



Patient and Carer Involvement Service



Together: Three Years On



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When we asked people to identify the signs that involvement is working, they said:

“It’s about a change in culture: We need to see and feel that things are different. This should be demonstrated through the words and actions of everyone.”

1. Welcome

Welcome to our Together three years on Report. We hope you find the information provided helpful.

This report describes Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust's (known as CNTW or for the purposes of this report the Trust) approach to service user and carer involvement during what has been a most extraordinary time in the history of the NHS. It has never been more important to ensure that we are listening to our service users, and their carers, to ensure that we adapt our services to meet their needs. We are delighted therefore that this report can clearly demonstrate the progress made against the 'Together: Service User and Carer Involvement Strategy', which was coproduced by service users, carers and staff, and adopted by our Trust Board in July 2019.

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the fact that we could not easily meet interested service users and carers face-to-face, has meant that we have had to develop different approaches to capturing their views. Whilst this at first felt like a constraint to engagement, we believe that the strengthening of our ability to gain views through 'remote' means is now a powerful addition to our toolkit. Our enhanced virtual approaches will now continue alongside face-to-face engagement, and we believe this will give us a stronger, blended, approach for the future.



“There are three golden rules. First, keep service users and carers in the centre of all you do and keep them in your heart and mind. Second, listen to them. Talk when they have said all they need to say. It is their life, their journey. Third, respond to them and their needs. They don't need off the shelf offers. They need what they need. If you have listened you will know what to do to support them.” Ken Jarrold - CNTW Chairman

Critically during this challenging time, CNTW prioritised working with and involving our service users, and their carers, by investing in specialist staff to improve our approach and redesign our Involvement Service. It is a testament to the skills of the Involvement Service teams, who worked in partnership with service users, carers and staff from across our geographic footprint, that we have delivered such high quality work in the midst of the pandemic. In particular the introduction and successful application of the Patient and Carer 'Involvement Bank' of Contributors, has hugely enhanced our understanding and enabled us to work together to make the future better.

2. Introduction



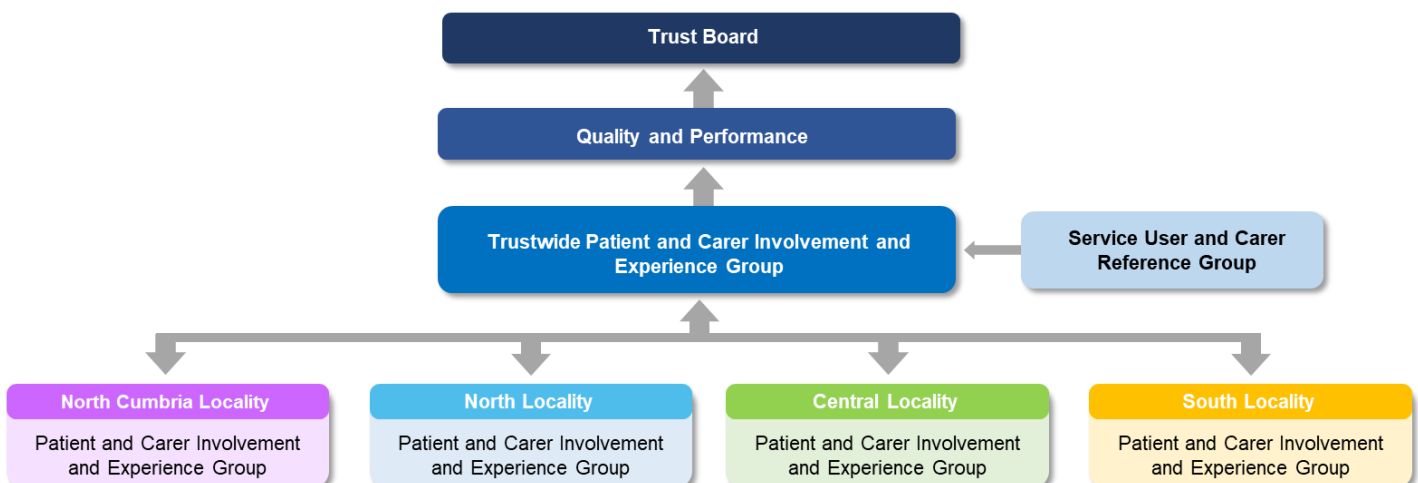
Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear (CNTW), National Health Service (NHS), Foundation Trust works from more than 70 sites across Cumbria, Northumberland, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland.

We also run a number of regional and national specialist services. Along with partners, we deliver support to people in their own homes, and from community and hospital-based premises.

We have more than 8,000 people working for us and a budget of over £500 million. The services we provide are divided into four sections, which are organised geographically into 'locality care groups'. These are known as North Cumbria, North, Central, and South.

The Trust was formed in 2019 when the mental health and learning disability services in North Cumbria were transferred to Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust. Since then, there have been some dramatic changes that have helped shape how we care and support the people we serve.

A robust governance framework was introduced to support the implementation of the Trust's 'Together: Service User and Carer Involvement Strategy' in 2019. Service user and carer representation is fully embedded in the membership of the Trustwide Patient and Carer Involvement and Experience Group and also the subgroups in the localities. This framework was fundamental to achieving our goals over the past three years.



3. About this report



The purpose of this report is to provide details on the key developments for the involvement of patients and carers in Trust wide activities and peer support initiatives. It explains how we have met our duty to involve people in the decisions we make about their care.

The report will detail the introduction and development of the Patient and Carer Involvement Service and Peer Support workforce. It will also provide insight on the newly introduced Patient and Carer Involvement Bank, its rapid growth and effectiveness which has supported a real change in culture.

This report will highlight the wellbeing structure in place to support members of the Involvement Bank and provide statistical data on involvement activity for the period April 2019 to March 2022. It will offer examples from across the organisation to demonstrate progress made in respect of the seven strategic ambitions of the Together Strategy.

Additionally, the report will provide details on the significant progress made within clinical services in respect of our Peer Support Workforce.

We would welcome your comments on how we can further improve our approach and reporting for future activities. Please get in touch using the contact details included in this report.



01670 501 816



Involvement@cntw.nhs.uk



www.cntw.nhs.uk/involvement



4. Meaningful Involvement



NHS England, Working in partnership with people and communities: statutory guidance

Patient and carer involvement is about a person's lived experience of distress, as a service user or carer, to help inform the design, delivery and evaluation of services. It is ensuring the service user and carer voices are at the heart of all decisions made within the Trust. It differs to mainstream volunteering which is an agreed regular commitment.

We achieve this through effective engagement approaches with service users, patients, carers, staff and partner agencies which include: focus groups, surveys, workshops, targeted outreach projects, community events and stalls, good relationships in the community, and staff training sessions.

"It's about a change in culture: We need to see and feel that things are different. This should be demonstrated through the words and actions of everyone."
(CNTW 5 Year Strategy)

5. Strategic ambitions

The engagement and involvement of service users, carers and staff was implicit throughout the co-creation and development of the Together Strategy, overseen by the Service User and Carer Reference Group, chaired by our lead Governor, Margaret Adams.

The Strategy defines our seven strategic ambitions which identified the way forward, and emphasised the importance of everyone.



“In a statement from ‘National Voices’ it was highlighted that: *It is time for person-centred care to become the central ambition for health and care reform and the fundamental design principle to be seen as ‘what matters’.* CNTW recognises this and fully endorse involvement, as an utmost priority. The ‘Together Strategy’ provides an excellent vehicle through which the Trust drives forward this critical agenda and I am so proud to have been able to be part of that.”

- Vida Morris, Group Nurse Director



Service design and delivery

Service design
and delivery



Strategic ambition 1 - Together, we are all involved, as equal partners, in decisions made regarding the design, delivery and evaluation of the way that care is provided.

Patient and Carer Involvement Bank

The introduction of an Involvement Bank of service users and carers to provide critical lived experience views and opinion to Trust wide projects and activities, was introduced in 2019. An internal promotional campaign resulted in staff requests for service user and carer involvement significantly rise year on year.

Introduction of Recognition Payment Policy

An offer of an involvement payment was introduced in April 2021 for service users and carers in acknowledgement of their contributions.

Autism Consultation

A steering group of autistic people, service users, carers and staff was set up in 2021 to co-create an autism consultation survey through six themed working groups.

The survey was made available online and in paper form for people to complete, and the Involvement Service also facilitated a number of successful workshops to allow people to provide verbal feedback.

The findings of this consultation were accepted in full by the Trust in early 2022 and have informed future strategy.

CNTW 2030 Consultation

During 2021 to 2022 the Involvement Service supported the review of the Trust's overarching strategy and the CNTW 2030 Consultation, facilitating conversations with service users and carers.

Service users and carers from the Involvement Bank and Peer Supporters were involved in the co-production of themed feedback videos which were used for sharing outcomes with service users and carers, staff and external organisations.

Understanding
the present

Imagining
the future

Working
towards our
2030 vision

Carers Charter

A carer forum was set up in December 2021 to review the Trust's Carers' Charter. A new and improved Carer Promise was co-designed to align with the Triangle of Care standards.

This forum has also agreed a set of benefits for carers which will be implemented by 2023, including free car parking and discounted cafeteria charges.

Peer Support (Development and Wellbeing) Service

The Trust's Involvement Service introduced a significant and new way of working in respect of our peer support workforce, with the provision of a dedicated Peer Support (Development and Well-being) Service, in 2020.



Peer Supporters underpin their work with their own lived experience of mental health difficulties and their ability to use this experience to help others with their recovery. A service review in 2019 quickly established that this specialism required a fully considered support structure in respect of their unique skills, their acceptance and integration within clinical teams, and the difficulties (or triggers) they faced in undertaking this role having an effect on their own well-being.

A Peer Support Operational Manager with a team of Development and Well-being Facilitators was put in place to provide a centralised service to Peer Supporters, their managers and clinical teams. They deliver specialist recruitment, induction, development and educational programmes, and importantly critical well-being support for our Peer Supporters.

The service is the first in the Trust (alongside Older Aged Adults North Cumbria) to pilot the I.ROC person led, facilitated self-assessment tool that seeks to measure recovery using the HOPE Model of well-being. This is a new and innovative way of utilising key indicators to provide early intervention for Peer Supporter's well-being. They deliver reconnection events to ensure Peer Supporters are given the opportunity to meet on a regular basis to share learning and experience from individual services, and also undertake key development sessions together in their specialism.

Peer Support introduced in North Cumbria

In January 2021 North Cumbria welcomed their first Peer Supporters into services. As part of this integration, they piloted the Peer Support Supervisor role which played an integral part in the development of the Peer Support career path.



Training

Strategic ambition 2 - Together, we are all involved in the design and delivery of meaningful training and development initiatives.



Carer Awareness Training

The core principles of the Trust's 'Carer Awareness Training' were reviewed through a robust co-production and redesign process, under the direction of the Trustwide Patient and Carer Involvement and Experience Group. The training package was rolled out in February 2021 across the Trust. This training is co-delivered with a carer and recorded on staff training records.



The Together Strategy

A systematic campaign of involvement sessions was delivered, to both clinical and corporate staff across the Trust, in order to raise awareness of meaningful involvement, under the principles of the Together Strategy. This work continues.

Peer Support Specialist Induction

A bespoke peer support induction process was co-created with experienced Peer Supporters and introduced into standard process in 2020. The process includes specialist training, a structured shadowing programme with a dedicated mentor. The process is underpinned by the newly developed Peer Support Competency Framework which has been aligned to HEE (Health Education England) national guidance.

Peer Support Educational Programme

After a successful submission to Health Education England, the Trust was chosen to provide an educational programme in our region. Whilst other successful organisations elected to procure external providers, CNTW's Involvement Service chose to develop an internal Peer Supporter Educational Programme that covered the requirements of the Trailblazer's national curriculum. The design and delivery of this programme by such a small team was a monumental task, coproduced with the Peer Supporter students, the value and effectiveness was found to be clearly evident in the evaluation and review of the project.

The 22 students who registered for the first cohort of this training all affirmed that it had benefitted their development as a Peer Supporter.



A Celebration Day was held on 20th October 2021 where certificates were awarded to students by the Chief Executive and Chairman of the Trust. Senior managers in attendance felt inspired and enthused at the event and gave commitments to continue taking the peer support agenda forward in all clinical services.

Cohort 2 was redesigned in response to valuable feedback from students, who also co-produced and now co-deliver new sessions.

Medical Staffing and Student Nurse Training

The Involvement Service work with the Trust's Medical Education Department to support third-year medical student training. Involvement Bank Contributors supported this training by meeting with students and providing their history of mental health illness, treatment and experience.

“This was a very rewarding activity - which was well supported by staff from the Involvement Team and also from the Education Department, due to the sensitive and emotional nature of the event. The trainees were grateful for our attendance and it was encouraging to hear the staff of tomorrow doing so well”. – Contributor, (2022).

Training



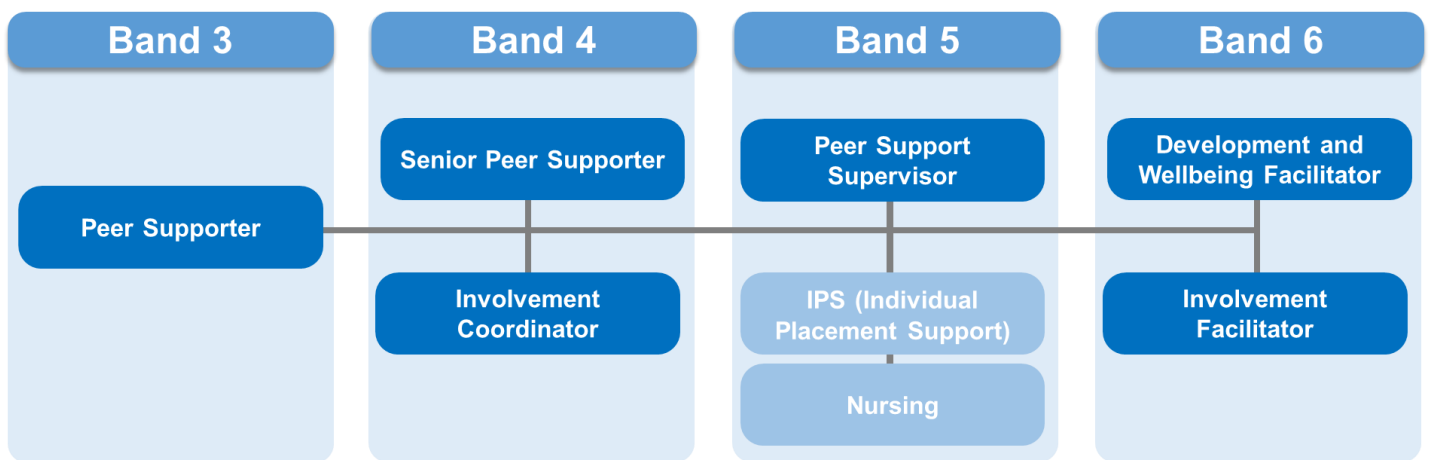
Workforce

Strategic ambition 3 - Together, we work as valued employees of the Trust, on the basis of the contribution we make.



Development of the Peer Supporter Career pathway

The new Peer Support Service has made substantial progress in the development of the peer support workforce. A fully embedded career path enables people to stay within the peer support specialism as Senior Peer Supporters (Band 4), Peer Support Supervisors (Band 5) and Peer Support Facilitators (Band 6). This Service has also made significant changes to how skills and competencies are supported, including innovations in the use of virtual learning.



“it’s one of the most positive and patient centred innovations I’ve seen in 25 years of being in the NHS” – Bill Kay (Group Nurse Director).



10 years of Peer Support

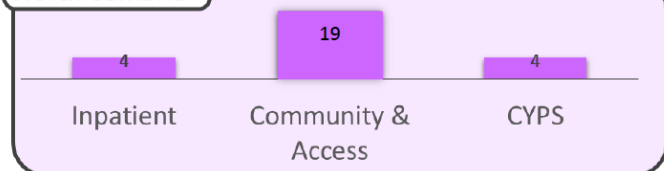
January 2022 marked ten years since the employment of Terry Haley, the first paid Peer Supporter by the Trust. The past three years have provided significant growth and development in the peer support workforce.

“To celebrate my 10th anniversary as a Peer Supporter I was invited to speak with the Chief Executive and the Board about my journey. This was a fantastic opportunity to give my personal journey as a peer over the last 10 years and discuss my ups and downs and how I’ve seen the role change. The feedback I received was phenomenal at the end of my Q&A session and the comments were also a great confidence boost too”.

Peer Supporter.

Peer Support Growth in CNTW

North Cumbria



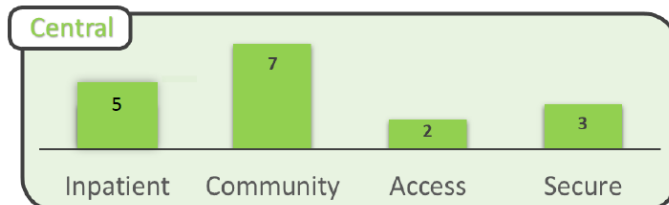
South



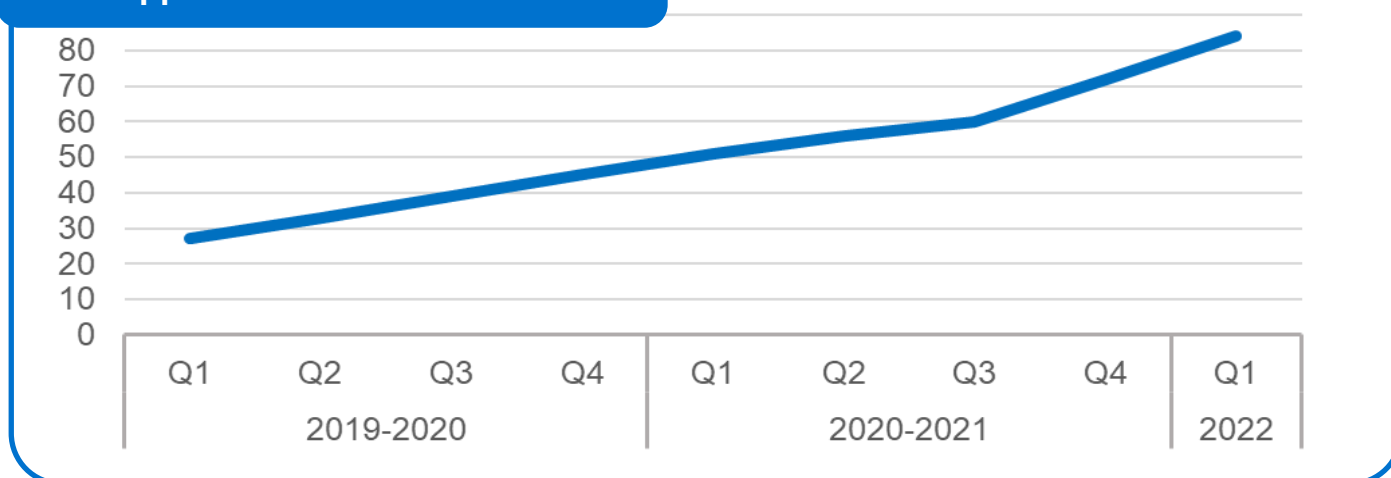
North



Central



Peer Support Growth 2019-2022



New roles in Clinical Services

Family Ambassadors

The Children and Young People's Provider Collaborative introduced the co-produced role of Family Ambassador, designed to improve the support given to families and carers when faced with their child being admitted into services. The Family Ambassador role sits under the Peer Supporter workforce group. Their approach is to build on shared experiences and empathy, and is intended to support parents navigate and understand the CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services) inpatient system, and help drive ongoing quality improvements.

Carer Lead

Individual services have introduced Carer Leads who focus on providing direct support to carers. They also provide awareness and understanding of Triangle of Care Standards to staff.

Workforce



Recruitment and selection

Strategic ambition 4 - Together, we are involved in the way we recruit people.



Recruitment Process

Service user and carer involvement is fully embedded into the recruitment process for staff at all levels. This includes the co-design of interview questions and membership of interview panels and focus groups across the Trust and partnership organisations.

The Service User and Carer Reference Group were an integral part of the appointment process for the Trust's new Chief Executive, James Duncan. Peer Supporters play an integral part of interview panels for Peer Support roles and senior management roles.

"The focus group helped us to assess a candidate on their ability to communicate and engage with those that have had experience of using services. That gives a valuable insight into what works and what doesn't". Activity Lead - Recruitment of Associate Director.

Involvement Bank Contributors also assisted Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust in the appointment process for the Lived Experience Director posts.

Growing our own... Joe's Journey



Joe Desborough joined the Trust's Involvement Bank in June 2020 on its launch in North Cumbria. This led to his paid employment in the Trust as a Peer Supporter. He was shortlisted for the Trust's rising star award in 2021 and then progressed to become a Patient and Carer Involvement Facilitator.

"Involvement is not just essential for CNTW. It's life changing for those who just want to be heard and make a difference. I never expected my life to go in this direction. But I'm proud I can share mine and my partner's hardships to hopefully help those still in darkness to see the light."

- Joe Desborough, Involvement Facilitator

Recruitment process for Peer Support

Trustwide recruitment events have been replaced by focussed recruitment which requires applicants to have specific experience of that service. Bespoke recruitment has improved the retention of staff in the early months of employment, effectively allowing them to thrive in their role and provide greater understanding in their support of the people they are caring for.

“This was my first time in an interview focus group and it took all day for me to get into my stride with asking the candidate a question. I need to improve my confidence in doing this. However, I did feel competent at scoring candidates based on their performance. I am interested in taking part in future opportunities”. Contributor.

Involvement Service new roles

The Involvement Service provision is exceptionally well supported by our Chief Executive and Chairman, as well as the senior management team. Resource applied to involvement and lived experience has been supported over the past three years with the introduction of a number of vital roles.

“I have seen the Involvement Service grow considerably since joining the Trust in September 2019, and I am proud to have been a part of that progress. Service users, carers and staff are joining together to bring about real cultural change and I am excited to see where this takes us.”
Dawn Willis Involvement Operational Manager

Involvement Operational Manager

Responsible for the service delivery of patient and carer engagement and involvement. Provides direct line management to the Patient and Carer Involvement Facilitators.

Involvement Core Business Manager

Responsible for the governance and administration of the Involvement Service, and ongoing design and application of data systems that provide quantitative and qualitative reporting.

Peer Support Operational Manager

Responsible for the delivery of the Peer Support Service, overseeing and leading on the continued growth and development of the peer support workforce.

Recruitment
and selection



What's working well and why

Strategic ambition 5 - Together, we are involved, as equal partners, in helping us all to understand more about what's working well and why.



Recovery College Collaborative

Recovery Colleges can revolutionise mental health services and help people to fulfil their potential. They deliver comprehensive, peer-led education and training programmes and are run like any other college, providing education as a route to recovery, not as a form of therapy with courses co-devised and co-delivered by people with lived experience of mental illness.

The Involvement Service led engagement events in Northumberland and North Cumbria to successfully introduce a recovery college provision in those localities.



The Trust and the seven recovery colleges in our geographical footprint formed the Recovery College Collaborative as a supportive space to share ideas and good practice, with a shared commitment to the future of recovery colleges in the area. The Collaborative is a means to ensuring that the CNTW Peer Supporter provision of working in recovery colleges is met.

Decision making groups

Service user and carer representation is becoming commonplace within the Trust's governance framework, with membership in committees, networks and steering groups.

Service User and Carer
Reference Group

Involvement and Experience
Groups

CNTW 2030

Autism Consultation Steering
Group

Sharing personal lived experience

A personal story from the service user and carer perspective can influence the design and delivery of future services. Trust Board, Trustwide Involvement and Experience Group and the Service User and Carer Reference Group (as do many other forums) all include a person's own lived experience presentation.

This is one of the most powerful activities the Involvement Service supports our Contributors with. It can be significantly triggering and upsetting for people to relive trauma and mental ill health, which is why Involvement Facilitators offer a wellbeing support framework that includes:

- 1 Working with the person to write their narrative of their journey
- 2 Contact with the person prior to sharing their story
- 3 If required, the Facilitator will support the person during the activity
- 4 Contact with the person post activity for a person-centred debrief

"She spoke from the heart and was not afraid to tell her story in the hope that this will help others. I was quite emotional and thank her very much for her time today". Activity Lead.

"The Contributor conducted herself fantastically, she was very calm and collected despite delivering her story to around 15 people on Teams". Activity Lead.

What's working
well and why



What's working well and why

Strategic ambition 5 - Together, we are involved, as equal partners, in helping us all to understand more about what's working well and why.



Involvement Bank

The Involvement Bank provides an effective system to the Trust for the involvement of service users and carers. The Involvement Bank process is designed to be a safe environment and meet the needs of service users, carers and staff. Membership of the Involvement Bank facilitates the involvement of those who wish to share their experience in order to improve the way services care for people. As of April 2022, 105 Contributors were active on the Involvement Bank.

Expression of interest

Service users and carers can express their interest in joining the Involvement Bank through conversation, electronically or in paper form.

Registration

A conversation ensures service users and carers are fully informed about the purpose and opportunities in respect of the Involvement Bank. Involvement Facilitators spend time with people to gain an understanding of their lived experience, interests and support needs.

Induction

Once registered, an induction session is delivered to new Contributors which offers additional information with respect of activities and provides a conversation on expectations from all parties.

Code of conduct

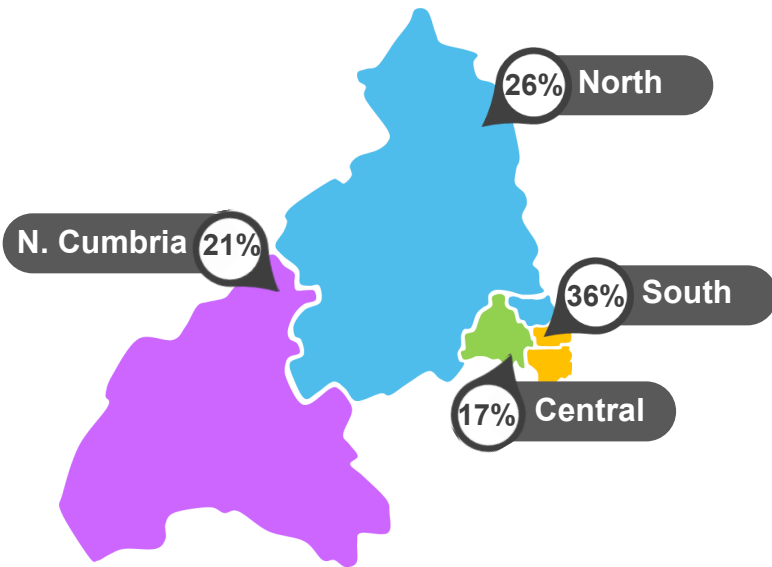
New Contributors joining the Involvement Bank must agree to act in accordance with the co-produced Code of Conduct in order to uphold Trust values.

Guide to Involvement

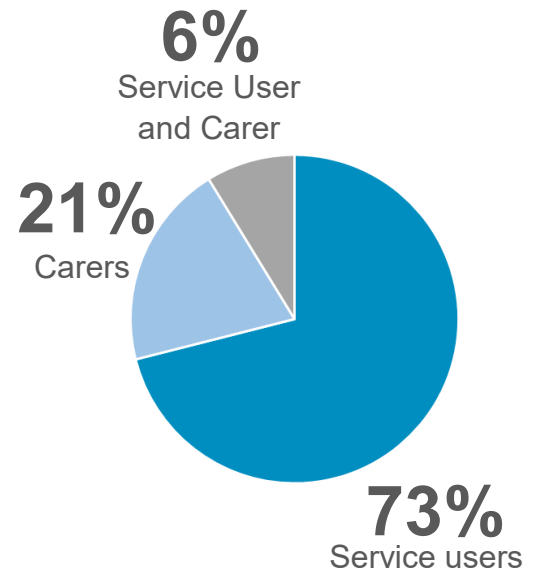
All Contributors are given a Guide to Involvement which contains the detailed information provided at induction for future reference, as well as contact details for the Involvement Service. This guide was co-produced.

'It is important to recognise that there are two sets of experts: experts who have professional training and acquired experience who make use of research and theories, and experts who have personal lived experience of distress (or caring for a loved one) and recovery, discovery and resilience.'
(CNTW, Together Strategy. 2019)

Involvement Bank membership by locality



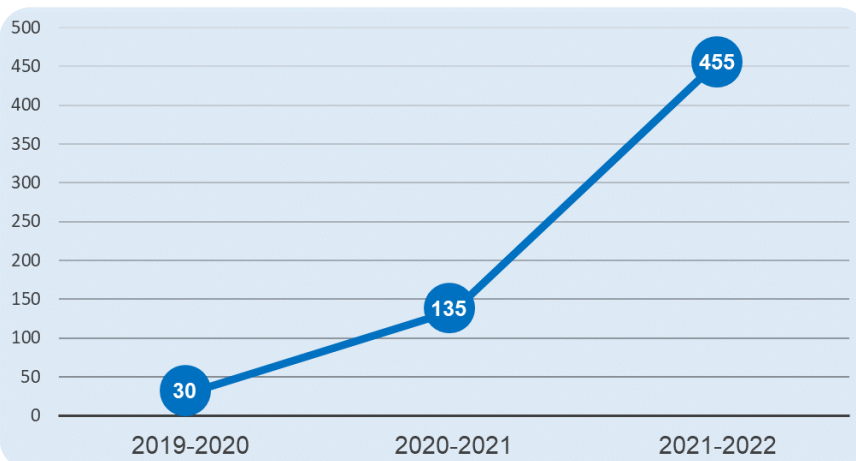
Involvement Bank membership



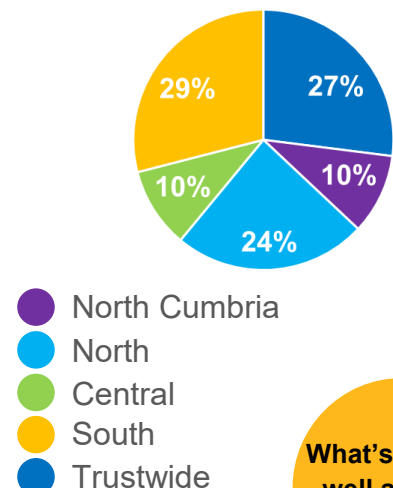
Involvement requests 2019 - 2022



Involvement requests 2019 - 2022



Involvement requests by locality



What's working well and why



Communication

Strategic ambition 6 - Together, we help to develop effective, accessible and meaningful methods of communication.



The co-creation of the Trust's Together: Service User and Carer Involvement Strategy set the stage for delivering new and accessible designs. This has raised the profile of involvement both internally and externally, with service users and carers continuing to co-produce Trust documentation such as the Carer Promise, staff guides, patient information leaflets, videos and presentations.

Please write to me

In 2019 the Academy of Royal Colleges published the 'Please write to me' guide to best practice for writing to patients. This guidance highlights that patients prefer letters to be written to them (rather than to their doctors) and how their doctors find the information easier to understand in this format. The guidance covers general aspects of letter writing and reports. The guidance is relevant to all clinicians who write letters. In response to the publication of this guidance, a focus group was established to develop a process for the continual learning and improvement of professional record keeping standards.

A considerable number of teams implemented direct writing to patients and carers, with many more continuing to adopt this approach.



Month of Hope

From World Suicide Prevention Day on September 10th 2020 to World Mental Health Day on October 10th 2020, the Trust shared inspiring messages. The Month of Hope campaign brought together quotes, poems, advice, pictures and personal stories from service users, carers and staff.

'Month of Hope' communications were sent out daily to service users, carers and staff – which the Trust's Chief Nurse brought to the attention of the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care. The messages are held in booklet form by the Trust.

Involvement Newsletter

The Involvement Service publish the Involvement Newsletter quarterly as a means to inform service users, carers and staff of key developments and events regarding involvement and peer support across the Trust.

Third sector organisations

The Involvement Service has developed reciprocal partnerships with third sector organisations who provide valuable contributions to the co-production of guidance and reporting. This was demonstrated in the production of the Patient and Carer Guide to Involvement and the Autism Consultation Report.

Involvement COVID Communications

From the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, the Involvement Service prioritised keeping in touch and supporting service users and carers. To help people move to a virtual world, basic guides to using online applications (such as Microsoft Teams and Skype) were developed and shared so that people could continue to get together and stay involved virtually. These guides were shared and used by other services.

A series of weekly communications were sent out to service users, carers and staff. They provided key updates on the pandemic, physical health and mindfulness exercises, short quizzes, cooking and baking recipes, links to online events and virtual tours across the world, keeping our friends and colleagues aware of the support available to them.

NHS
Cumbria, Northumberland,
Tyne and Wear
NHS Foundation Trust

**Service User and Carer
Involvement Communication**
No. 15 Recovery Colleges 26/06/2020

As with many services, organisations and businesses, due to COVID-19, 'lockdown' and the restrictions in place, the region's Recovery Colleges have understandably yet sadly had to close their doors to students. In spite of this, all have managed to still provide a service to their students, have found creative ways of still being able to deliver courses, and have embraced social media where possible to stay connected and provide support to students. This update shares just some of the amazing work our regions Recovery Colleges have been doing throughout this pandemic and how they have adapted and changed throughout COVID-19.

Recovery College Online

Coping during the pandemic
The Recovery College Online provides a range of free online courses and resources to people who might be struggling with mental health issues, families, friends, mental health workers and anyone else who might be interested. There is also a specific 'coping during the pandemic' course which has been created to provide information about current guidance, links to the most up to date advice, as well as exploring how you might be feeling, what you can do to support your mental health at this time, and how best to manage a period of isolation and support other people you know, including children and young people. To access the courses, visit:
www.recoverycollegeonline.co.uk

recoverycollege
online

Caring | Discovering | Growing | Together

NHS
Cumbria, Northumberland,
Tyne and Wear
NHS Foundation Trust

**Patient and Carer
Involvement Service**

**Getting started with
Microsoft Teams**

Caring | Discovering | Growing | Together



Leadership

Strategic ambition 7 - Together, we are embraced, as equals, as leaders and given opportunities to develop our leadership capabilities.



Service User and Carer Reference Group

It is crucial to involve the people accessing Cumbria, Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust services in the design, delivery and evaluation of those services, to ensure that the needs of service users and carers are represented and reflected at the heart of everything we do.



The Reference Group is a service user and carer led forum made up of individuals from statutory services, third sector community groups as well as individual carers and service users that work equally towards continuous improvement of Mental Health, Learning Disability and Neurological Care Services by utilising the group's assets and expertise. The Reference Group was fundamental in the development of the Trust's Together Strategy providing direction to staff and leaders.

Sharing lived experience

Leadership development has a key role to play in improving the Trust's ability to deliver great care. Service users and carers have unique insights and acquired expertise.

"A personal story can show that people with mental health problems are cared about, understood and listened to. We can use it to challenge the status quo and change attitudes. Your story can be an opportunity to share your thoughts and feelings, help others by providing hope and encouragement, and also help break down the stigma linked to mental health. I shared my lived experience with the Service User Carer Reference Group and this gave me more confidence to speak about myself and my recovery with hope".

Andrew Dent, Involvement Core Business Manager.

Collective Leadership and Management Development Programme

Everything we do as well as the systems, processes, and structures we have in place, influences our culture but we know that the single most powerful factor influencing culture is leadership. This means that it is important for us to think about why we do what we do, how we do it, and how we can seek to ensure we continuously improve and always strive to deliver great care and a great employment experience for people who work here. If we are to achieve these ambitions it is important that everyone working here or being cared for in CNTW shares the leadership of the organisation so we can make the most of our knowledge, experiences, different perspectives and capabilities, and skills. This programme aims to help the Trust achieve these ambitions.

6. Triangle of Care



The Triangle of Care identifies six key standards required to achieve better collaboration and partnership with carers. It is widely accepted that these key principles (standards) can be applied to all service areas, as the self-assessment tool enables health providers to assess their services on a ward by ward or team by team basis.

CNTW is one of 26 organisations (Carer Trust, 2022) who have been awarded the prestigious Stage 2 Triangle of Care accreditation. The award recognises the Trust's commitment to ensuring all staff adopt good practice when working with carers and families.

1. Carers and the essential role they play are identified at first contact or as soon as possible thereafter
2. Staff are 'carer aware' and trained in carer engagement strategies
3. Policy and practice protocols regarding confidentiality and sharing information are in place
4. Defined post(s) responsible for carers are in place
5. A carer introduction to the service and staff is available, with a relevant range of information across the care pathway
6. A range of carer support services is available

The Triangle of Care Annual Report 2020-2021 identified that the Trust would review our Carers' Charter (version 2019) as a future action. A carer led focus group was set up in February 2022 to undertake this task, and co-produce a new 'Carer Promise' for the Trust. The group is considering carer leaflets and information, as well as the Getting to Know You process within the remit of this review.



You will be recognised, valued and involved.



We will work together with you to ensure we are all aware of your needs as a carer.



We will listen to you, share information with you and be honest with you when there is information we cannot share.



We will tell you what to expect as a carer and where to go for further help and information.

7. Thank you



“I want to thank the wonderful service users and carers who have supported us on our journey over the past three years, as well as staff across the Trust. I specifically want to thank the Involvement Service teams for their hard work in ensuring that the voices and views of service users and carers have been heard at all levels of the organisation. Every day we are learning how to be more inclusive in our processes and I very much look forward to working with you all during the coming year.”

Alane Bould - Associate Director for Involvement and Lived Experience

At the start of this 3 year review, we were very much aware of the difficulties facing our service users, carers and staff following the considerable effect of the pandemic. However the past couple of years saw us meeting the challenges of Covid by creating and delivering a portfolio of digital communication methods and working more closely with service users and carers than in previous years. Before this, we might have lacked confidence in trying new ways of working, but out of necessity of having to work differently, we took a positive approach and improved how we deliver involvement.

Together we have proved that we can innovate and embrace digital technologies, as well as co-creation and design, which has given us all confidence to continue this exploration, and press forward in finding new ways to engage, support and help our service users and carers to make their voices heard. We thank everyone who has helped us along the way and hope that you will continue to join us on our journey.

“I am delighted and proud of the work that is described in this report and of what has been achieved by a real partnership of staff, service users and carers. This is really the heart of what we do and I want to thank everyone for their commitment, energy, involvement and drive. It is remarkable. But it is also only a start. We will continue to listen, to learn and to drive to make sure that this partnership is truly embedded in everything that we do and every decision we make. Because it is the only way to truly succeed.”

James Duncan - CNTW Chief Executive

