

# Bite-size guides to patient and public participation

---

## Guide 1:

## Principles for participation in commissioning

Publications Gateway Reference: 00986

February 2014



This is an interactive PDF. To navigate, use the arrow buttons on the page where relevant or locate a specific section using the tool bars within the document.

NHS England's series of '**Bite-size guides**' aims to help colleagues plan and deliver the best possible patient and public participation, in line with **Transforming participation in health and care**.

For further information, please contact [england.nhs.participation@nhs.net](mailto:england.nhs.participation@nhs.net)

**Produced by the Patient and Public Voice team at NHS England.**



## Why participation?

---

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 health-care services, from planning to delivery. Every level of our commissioning system will be informed by listening to those who use and care about our services. These guides aim to support clinical commissioning groups and others to plan and deliver good patient and public participation. We should work jointly with communities to improve our NHS together.

NHS England has developed this 'Bite-size guide' to principles of participation based on a review of research, best practice reports and the views of stakeholders. The guide also includes some steps you can take to put these principles into practice.



## Core principles

---

### Working with each other

Relationships will be  
conducted with equality  
and respect.

1

Listen and truly hear  
what is being said, proactively  
seeking participation from  
communities who experience  
the greatest health inequalities  
and poorest health outcomes.

2

Use the strengths  
and talents that people bring  
to the table.

3

Respect and encourage different  
beliefs and opinions.

4

Recognise, record and reward  
people's contributions.

5

Use plain language,  
and openly share information.

6



## Core principles

---

### Working with each other

Understand what's worked in the past, and use knowledge that has previously been shared, and consider how to apply it to the present and future.

1

Have a shared goal and take joint responsibility for our work.

2

Take time to plan well.

3

Start involving people as early as possible.

4

Give feedback on the results of people's participation.


5

Provide support, training and the right kind of leadership, so that people can work, learn and improve together.

6

## The Engagement cycle

The **'Engagement cycle'** represented here identifies key points in the commissioning cycle for public participation.

For further information, see the dedicated website [here](#). 





## Practical steps you can take

---

**1/**

Make sure that participation activities are included in programme milestone planning, from the beginning, with sufficient time to plan and deliver robust participation.

**2/**

Understand who your patient and public stakeholders are. These may be broad patient groups, the general public, or specific communities. This should include communities who might otherwise be overlooked.

**3/**

View your work through an inclusion, equality and diversity lens. Those who experience disadvantage or exclusion often experience the poorest health outcomes, and are not always heard.



## Practical steps you can take

---

**4/**

Think about using a wide range of participation approaches – one size does not fit all!

**5/**

Work in partnership with others, particularly patient and public groups. The voluntary sector, Healthwatch and local authorities are excellent places to start. Working together brings insight that can be used for joint planning, and makes better use of resources.

**6/**

Feed back the outcomes of participation activities to those who took part.



## Want to learn more?

---

- i** 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.
  - i** The government's consultation principles and guidance can be found [here](#). 
  - i** NHS Networks' [Smart guides to engagement](#) series provides straightforward advice on all aspects of patient and public engagement, in an easily digested format. Their [Commissioning zone: working with patients and public](#) offers links to resources and good practice.
  - i** The Equality and Human Rights Commission website includes a range of useful [advice and guidance](#).
  - i** The [Engagement cycle](#) is an online resource to help commissioners undertake meaningful patient and public engagement, for maximum impact, hosted by *InHealth* and the Centre for Patient Leadership.
  - i** The Equality Delivery System for the NHS – EDS2, is a facilitative tool that helps NHS organisations to improve their equality performance, in full collaboration with their patients, communities and staff. More information about the Equality Delivery System can be found [here](#). 
  - i** [Compact Voice](#) offers a range of useful resources and voluntary sector information.
  - i** [Voluntary sector health and care: strategic partners portal](#) is a source of news, events and resources for and about the sector.
-





## Download our other 'Bite-size guides'

---

Click on the links below to download each of our 'Bite-size guides' to participation. Additional guides are in development.

---

  **1** | **Principles for participation in commissioning**

  **2** | **Governance for Participation**

---

  **3** | **Planning for Participation**

  **4** | **Budgeting for Participation**

---