



" Working Together "

Information Pack 2nd Draft

Clearer Voices for People 50 plus

This pack is to tell people about Working Together - a strategy to enable the engagement of people age 50 + in the work of Cumbria County Council's Adult Social Care Directorate, particularly by the development of Forums which include users, carers, interested citizens and partner organisations.

The pack gives information on what a forum is and how Working Together can inform and support your local 50 + forum.

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Additional information provided with this pack:

- Expression of Interest form
- Working Together Leaflet



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Charity Registration Number: 1117645
Member of AdviceUK (previously FIAC)

Company Limited by Guarantee: 5990592
Registered in England and Wales



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Outline of Working Together Strategy

Working Together Strategy is a working document that outlines the strategic direction for the engagement of service users, carers and concerned citizens in the work of Cumbria County Council's Adult Social Care Directorate, particularly by the development of Working Together Forums for people who are 50 +.

The strategy is being implemented by a steering group which aims to:

- Demonstrate that users and carer views are considered and used in decision making.
- Achieve a coordinated approach to participation, avoiding duplication across localities.
- Achieve improved standards in engagement, obtaining views more successfully, with detailed feedback.
- Consider fully the challenges people face to fully engage.
- Avoid over reliance on one-off consultations.
- Continue to map engagement and to empower and enfranchise existing networks.
- Promote inclusion and participation for all people 50 + including people who are currently seldom heard.
- Provide practical and financial support to facilitate the running of working together forums.

The strategy is linked to several national initiatives which are outlined in the appendix to this document:-

- In Control Total
- Seldom Heard Voices
- Local Involvement Networks (LINKs)
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

Information about Working Together (50 +) Forums

What is a forum?

By meeting together as a forum, people aged 50 + are making their voices heard on the things that really matter to them, influencing the planning and provision of local, regional and national services.

Although they vary in size from small groups to those with members numbering many hundreds, forums all have a number of important features in common:

- They are independent organisations which give a collective voice to people 50 +, to influence decision-makers on matters which impact on their every-day lives.
- They are run by local people who are 50 +, for local people. All members are volunteers.
- They are democratic and inclusive.
- They decide their own agenda, sharing information and raising issues of concern as they see fit.
- Forums help combat disadvantage by providing a platform where older people can speak out on the issues that concern them.
- As well as their campaigning efforts, many have social activities, run trips and hold open meetings, helping to break down isolation by providing opportunities for older members of the community to socialise, meet new people and keep in touch with local news.

How to get involved:

If you are interested in finding out more about the forums there are several ways you can get involved -

- Contact your local forum or talk to member of a forum about a service
- Attend a meeting
- Fill in questionnaires of surveys
- Share your concerns, ideas, experiences with us

If you would like to discuss any aspect of the forums or need information about the availability of forums in your area please contact Signposts (details on page 7).

Information for Existing forums - What we can offer

- Admin package to Older People's Forums with a financial contribution to help with admin support, printing, stationary and postage.
- Training for Forum members on engagement and forum development.
- Support to develop engagement in local communities, including training of social care managers and staff.
- Support and develop existing networks by developing email groups and websites to distribute pertinent and up to date information i.e. new consultations; social policy.

Signposts - Who we are, what we do and how we do it

Signposts is a charitable organisation which aims to relieve the poverty and promote the benefits of the inhabitants of Lancashire & Cumbria, without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, age, race or of political religious or other opinions.

We work to 'empower the community' by developing and delivering a range of targeted services that are accessible and affordable to everyone. The services we develop aim to address the needs of the most disadvantaged and hard to reach people within their communities. The projects we deliver are diverse and creative.

The project is delivered in Lancashire and Cumbria via:

- Prevention, effective signposting to other services, and the reduction of inappropriate referrals to other agencies.
- Intervention at a low level to identify the correct route into services
- Partnership work with others around casework and ongoing support and intervention
- Empowerment of people beyond crisis
- Empowerment of communities to meet their own needs
- Provision of intervention and support work at a level appropriate to need, providing services below the threshold criteria, and on behalf of, local statutory service providers

Signposts current work with Older Adults includes:

- **Clearer Voices for Older People**

Signposts provides administrative support to the Lancashire and Cumbria Older Person's NSF Reference Group "Clearer Voices for Older People". Signposts role was to provide a coherent approach to the development of the group; raising awareness of its existence to appropriate organisations and ensure sustainability and independence for the group.

- **50Forward**

50Forward aims to provide a service to people (50+) to enable them to access services, activities, volunteering, employment, training and leisure opportunities to enable them to meet their own needs, and to be included within their communities and wider society, thereby engendering social cohesion.

Signposts role in 50 forward is called the 'navigator role' is designed to deliver a one-to-one time-limited support service that removes barriers to older people undertaking activities that interest them. This might include:

- a volunteer accompanying an older person to a new activity or to access a service
- helping to overcome practical barriers to engagement e.g. transport issues, caring responsibilities, helping the person access the personal care they need away from home
- signposting to services that can assist with rehabilitation e.g. when a mobility problem prevents the person accessing mainstream services.

- **Farming and Rural Health Project**

The Farming and Rural Health Project works within sparse rural communities to meet the following aims and objectives:

Aim: To provide a user friendly, easily accessible, non-threatening service to anyone seeking information and advice at Signposts whether by personal contact, telephone or letter. And to provide a support system for remote access Information and Advice within outreach settings in urban and rural areas.

Objectives

1. to meet the information needs of individuals, agencies and statutory bodies and the community (in conjunction with the core element of the work)
2. to make appropriate referrals to other agencies and services
3. to offer a holistic service to enquirers which seeks to address the concerns of the individual rather than provide answers to questions
4. to provide a suitable range of leaflets and publications
5. to provide local information sheets on a range of issues and directories
6. to offer specialist information and advice both within its own service and by offering space for other services to provide information and advice

How to get in touch

Contact details at Signposts

Susan Edwards

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Email: workingtogether@signposts.org.uk

Website: www.workingtogether.signposts.org.uk

Signposts is an Investor in People

Registered Charity (1117645)

Company Limited by Guarantee (5990592)

Registered in England and Wales

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Contact details at Adult Social Care Directorate, Cumbria County Council

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Appendix

National Initiatives which influence Working Together

'in Control total'

(Extract from Cumbria County Council website:

www.cumbria.gov.uk/adultsocialcare/iCT/default.asp)

Cumbria County Council's Adult Social Care Directorate is taking part in 'in Control Total', a national project starting in 2007 which seeks to change the way support is arranged for people who use services.

Cumbria has been one of a number of 'in Control' pilots across the country. Cumbria's pilot sought to offer better outcomes for people with learning disabilities through the use of self-directed support and individual budgets. So far, 270 people with learning disabilities have been given an individual budget, many of whom have used these to pay for flexible and innovative services.

'in Control Total' extends these ideas so that they apply to all adults, including older people, younger people with disabilities, younger people with mental health problems and carers. The principles of 'in Control Total' will apply to all social care services for all adults. Our target, as part of the 'in Control Total' project is to have at least 50% of service users with individual budgets by May 2009.

Put simply, 'in Control' and 'in Control Total' aim to put people in control of the support they need. Through this we aim to offer better outcomes for people who use services.

Seldom Heard Voices

(Extract from Social Care Institute for Excellence - Practice guide 11, the Participation of Adult Service users:

www.scie.org.uk/publications/practiceguides/practiceguide11/practice/practice5.asp)

There is now greater awareness of the need to include 'seldom heard' or so-called 'hard to reach' groups. The three main reasons why this should take place are:

1. All service users have equal rights as citizens to make sure that their views are heard.
2. Service users comprise an extremely diverse group (Begum, 2005; Beresford & Branfield, 2006) and this should be reflected if participation strategies are to be both inclusive and representative.
3. Members of seldom heard groups may have separate or differing needs for participation (Begum, 2005).

There is a danger that service user engagement is seen as applying only to those who are currently receiving services and fails to address groups of people who are under represented or who do not receive a service.

There are some groups of users who are more stigmatised than others and they may feel reluctant to disclose their status as a service user. In these instances, it may be necessary to use methods aimed at providing an individual and collective voice for service users at risk of being excluded from more mainstream traditional types of involvement. For example, separate focus groups for people with a learning disability have been used as part of Best Value consultations (Cambridge & McCarthy, 2001)

Local Involvement Networks (LINKs)

(from Cumbria LINK Stakeholder Briefing)

From 1st April 2008, a new system of 150 Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) will be created. Each local area will have a LINK which will be run by individuals and groups with a remit covering most publicly funded health and social care services.

The Role of the LINK will be to:

- Find out what citizens think about and want from local health and social care services
- Investigate specific issues of concern to the community
- Suggest ideas to help improve the care people receive

They will be able to:

- Enter specific services and view the care provided
- Ask commissioners for information about services, and expect a response
- Make reports and recommendations and expect a response from commissioners

- Refer matters to the local Overview and Scrutiny Committee

LINK membership will be open to:

- Individuals with an interest in improving care services for example carers, service users
- Groups such as charities, faith groups, tenants associations and independent providers of services and other might join to make sure those they represent are championed.

Likely benefits of LINKs:

- A single system to involve communities
- Help to inform health and social care commissioners' decisions and support contract management
- Support the NHS to meet the strengthened 'duty to involve'
- Give providers ongoing feedback
- Help management assess if services meet local need
- Allow Overview and Scrutiny Committees to base reviews on actual feedback
- Help regulators access local information
- Build community views into Local Strategic partnerships in Local Agreements process

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

(Extract from Joint Strategic Needs Assessment guidance published by DoH)

In order to achieve the world class services that people expect, we must have a full understanding of local needs.

The requirement for Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, created earlier this year in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act, will lead to stronger partnerships between communities, local government, and the NHS, providing a firm foundation for commissioning that improves health and social care provision and reduces inequalities.

We firmly believe that community engagement is an essential element of Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, and that the process will, in itself, have a positive impact on health and wellbeing. Engaging with communities includes understanding whether services have delivered what was expected, and whether service users have had their needs met.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment will identify areas for priority action through Local Area Agreements. It will help commissioners, including practice based commissioners, to specify outcomes that encourage local innovation, and help providers shape services to address needs. We will therefore look for evidence that commissioning decisions have been informed by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, to achieve improved health and wellbeing and reduced inequalities at best value for all.

Working Together

Expression of Interest - Existing Forums

Forum Name _____

Main Contact Details

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Email _____

Phone _____

What can Working Together provide for your forum:

- More information on the strategy
- Access to training
- Information about forum systems and structures
- Increasing membership and development of the forum
- Help to access funding and resources
- Information on In Control Total
- Anything else? _____

Please return to:

Susan Edwards

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58 Regent Road

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LA3 1TE

Fax: 01524 411541

Email: workingtogether@signposts.org.uk

Working Together

Expression of Interest - Older Adults and Carers

Main Contact Details

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Email _____

Phone _____

What can Working Together provide for you:

- More information on the strategy
- Information about Older Peoples Forums
- Contact information for your local forum
- Information on Adult and Social Care Services
- Information on In Control Total
- Anything else? _____

Please return to:

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