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Connecting with People

How to connect service providers with people from diverse backgrounds.

A guide by the Co-Creating Healthy Change Project at Diverse Cymru.

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Contents

Part 1: Background to the guide

Background

The Co-Creating Healthy Change Project at Diverse Cymru was set up in May 2013 to bring together people from diverse communities in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan to enable and encourage them to have their say on health, well-being and social care services.

The project aimed to link people with service providers so that information could be shared and people would have the opportunity to influence decisions about health, social care and well-being services and co-create change in public service delivery.

The project specifically aimed to include Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) people, carers, disabled people, gay, lesbian and bisexual people, older people and transgender people in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan as their voices are often not heard by service providers.

People from diverse backgrounds frequently face barriers when engaging with service providers. These include poor educational attainment; a lack of employment opportunities; disempowerment; a lack of confidence; isolation; a lack of social networks; poor access to transport; and a lack of information on a range of issues, including access to health and well-being support, benefits, direct payments, housing, education, and employment opportunities.

The project at Diverse Cymru is part of a portfolio of 10 projects funded under Community Voice by Big Lottery working across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan.

What this guide is for

The purpose of this guide is to share the views of people involved in the

Co-Creating Healthy Change Project on how service providers can connect with people from diverse backgrounds and involve them in influencing and making decisions about service provision.

It is based on the experiences and suggestions of people who have been involved with the project over the last 4 years. During this time the project has been working with people to link them with service providers so that they can have the conversations that will enable them to work as equal partners towards co-production and find solutions to the barriers that people face when accessing services. The guide also draws on good practice information produced by Diverse Cymru and other organisations.

The guide can be used by service providers as a first step towards co-production by highlighting things they need to think about when engaging with people from diverse backgrounds and it signposts them to further relevant information.

Why involve people in developing services?

People who use services have a wealth of experience and knowledge that they can contribute to improving health, well-being and social care services. They are experts in their own lives and know what would make a difference to them in service provision. Service providers who work in partnership with people can harness this resource and ensure that their services reflect and support the needs of those who use them in a positive way. It is important that the knowledge and experience of a wide range of people from diverse backgrounds is included as part of this because this can act as a catalyst for providing services in new innovative and effective ways.

It is also important that organisations reach out to people who do not currently use services as they may have a valuable contribution to make on how services can be inclusive and how improvements can be made.

Connecting with people can take various forms, including sending out information leaflets and letters using post and the internet, consultations, meetings, events, activities and in true partnership in the form of co-production.

What is co-production?

Co-production has been defined in various ways. It is at the heart of the new Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. A principle of the act is:

> **"People - putting the individual at the centre by giving them a stronger voice and control over services they receive."**

Other definitions of co-production are:

> "Co-production is not just a word, it's not just a concept, it is a meeting of minds coming together to find shared solutions.
>
> Co-production is about developing more equal partnerships between people who use services, carers and professionals."
> http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/guides/guide51/references.asp
>
> "Co-production enables citizens and professionals to share power and work together in equal partnership, to create opportunities for people to access support when they need it and to contribute to social change."
>
> "Traditionally, service providers ask the 'tick-box' questions: what do you need, what are you eligible for, and how do you fit into the system? With co-production, the questions become a conversation: what does a good life look like for you, what strengths can we build on, and how can we work with you to achieve your goals? It's about thinking less about fitting people into pre-determined services, and more about empowering people to contribute to achieving the outcomes that matter to them."
> https://allinthistogetherwales.wordpress.com/co-production/

This is not a comprehensive guide to co-production but a tool for service providers to use to engage with people so they can have the conversations that will enable them to work as equal partners towards co-production. It outlines the steps that the Co-Creating Healthy Change Project took to involve people and steps that service providers can take themselves to connect with people with a view to involving them in service design.

What we did

Research

We began the project by inviting people from diverse backgrounds to become part of an Advisory Group to share their knowledge and experience of how to connect with people from different communities. We asked them what speakers, events and training courses that they thought the project should organise to encourage people to have their say on services and how the project's activities could be promoted. In addition we met a range of service providers and community groups and organisations to share information and explore ways of working together.

Reaching out

We used different methods to reach out to people and tell them about the

project including: linking in with existing networks such as Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan 50+ forums and organisations such as Women Connect First, Taff Housing and BAWSO; two project launches (one in Cardiff and one in Barry); holding coffee mornings and lunch events (in Butetown, Fairwater and Splott in Cardiff and Llantwit Major, St Athan and Barry in the Vale of Glamorgan); having information stalls at GP surgeries, libraries, hospitals, supermarkets, Barry Market, the communal area of a block of flats, community events and events by other third sector organisations. We signed up interested people to our mailing list.

Guest speakers included:

- Cardiff Bus
- Cardiff and Vale University Health Board
- Cardiff Social Services
- Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales
- Hospital Discharge Service
- Mental Health Clinical Board
- National Assembly for Wales
- Vale of Glamorgan Social Services
- Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust.

We also visited existing community groups and organisations to explore ways of working together and gave presentations about the project.

Inviting people in

We invited people to attend two project launches in Cardiff and Barry. The launches included speakers and workshops on "What is Co-production" and "Having Your Voice Heard". Attendees included people from diverse communities as well as service providers. We used the contacts from our 'reaching out' and the launch events to invite people to the newly formed Cardiff Co-Creating Healthy Change Forum and the Vale Co-Creating Healthy Change Forum.

The forums offered an opportunity for members of the public to meet service providers, find out about issues and share information with a view to improving services for everyone. Forum meetings were held in Barry, Cardiff, Cowbridge and Llantwit Major in venues suggested by members.

Topics for the forums were suggested by the Advisory Group and people who came along to the forum meetings. We also held two forums on "What does diversity mean to you?" and one on the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

We promoted events through existing networks such as the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan local authorities, libraries, town councils, Glamorgan Voluntary Services (GVS), Cardiff Third Sector Council (C3SC), Vale of Glamorgan 50+ Strategy Forum, Cardiff 50+ Forums, Rainbow LGBT Fflag Network, Stonewall, Race Equality First, community groups and organisations. We produced posters and fliers which were distributed to amongst others, GP surgeries, hospitals,

libraries, hubs, shops and community groups.

Our events always included the opportunity for members to have their say and ask questions of the speakers. We handed out "Have Your Say" postcards so that if people were uncomfortable speaking out at our events they could write their questions down and we would pass them on to the guest speakers.

We sent out news releases and gave interviews about the project on local radio stations and articles appeared in Barry & District News, South Wales Echo and the Glamorgan Gem. The project was also promoted on Diverse Cymru's website and social media.

In October 2014, in celebration of Older People's Day, we held a "50+ Health and Well-being Awareness Day" at Cardiff County Hall in partnership with Cardiff Council's 50+ Forums. Guest speakers included Maria Battle, Chair of Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (CVUHB); Sarah Rochira, Older People's Commissioner for Wales; Susan Schelewa from Cardiff Council Social Services and Cheryl Williams from Public Health Wales. The event also included a range of stalls promoting health and well-being services. The event was fully booked with more than 60 people attending.

Attendees were also able to take part in a workshop session where we asked them to discuss 3 questions: "What does being healthy and having good well-being look like to you?", "Where do you go for information about health, social care and well-being services?" and "What barriers do you face or what prevents you from using health, social care or well-being services?" We passed the information collected from this session onto service providers.

Attendees had the opportunity to have their say in a question and answer session with the speakers. A large number of those who attended went on to become involved with the project.

We provided a free lunch and encouraged service providers and people who use services to chat informally and share information on how services could be improved.

At all of our events we provide free refreshments. We also offer travel expenses, access and replacement care costs to those who need them in order to attend our events. This is important as it removes a barrier that might prevent some people from participating in the project.

Developing Knowledge, Skills and Volunteering

The project aimed to develop the skills and knowledge of people from diverse communities so they could have their say on health, well-being and social care services. As part of this, in the first and second year we held two 5 week courses on "Personal Development and Confidence Building", facilitated by the Mentor Ring.

Two people who attended the courses became volunteers with Diverse Cymru and one of these went on to become employed by the organisation. We also held coffee mornings to promote volunteering opportunities within Diverse Cymru and other organisations.

Project members also contributed to the project through informal volunteering, for example by attending Advisory and Working Group meetings and taking part in service provider engagement events and consultations. They also shared information and knowledge about the project through word of mouth and raised awareness through the networks and organisations that they were linked with.

Training and Information

The project organised training and information sessions on different topics with the aim of developing the skills of project members and increasing their knowledge and confidence to have their say.

We asked members what specific areas they would like training / information on and as a result we held sessions on topics including:

- Dementia Friends
- Demystifying Commissioning
- Energy Awareness
- Making Every Contact Count (skilling people to promote health messages)
- Love Food Hate Waste
- Screening for Life Information Sessions
- Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- Understanding the Health Board and Community Health Council
- Understanding Universal Credit
- Vale of Glamorgan Council Engagement Session
- Who Does What Where When in Mental Health Services?

Identifying opportunities for sharing information, having your say and co-production

We linked members with service providers so they could have their say on services and held sessions with the team from the Older People's Commissioner for Wales' office on Access to GP Services. We also held sessions for Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (CVUHB) on its "Shaping our Future Well-being" initiative and its Strategic Equality Plan.

In addition, we held coffee mornings with the Chair of CVUHB, the Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust and the GP Out of Hours Service. We held focus groups for Marie Curie for people with religious and no religious belief; the General Pharmaceutical Council on standards for pharmacy professionals; Velindre NHS Trust on cancer care delivery; and Beaufort Research to identify care and support needs.

We promoted opportunities for members to be involved in co-production with other organisations. In particular, a number of members became part of Cardiff Metropolitan University's BA in Social Work Programme Service User and Carers Group and Cardiff University's MA in Social Work Programme's Co-production Group.

Members took part in Public Health Wales (PHW) editorial board meetings to produce two Annual Quality Statements. They then appeared in a film about their experiences of this. Members were also filmed for the Love Food Hate Waste session that they participated in. One member appeared in the Social Service Improvement Agency "Anatomy of Resilience" video, and we also worked with University of South Wales students to produce a short film on the project.

We organised 3 visits to the Senedd, 1 to PHW's AGM and 3 trips to CVUHB's Board meetings for members to further their knowledge of the decision making process in Wales.

We promoted opportunites for members to take part in consultations by the Welsh Government, CVUHB, the General Pharmaceutical Council, and Public Health Wales amongst others.

What did we find out?

Throughout the project we collected information on people's experiences of using health, well-being and social care services in a variety of ways.

At our events members spoke with service providers about their experiences of accessing services, what the barriers are and what the solutions might be.

We produced "Have Your Say" postcards inviting people to have their say on

services and collected more than 60 completed anonymous postcards at our events and information stands.

These provided a "snapshot" of people's experiences and we passed information from the postcards onto the Patient Experience Team at CVUHB.

Members also shared information about their experiences at our Advisory and Working Group meetings. Much of the information shared by project members related to experiences of specific services but common themes were identified across services. Particular barriers to accessing services related to lack of information, communication, cuts to services, transport, awareness, assumptions and attitudes.

Lack of information members told us that there was a lack of information about services, particularly for people who have difficulty leaving their home and not connected to the internet. People do not know where to go to get help and up-to-date information.

Members told us they face **communication barriers** when accessing services. Information is often not presented in accessible formats for people with sensory loss or whose first language is not English or Welsh. There is a lack of professional interpreters. People have problems using telephone support services. They have difficulty in understanding people with strong accents.

Cuts to services have an impact on people's well-being. Members told us that older people are particularly affected by cuts to funding for day centres, nursing homes, lunch schemes, leisure facilities and public toilet provision.

Access to **public transport** has a major impact on people. There is a lack of evening bus services and routes are being cut. This is a particular problem for people who live in rural areas of the Vale of Glamorgan. Disabled people have

faced issues when accessing buses and trains. People who use wheelchairs often have to compete with buggies and shopping trolleys to get a space on buses. Often they do not receive assistance from drivers when using accessibility ramps. Members told us there was a lack of training for drivers in relation to people who have learning disabilities, dementia and visual impairments.

People particularly found it difficult when trying to get buses at the main hospitals in Cardiff and the Vale, such as long journeys, and not knowing where the bus stops are located.

Awareness, assumptions and attitudes

People told us that they faced barriers to using services due to the awareness, assumptions and attitudes of both service providers and themselves. People could be afraid to speak up about services because they feared there would be repercussions. Similarly they feared or had experienced discrimination by service providers because of their equality characteristics, for example, because of their gender, culture, religion, disability or sexual orientation.

All of the above issues can contribute to the isolation of people from diverse backgrounds, prevent them from accessing services and having their say on how services can be improved.

Overcoming barriers

The people who have been involved with the Co-Creating Healthy Change Project at Diverse Cymru have a keen passion and commitment to work with service providers to make sure that services are fair and accessible for everyone.

This guide suggests some ways that service providers can connect with people so that they can help overcome the barriers identified above, effectively involve people in their service delivery, and identify solutions together.

The following sections give ideas on how service provides can connect with people from diverse backgrounds and things to think about when organising an inclusive community engagement event. Once effective connections are made people and organisations can work together to co-produce services that are accessible, innovative and fit for purpose.

Involving people when designing services as equal partners should become an integral part of planning by service providers rather than something extra. Service providers are already working towards this goal and this guide makes suggestions on how they can more effectively make the first connections with the people they want to involve in this process.

Thank you

Diverse Cymru would like to thank all the people who have been involved with and supported the Co-Creating Healthy Change Project, members and service providers. There is huge potential in people and service providers working together to deliver services that more effectively meet the needs of those that use them. The Co-Creating Healthy Change Project through its work and this guide seeks to ensure that this becomes a reality.

Part 2: Connecting with People

Why should I connect with people from diverse backgrounds?

People should be at the heart of health, well-being and social care service design and provision. Service providers should be having conversations with people and working with them to ensure that services meet people's needs. Organisations should enable people to "have their say" on what is important to them and their communities so that they can influence decisions on service provision. It is vital that organisations engage with and listen to as wide a range of people as possible to provide inclusive services. People from diverse backgrounds often do not have their voices heard by service providers for a range of reasons and this section focusses what organisations need to think about when involving people and suggestions for connecting with people who are often "seldom heard".

How do I connect with people from diverse backgrounds?

If you want to connect with people whether for engagement purposes or for co-production and the design of your services, you must decide:

- Why you want to involve people
- Is there a legal requirement to involve people? (e.g. Public Sector Equality Duties, Equality Act 2010, Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014)
- What are your organisation's policies on involving people?
- Do you have the financial, staff and time resources to support the involvement of people?
- Who is your key target group / market?
- How are you going to involve people?
- How are you going to manage expectations?

Look at your own organisation

Peoples' perception of your organisation will affect whether they want to be involved with you.

- Is your organisation welcoming and inclusive?
- Do people fully understand how your organisation works and what it offers?
- Is it transparent, open and honest?
- Is it diverse and an equal opportunities employer?
- Does it value and respect people?

Points to think about when engaging with people and involving them in co-production

- What mechanisms do you have for involving people in your organisation either by engagement or co-production?
- Do you have the resources for engagement in terms of time and budget?
- Do you have the resources for an engagement team?
- Are you prepared to listen to people?
- Are you prepared for people to be involved in the design of your services? Co-production is about sharing power and involving people as partners to work together to improve services. It's a two-way process, not simply consultation.
- Can you offer training and support to enable people to contribute to your service more effectively on an equal standing with you?
- Do you expect people to fit in with your organisation's way of doing things or are you prepared to work equally with them to find new more effective, innovative ways of delivering services?
- How are you going to select the people you involve in your service design?
- How are you going to show that you value the contribution that people make to your service?
- Can you offer people travel, access and replacement care costs if they become involved with your organisation?
- Can you compensate people for the time that they give to your organisation, e.g. monetary payment, time credits, vouchers? Be aware that monetary incentives can affect receipt of state benefits and if a person is receiving state benefits it is their responsibility to check with their local benefits office whether this will affect them.
- How do you find people who might like to become involved with your service / organisation?

Things to think about

- Have a positive attitude and approach towards inclusivity when working with people from the 9 protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.
- Be diversity sensitive and be aware of the diversity within equality, religious, social and cultural groups. Don't make assumptions.
- Be clear to people about why you want them to be involved and be prepared to give feedback.
- Make a plan of how you are going to connect with people.

Protected Characteristics

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief (including lack of belief)
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

Do your research

Find out whether your organisation already has links to people from diverse backgrounds and / or groups and organisations that work with them. Use information from the Census, Office for National Statistics and your local authorities to find out the demographics for your area - how many people from equality groups / diverse backgrounds could potentially access your service?

Talk to people and build relationships

- Go out and meet people, don't expect them to come to you. Meeting people in their own environment is a good first step to involving people in your service.
- Are there any organisations who work with the people you want to connect with that you can meet and get advice from?
- Link in with equality, community, cultural, social and religious groups and organisations.
- Link in with housing associations, leisure organisations, libraries, hubs, councils, voluntary sector networks.
- Link in with businesses. Can they put up posters and / or promote your message to employees and customers?

Use a range of communication methods to involve people in your service

- Identify key individuals from diverse backgrounds who can help promote your message (don't rely solely on community leaders).
- Go to local events, fairs, fêtes, festivals and community celebrations and invite people to be involved with your service.
- Have information stalls at events by organisations already connected to the people you want to involve.
- Have information stalls at places that people go to, such as supermarkets, community venues, GP surgeries, hospitals and leisure facilities.
- Build a database of contact details for the people that you meet who want to be involved with your service.
- Ask people how they would prefer to be contacted.
- Can you send out letters / invitations by post to those who are not online? Can you use telephone, text, minicom for those who would prefer to be contacted by those methods?
- Use social media, websites, email, blogs. Consider setting up dedicated Twitter and Facebook accounts.

- Ask other organisations / partners to promote your service on their social media.
- Word of mouth is very effective can you involve volunteers / community ambassadors / champions to get your message out?
- Send out news releases to local and national newspapers, magazines, radio, and TV and build relationships with media outlets. Many people find out information in traditional ways from newspapers, TV and radio.
- Many organisations / community groups have newsletters, bulletins, Facebook pages and Twitter accounts, contact them and ask them to include an article/ information about your service.
- Distribute posters and leaflets to shops, GP surgeries, hospitals, businesses, voluntary, religious, cultural and social organisations.
- If you ask other organisations or groups to send out information on your behalf give them plenty of notice but be aware that they may not have the time or resources to do this.

Accessible information and communication

When reaching out to people think about whether the information you provide is accessible and easy to understand.

Use a simple, concise, clear and engaging style of writing. Use Plain English. Think about the terminology and tone that you use. Are you using inclusive language, gender neutral pronouns? Ensure your written communication follows guidelines for producing accessible information. Think about things like font size and colour, layout and design of print materials and webpages. Keep it jargon free.

Consider using inclusive and diverse images on promotional materials such as pop up stands, posters, newsletters, websites, documents and leaflets. This will signal to people from diverse backgrounds that you are willing to engage with them and they are more likely to want to work with your organisation.

Consider which communication formats might be required by disabled people. Some formats suit one type of impairment over another for example:

- visual impairments – audio, audio description, Braille, Moon, telephone
- learning disabilities and literacy difficulties – audio, audio description, Easy Read, easy access, Makaton, subtitles
- hearing – British Sign Language, Makaton, subtitling, textphone, SMS
- co-ordination difficulties – large print, audio, audio description, telephone

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-communication/accessible-communication-formats


CADOXTON MULTICULTURAL
VOLUNTARY COMMUNITY
sub. Cadoxton Youth Project
CIRCUS
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Harrier Plus

Consult with disabled people and organisations that work with disabled people for advice on best practice and refer to your own organisation's policies.

When connecting with people from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds consider whether you need to produce information in community languages or provide interpreters. Could you provide people to directly promote your message in community languages without the need for interpreters? Ask people and organisations from BME backgrounds how engagement can be made accessible for BME people.

Follow good practice guidelines for publishing information on the web to ensure that it is accessible. Is your website user friendly and easy to navigate? If you provide information to download use a range of formats – many people have difficulty opening pdfs for example. Ensure any surveys on your website offer both downloadable and online questionnaires.

Ensure that any electronic presentations and films that you use are accessible. For example, PowerPoint presentations, should use strongly contrasting colours and large fonts. Films should be subtitled and if possible include sign language interpretation.

You can find out where to get further information in the areas outlined above in the appendix.

How do I organise an inclusive and accessible engagement event?

As well as going out and meeting people in their own spaces, you may also want to organise your own events to encourage people to become involved with your service / organisation. Your aim is to make it as easy as possible for people to attend and participate. Here are some things to consider:

- Why do you want to hold an event – what is its aim and purpose?
- Who is the target audience?
- What type of event are you going to hold?
- What resources (time, budget, and staff) do you have to organise the event?

Type of event

The type of event you have will depend on your reason for holding the event and the resources that you have. Do you want to reach people from particular communities and diverse backgrounds? Do you want to consult or share information with a large group of people at the same time? Do you want smaller informal meetings / focus groups?

Events could include coffee mornings, tea and toast drop ins, lunch events, focus groups, consultations, conferences, road shows, fun days, activities and visits to your organisation. You could have a mix of events. You could ask the people that you are trying to reach or organisations involved with people from the backgrounds that you want to reach for advice. You could have different types of events on different days and times to reach a wider group of people.

Different types of event have different considerations depending on your target audience but these are some of the things you need to consider for a day event such as a conference. Many of the suggestions can be adapted for other types of event.

1. Before the event
2. Day, date and time of event
3. Location and venue
4. Access (physical, communication, catering, expenses)
5. Format and timetable of the event
6. After the event

1 Before the event

- What resources do you have for your event in terms of budget and staff?
- Think about how you are going to promote the event to people who you would like to attend and ensure you have enough time to do this.
- Use different methods of promotion, remember not everyone is online and use traditional methods such as post, newspapers, TV, radio, leaflets and posters.
- Decide if it is an event where people must book a place or whether they can drop in on the day.
- If people need to book, send out booking forms in plenty of time and ask for information on people's dietary, replacement care and access requirements. If you are not sure of a request contact the person and ask for clarification, don't make assumptions.
- Have a deadline for the return of the booking forms that gives you time to meet any access requirements and to provide information on dietary requirements to caterers.
- If it is an open invitation but you are still going to provide refreshments or lunch, ensure there are vegetarian and vegan options.
- Build a good relationship with venue staff and have a direct line of communication both before the event and on the day. Check things with them such as facilities and equipment, insurance and emergency procedures.
- If people have booked a place, send out confirmations, joining instructions and clear directions to the venue prior to the event.

2 Day, date and time of the event

Different days, dates and times have advantages and disadvantages.

Day and Date

- When choosing a day and date for your event it is good practice to avoid significant religious dates and important festivals. For example, it is not advisable to hold evening meetings during Ramadan, the Muslim holy month when people tend to meet up with their families or to have long day meetings with refreshments during this time when people are fasting.
- Many people have religious commitments on certain days of the week. Many Christians may go to church on a Sunday. Some Jews may prefer not to attend an event on the Sabbath (Saturday) and many Muslims might visit their mosque on a Friday for prayers.
- It might also be advisable to avoid school holidays and clashes with major sporting or cultural events.
- Are there similar events being held nearby on the same day as your event?

Time

How much time will you need for your event, a full day, a half day? A conference will generally require a full day but an outreach event could be half a day or shorter.

Think about the time of the event. It might be more convenient for disabled people, carers, parents / guardians to attend events later in the day, some people don't like being out after dark, many people work during the week and would like to attend events in the evening or at the weekend.

If you want to reach members of the public, try not to start your event too early. Starting an event before 10am may mean that some people will struggle to get to your event. Early start times can exclude people with children because of the school run. Some disabled people may not be able to attend meetings that are held earlier in the day. They may need extra time in the morning to prepare for their day and / or they may have to wait for their support worker to start work. Similarly, aim to have events finish by 4pm so that people can go home early and in safety.

3 Location and venue

The location and type of venue you choose depends on how many people you are trying to attract and how much money you have available to spend on your event. Things to consider are:

- Is the venue appropriate for the group of people that you are trying to

reach? Some venues such as local authority offices might be intimidating for people; they might prefer to go to community venues. Some function rooms in leisure centres and hotels have bars which might deter some people from attending.

- Is the location easy to find? Is it on public transport routes and are there regular services? Is there disabled parking nearby? Are there car drop off points near the entrance for those who need to use them because of accessibility requirements?
- Think about how many rooms you will need and the room layout. Do you need a stage for speakers? Would you like the room set up cabaret style, boardroom, conference, theatre style, U shape?
- Are you going to have information stalls at your event? How will you set them out?
- Draw up a floor plan to work from.
- Can you offer a prayer room or quiet room?
- Visit the venue prior to the event to conduct an audit, check accessibility, lighting and temperature in the rooms you will be using.
- On the day provide clear simple signs to direct people where to go.

4 Access

As well as accessibility in terms of transport there are other issues to consider when organising an inclusive engagement event, depending on the type of event that you have.

This section will look at the following issues:

- Physical Access
- Access and Communication
- Access and Catering
- Access and Expenses

Physical Access

- Does the venue have alternatives to steps? If lifts are to be used, are venue staff trained in evacuation procedures for people who use wheelchairs or have mobility issues in case of lift breakdown or fire?
- Remember to include spaces for people who use wheelchairs or mobility scooters in your room layouts but ensure that these spaces are not all in one part of the room.
- If people bring their support workers, ensure that they are seated beside them.

- Always set up a room with inclusion in mind. If you need to have a stage at the front of the room, ensure that it is accessible and has stepped and ramped access.
- Ensure that there are open spaces for people to get from one end of the room to another. Is there room for people who use wheel chairs to manoeuvre? Make sure there are no obstacles for people with a visual impairment.
- Are the toilets accessible? Are there gender neutral toilets? If there are let people know - it might remove a concern for transgender people.
- Ensure that they are clear signs directing people around the venue to your event.
- Don't make assumptions. Ask people if they need assistance.

Access and Communication

Depending on the type of the event there are a range of things to think about that will ensure communication is accessible. For an event such as a conference you can ask people to complete booking forms prior to the day and to include whether they have any access requirements. Issues to consider are:

- Does the venue have a hearing loop system if you need to use it? Does it work and do venue staff know how to operate it?
- Do you have microphones and a Public Address (PA) system available? Do you need a roving microphone as well as a static microphone?
- Are presentations visually accessible? Consider font size and colour. If videos are shown, do they have subtitles and or sign language interpretation?
- Can you provide palantypists if required? If yes, ensure you can meet their equipment requirements such as dedicated display screens?
- If you have an event with presentations and guest speakers it is important that everyone can see the front of the room, the speakers, presentations and displays. Are there adequate lighting levels for people who might have impaired vision?
- Can you provide information packs including a programme / agenda and copies of presentations? Can you provide these in large print for those who require them?
- People requiring Language Support Professionals must have seating near where this support is placed.
- If people have asked, can you provide British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters and / or Makaton?

- Can you provide information on audio tapes if required? Many Deaf people will only be able to access information via BSL video or sign language interpretation.
- Provide information in Plain English and avoid jargon.
- Use gender neutral language if possible.

Can you offer information in Easy Read? Making information easier for people with learning difficulties to understand can make it better for everyone else too, and for other people who have difficulty reading complicated things, e.g. people whose first language is not English, and people who find reading difficult.

Can you offer to provide interpreters and / or information in community languages? This is particularly important if you are aiming to connect with people from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds. Get advice from people, groups and organisations from the communities that you want to link with on what languages might be required and in what format.

Think about how you can involve people who can't attend your event. Can you use:

- Skype
- Twitter
- Facebook
- Live streaming
- Can you send out post event reports?

Access and Catering

You should aim to provide a welcoming and supportive environment for people attending your event. Offering refreshments to people that you want to involve in your services is good practice because it shows respect for people. They might have come a long way; they might not have been able to go home for food or they might not be able to afford to buy food. There might also not be suitable food places near to the venue or people might feel unsafe going to shops / cafés / restaurants they are unfamiliar with.

- If it is a day event such as a conference, provide refreshments on arrival and regular refreshments breaks.
- When providing lunch, take into consideration people's dietary requirements. If requested can you provide vegetarian, vegan, halal, non-halal and kosher options? Inform the caterers of any dietary

requirements prior to the event and ensure that they can answer any questions about the food provided. It is often a good idea to order 50 per cent vegetarian and 50 per cent non-vegetarian food.

- If you provide a buffet, keep vegetarian and halal food separate from meat and non-halal food. Make sure that everything is labelled. If people have specific dietary requests, particularly relating to allergies, have the food plated and delivered directly to the person requesting it.
- Have water available throughout the event.
- If possible, provide tables and chairs for people during lunch. Some people might find it difficult to eat holding a plate and standing up.
- Be aware of potential issues that might arise. For example, some people will not eat in the same room where there is a guide dog. To overcome this, can you offer a second room that can be used.
- Have a dog bowl to provide water for any guide dogs in attendance.

Access and Expenses

A major barrier for many people when going to events is having to meet the financial costs of attending themselves. In order to increase the accessibility of your event can you:

- Offer to pay travel, access and replacement care costs to those attending the event. These could include (if requested) taxis for disabled people, interpreters, additional support workers, additional accessible information and Language Service Professionals.
- Offer vouchers / time credits to people for the time that they contribute?
- Offer to pay child-minding fees or can you provide crèche facilities on the day if required?

5 Format and timetable for the day

- If you are running a day event such as a conference, have a timetable so that people can take part effectively.
- Greet people when they arrive and explain the purpose of the day.
- Consider having name badges for people.
- Let people know what to expect, provide a programme or an agenda.
- Keep to time.
- Consider having ground rules for the event to ensure that people can contribute. These could include not having more than one person speaking at a time, confidentiality, being polite and using respectful language.
- If you are photographing, filming or recording the event let people know and ask them to tell you if they object to this.
- At the start of the event welcome people and inform them of "housekeeping" issues such as where the toilets are, fire exits, planned alarms, turning mobile phones to silent, etc.
- Have regular breaks, at least every 90 minutes. Comfort breaks and refreshments breaks will benefit everyone, particularly people providing communication support and people who need to take medication at regular intervals, e.g. those with diabetes.
- If you have an event where you require people to move around, e.g. to workshop rooms, give them plenty of time to do so.
- Keep main speakers and presentations short.
- Give people the opportunity to have their say, e.g. question and answer sessions.
- Some people might not have the confidence to speak up at large meetings, can you provide options for them to write their questions down and pass them on to the speakers?
- Have activities and opportunities for discussion, don't just talk at people.
- Build in time for informal discussion.
- Have different methods of evaluation for the event.

6 After the event

Can you:

- Give people the opportunity to stay in touch?
- Let them know the results of their involvement?
- Send them feedback?

Part 4: Conclusion

This guide gives an overview of how service providers and organisations can connect with people from diverse backgrounds. It looks at general principles of why organisations should connect with people, ideas for how they can do this, and issues that they should consider if they want to effectively involve people in their services.

The information in the guide has been informed by members of the Co-Creating Healthy Change Project at Diverse Cymru. These are people from diverse backgrounds who have been coming together over the last 4 years to have their say on health, well-being and social care services. Members have contributed their views on how organisations can connect with people through the project's events, Advisory Group and Good Practice Working Group.

People are experts in their own lives and have a wealth of experience and knowledge that they can contribute to improving health, well-being and social care services. Many people are keen to link up with service providers to share this knowledge and experience. It is important that service providers connect with people from diverse communities as their voices are often overlooked due to a range of barriers.

This guide suggests ways in which service providers can overcome these barriers and connect with people. It is not a comprehensive manual on how to connect with every person from every diverse background but it highlights a range of methods that service providers can use to meet people and start the conversations to involve them in service delivery.

The following appendix contains links to more in-depth information for service providers who want to focus on particular aspects of engaging with people including community engagement, co-production, accessibility and diversity.

Part 5: Appendix

Co-Creating Healthy Change Portfolio

Co-Creating Healthy Change, funded under Community Voices by Big Lottery, is a portfolio of 10 projects working across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan so that people are able to influence decisions about health and well-being services and co-create change in health and social care public service delivery.

Managed by Cardiff Third Sector Council and Glamorgan Voluntary Services, the portfolio operated from 2013 until 2017 to develop people's skills, enabling them to influence decisions about the delivery of health and well-being services in their area.

www.c3sc.org.uk/partnerships/community-voice-co-creating-healthy-change

Diverse Cymru

Diverse Cymru is a unique Welsh charity committed to supporting people faced with inequality and discrimination because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation

www.diversecymru.org.uk

C3SC

Cardiff Third Sector Council - **www.c3sc.org.uk**

GVS

Glamorgan Voluntary Services **www.gvs.wales**

Community Engagement

Participation Cymru

Participation Cymru is a partnership of public and third sector organisations hosted by WCVA. It works with public service organisations in the public, private and third sectors to achieve better public engagement in the design, development and delivery of citizen-centred services for the people of Wales.

- National Principles for Public Engagement **www.participationcymru.org.uk/national-principles**
- Models of Engagement **www.participationcymru.org.uk/resources/models-of-engagement**
- Practitioners' manual for public engagement

http://www.participationcymru.org.uk/national-principles/practitioners-manual-for-public-engagement

"Communities First Engagement with Black and Minority Ethnic groups"
http://gov.wales/docs/dsjlg/publications/comm/140814-comm-first-engagement-bme-groups.pdf

"Best Practice Guidance for Engagement and Consultation with Older People on Changes to Community Services in Wales"
http://www.olderpeoplewales.com/Libraries/Uploads/Community_Services_Guidance_for_LAs.sflb.ashx

Co-production

Co-Production Wales... putting co-production at the heart of public services in Wales
https://allinthistogetherwales.wordpress.com/coproduction/

Wales Co-Production Group
Co-production practitioners' network: design and delivery of services by citizens and professionals in equal partnership
http://coproductionnetwork.com/group/walescoproductiongroup

SCIE (Social Care Institute for Excellence)
Co-production training and resources for health and social care managers, commissioners, frontline practitioners, people who use services and carers. Improve participation and co-production with people who use services and carers to develop and deliver better social care and health provision.
http://www.scie.org.uk/co-production/

1000 Lives Improvement
1000 Lives Improvement is the national improvement service for NHS Wales delivered by Public Health Wales.
www.1000livesplus.wales.nhs.uk/home

- "1000 Lives Tools for Improvement: Co-producing services, Co-creating health"
  www.1000livesplus.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/1011/t4i%20%288%29%20co-production.pdf

- "Co-producing prudent healthcare: putting people in the picture" **www.prudenthealthcare.org.uk/coproduction/**

Accessibility

Action on Hearing Loss – Wales

www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/about-us/wales.aspx

- All Wales Standards for Accessible Communication and Information for People with Sensory Loss **http://gov.wales/topics/health/publications/health/guidance/standards/?lang=en**

Disability Wales

"Good Practice Toolkit – Accessible events and meetings"

www.disabilitywales.org/toolkit/practical-resources/accessible-meetings-and-events/

Easy Read Health Wales

Improving the health and well-being of people with a learning disability in Wales

- "Handbook for making easy read information" **www.easyreadhealthwales.org.uk/miscpages/handbook-for-making-easy-read-information.aspx**

Plain English

Fighting for crystal-clear communication since 1979

www.plainenglish.co.uk

RNIB

Supporting people with sight loss

- "Providing accessible information" **www.rnib.org.uk/accessible-information-campaign**

UK Government Publications

"How to produce communications that include, accurately portray, and are accessible to disabled people."

www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-communication

Carers

Carers Trust Wales
https://carers.org/country/carers-trust-wales-cymru

Practical considerations when involving users and carers
https://blogs.city.ac.uk/communityengagement/guidelinesfaq/getting-user-and-carers-involved/

Disabled people

Disability Wales
www.disabilitywales.org

Learning Disability

Cardiff People First
Putting people with a learning disability first.
www.cardiffpeoplefirst.org.uk

Learning Disability Advisory Group
Advising Welsh Government on the issues influencing the lives of people with a learning disability in Wales and those who support them. Helping to shape Welsh policy and practice. Sharing information and expertise. Engaging with the community.
www.ldag.info

Vale People First
Vale People First is a self advocacy organisation for and led by people with a learning disability in the Vale of Glamorgan.
www.valepeoplefirst.org.uk

Mental Health

Cavamh (Cardiff and Vale Action for Mental Health)
Supporting voluntary sector, service user and carer involvement in the

development of mental health services across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan
www.cavamh.org.uk

Cultural Diversity

Information about religious holidays
www.interfaithcalendar.org

Diverse Cymru

"Cultural Competency Toolkit: A Practical Guide for Mental Health professionals, other professionals and front-line staff working within the Mental Health, Health and Social Care Sector in Wales."

- to help staff better interact with clients with mental ill health who are from different cultures

www.diversecymru.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Cultural-Competency-Toolkit.pdf

Race Equality First

- Cultural Awareness in Community Engagement - Training

This course is aimed at providing participants with an opportunity to gain a wider knowledge of cultural diversity and distinguishing between culture and faith. The course raises awareness of the public sector engagement duties under the Equality Act 2010.
www.refweb.org.uk/training/default.htm

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People

Stonewall Cymru

Stonewall Cymru aims to achieve legal equality and social justice for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in Wales.
www.stonewallcymru.org.uk

The NHS Centre for Equality and Human Rights

- Meeting the Primary Care Health Needs of Transgender and Gender Diverse Patients: Developing a Model of Best Practice

www.equalityhumanrights.wales.nhs.uk/meeting-the-primary-care-health-needs-of

Older People

Older People's Commissioner for Wales
www.olderpeoplewales.com/en/home.aspx

Cardiff 50+ Forums
Email: equalityteam@cardiff.gov.uk

Vale 50+ Strategy Forum
Working for a Better Future for People Aged 50+ in the Vale of Glamorgan
http://valeopf.webplus.net

Legal

The Equality Act 2010

- Equality Act 2010: guidance
  www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance
- What is the Equality Act?
  www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act-2010/what-equality-act

Social Service Health and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

- Care Council Wales – Social care legislation in Wales Information and Learning Hub
  www.ccwales.org.uk/the-act

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
http://thewaleswewant.co.uk/about/well-being-future-generations-wales-act-2015

Religion

NES Multi-Faith Resource for Healthcare Staff
www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/media/3720/march07finalversions.pdf.pdf

diverse cymru

Promoting equality for all
Hyrwyddo cydraddoldeb i bawb

Diverse Cymru is a unique Welsh charity committed to supporting people faced with inequality and discrimination because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

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