced engagement activity, service development and the production of your report.
- Highlight where you have worked with others to co-produce services.

How you involve patients and the public

- Give an overview of any regular communication or feedback mechanisms you use to keep patients and the public informed.
- Include details of how you promote involvement opportunities to patients and the public.

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Learning and best practice

- Show what you have been doing well and how it's changing lives. Give tangible examples of what has been done - celebrate what has worked well.
- Be honest about what could have gone better and how you will do things differently in the future.

Future plans

- Provide an outline of key activity planned for the next financial year to show how you intend to continuously improve participation and incorporate learning and best practice.

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- Ensure that the whole annual report is people-focused and bring it to life by including stories from patients, carers and staff, showing how your work makes a positive difference to them.
- Keep it short – go for quality rather than quantity of information.
- The structure of the report should be clear and logical so that it flows naturally and the reader can easily find the information they are looking for.
- Consider presentation and layout. Within cost and branding constraints, use photographs, illustrations and other visuals to make your report attractive to the reader and break up the text. Make key points stand out – use boxes, bullet points, different font sizes and colour. Keep paragraphs short.
- Use plain English – keep sentences short, ideally to around 20 words, and use active verbs. Avoid jargon and complex terminology to make your document easy to understand. If technical terms or abbreviations must be used, explain them. It may be helpful to include a glossary.

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- Consider the needs of the diverse groups of people in your community and provide the report in different forms, for example other languages, Braille and 'easy read'. You can present it in different ways such as, hard copy, online, audio and film, to reach a variety of audiences in a way that meets their needs. Make sure online reports are easy to navigate and consider the use of interactive tools to gather feedback on the report (or particular areas within it). Make the report easy to find on your website.
- Use clear fonts that are large enough to make them easy to read. Avoid using italics and underlining, unless you are showing a link to a web page or document.
- Refer to your in-house accessibility standards for producing documents. NHS England staff should refer to the 'creating accessible documents' guidance this includes guidance on making documents work with screen readers and the importance of correct formatting.

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Here are some examples of reports that CCG lay members, voluntary sector organisations and patients told us they thought were particularly well laid out and contained good accounts of activity:

1. NHS North East Lincolnshire CCG:



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Why it works well

- The CCG sets out its commitment to patient and public participation in the way services are planned and commissioned and it uses a 'triangle' model to illustrate how this works in practice.
- It is creatively set out and interactive, allowing users to find the pages they want quickly.
- It links to engagement activity and relevant partnerships in the CCG.
- The report notes key activity against the legal duty for involvement criteria and includes a link to their full [Engagement Strategy](#).

More information and a full version of the report can be found on the [North East Lincolnshire CCG](#) website along with additional resources which may provide some useful ideas to other CCGs and NHS England.



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2. NHS Leeds North CCG

Why it works well

- The report is interactive and includes a detailed contents page and references.
- It highlights the CCG's corporate commitment to the community in the Chair and Chief Operating Officer's foreword. This demonstrates the importance of patient and public participation to the organisation from the outset and enables people to clearly identify the relevant sections.
- Key patient and public participation activity is included in a specific section. This outlines how patients' experience has been used to inform social prescribing and work with partners.

More information, the [Annual Review](#) and a full version of the [report](#) can be found on the [Leeds North CCG website](#).



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3. NHS England - London region

NHS England London region and CCGs have worked together on a new approach to reporting across London. The 32 London CCGs have submitted specific patient and public participation annual reports which are published separately to their overall annual report. A good practice example of is [NHS City and Hackney CCG](#).



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NHS England - London region (cont.)

Why it works well

- The report starts by setting out the demographics and population information that the CCG is responsible for commissioning.
- A clear commitment to participation is noted and runs as a golden thread throughout the report.
- The report is detailed, highlights key health programmes and details the objectives, how patients and the public have been involved as well as the impact that each programme has had.
- In section five plans for 2015-16 are stated making clear commitments to the public and noting how they can be involved.

Additionally, NHS England’s London region has published a participation and engagement report called ‘[Listening to our patients and public](#)’ which has been influenced by the work of an independent London Patient Voice scrutiny panel. This provides a regional commissioning picture of the health landscape and will form part of NHS England’s overall annual report.



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[Transforming Participation in Health and Care](#) (NHS England, 2013) is the statutory guidance for commissioners on this subject. It includes a range of resources and case studies demonstrating good practice.

NHS England's [Patient and Public Participation Policy](#) and [Statement of Arrangements and Guidance on Patient and Public Participation in Commissioning](#).

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Download NHS England 'Bite-size guides' to participation

Click on the links below to download each of our '[bite-size guides](#)' to participation. Additional guides are in development.

[Bite-size guide 1 – Principles for Participation in Commissioning](#)

[Bite-size guide 2 – Governance for Participation](#)

[Bite-size guide 3 – Planning for Participation](#)

[Bite-size guide 4 – Budgeting for Participation](#)