

# Community engagement & experience

Impact Report April 2023

Our vision is to improve health and reduce inequalities in our local community



# Who We Are

The Community Engagement and Experience Team at Solent NHS Trust work in partnership with patients, families, carers, local communities and Solent teams to ensure the community voice is at the heart of all we do. Together, we have developed Alongside Communities - the Solent approach to engagement and inclusion. In that we describe the three things that our community have asked us to focus on improving - those things that matter most to them.



## Core values

**People participation**  
enabling people who use our services to be at the centre of decision making about their care and treatment at all stages, phases and levels of their health care

**Community engagement**  
understanding what our local community does best, what they may need some help from us with and what we need to focus our expertise and energies on.

**Health Inequalities**  
adopting a positive approach to improving access, experience and outcomes for all.

## How We Work

In community engagement, we start with what's strong, not with what's wrong, we recognise the value of lived experience and seek out community partners willing to share their knowledge. We strive to build trusting relationships with the communities we serve, working with small places, or small groups of shared interest to improve our services in line with our core values.

# What we do

Community Conversations

Work with the PALS complaints service

Improve experiences of care

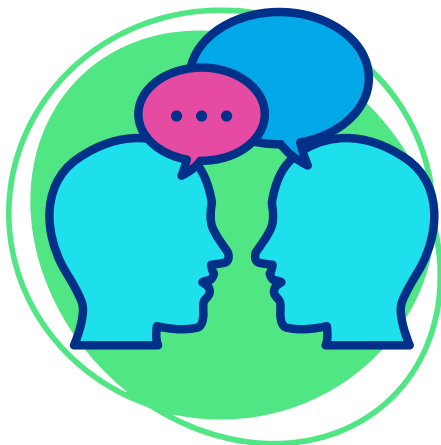
Support community partners

Pilot national initiatives

Reduce health inequalities

Support and improve the volunteer service

Review feedback and act to improve



# 2022 at a glance



**5000**

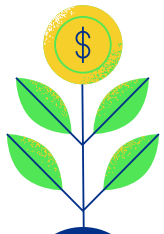
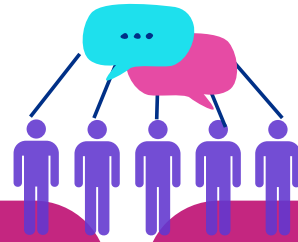
People spoken to and their feedback was used to inform service improvements

**63/73**

Co produced objectives have been completed with communities

**100**

community organisations worked with us and 14 of them worked with seldom listened to groups



**40%**

of income generated has been invested back into our community

**8**

Services supported to work with 500 members of the community to develop and improve services

**500,000**

is our potential reach as we expanded our community partners network.

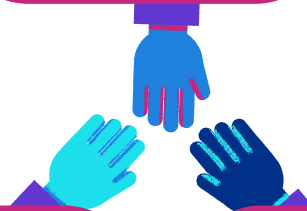


Almost  
**30,000**

People provided feedback through our team

We are recognised as NHS leaders relating to our work with communities and we have presented at 10 national events

We have built trusting relationships with our communities and engaged with the people most affected by health inequalities



# Timeline

**2020**

Discovery and exploration with help from some friends – to find out what do we knew and what we didn't.

**2019**

Declared organisational commitment to community engagement

**2021**

We reached out and listened to communities which resulted in the co creation of Alongside Communities to improve experience of care.

**2022**

Holding regular community conversations and encouraging people participation is how we work and it is how we identify what is important to communities.

**2023**

Continued to ensure that communities remained at the centre of decision-making in our organisation.

# Expansion of the Community Partners Programme

Our community partners programme has developed rapidly since its launch in 2020. We value working with our community partners and over the past year we have been focusing on expanding our reach.

## What is a community partner?

Community partners are members of the local community made up of a wide variety of people including: voluntary organisations, charities, patient representatives, NHS organisations and members of the general public

## How do we work alongside community partners?

We work with our community partners in multiple ways. Their knowledge and contacts are invaluable when holding community conversations.

We operate using a strength-based approach, which means we recognise our communities as being strong, with exceptional knowledge, skills and experience. It is our mission to reach as many communities as possible, which is why we have hosted events and visited community groups in person.

We've increased partners by 22% from 225 to 275

In 2022/23 we have fully funded 3 projects in the community

We've hosted 26 workshops & events, and we joined 69 events held by others

The IAPT service has a new minority ethnic community outreach worker after we identified gaps in support available to minority ethnic communities

# Feedback from our communities

'The connect events are such a brilliant idea, getting everyone in a room to meet. Much needed and appreciated – please do more of them'

*(Community Partner at Super connect event)*

'You are ahead of the curve when it comes to community partnerships, something you can be proud of.'

*(Community Partner at What's Strong Event)*

'Whatever else comes from your sessions on People First, you have changed the lives of my mum, my sister and myself as well as my nieces who also care for my mum. I hope the Time for T session on Tuesday was useful for you and worth doing. They did really appreciate it.'

*(Participant LGBTQ+ conversation)*

'It was a good session and involved the local community to express their opinions. This conversation was very much needed! Well done'

*(Participant at QI event)*

'What a difference you have made for my mum's mental and hopefully physical health. She is over the moon that someone is coming to assess her'.

*(Participant at carers event who had been supported following the event to get care for her mother)*

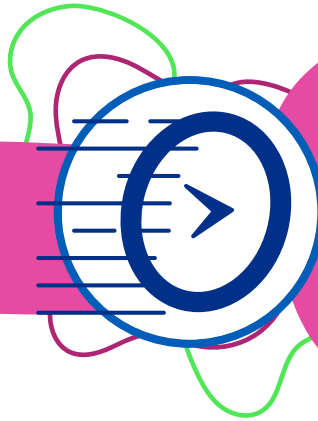
# Improvements made to service-user experience

Review complaints and take action to improve our services



We have carried out two deep dives this year, into staff attitudes, and behaviours and communication. We have developed several strategies to improve these areas which will be launched in the coming year.

Extend the Waiting Well feedback call list to areas with longer waiting times



Our volunteer team have provided support to people on our waiting lists. We are expanding this support following positive feedback from service users

Use the learning from the carers support project to improve the support available to carers



Following recommendations from our carers project, we have raised awareness which has resulted in us developing a carers passport with other Trusts.

Create and use a system of post-discharge feedback calls



We have developed our process for delivering post discharge feedback calls with volunteers. This will be rolled out across the Trust this year



# Case study: Quality Improvement Project

## How to engage ethnic minority men within healthcare

We noticed a historic lack of male attendance at our community events, particularly men from ethnic minority backgrounds. We were concerned about maintaining equity when carrying out our community conversations, so we undertook a project enlisting a group of men of varying ages and backgrounds to get their views on the issue.

To begin the project we assembled a group of men to help us develop different strategies for engagement and advertisements used for past events, particularly posters. We also utilised effective tools such as fishbone diagrams to identify underlying issues of the larger problem.



From this project we set some goals to improve male attendance at our events:

To work with groups across Southampton to explore organising a health and wellbeing event in Southampton, and another in Portsmouth later in the year.

To co-produce communications such as posters to ensure that the target community has opportunity to give us their feedback.

To make a conscious effort in promoting events to male and minority ethnic groups, ensuring promotional materials are advertised in places where these groups will be able to find them easily.

The amount of ethnic minority men attending events has gone up by 25% since undertaking this project!

### We learned:

- Regular reviews of service users will help to identify gaps and enable us to increase equity when carrying out community engagement.
- When planning events we must ensure active inclusion of our target groups.
- When we're creating public-facing communications we must gather feedback from our target group to make sure our efforts to reach out to them are the most impactful and effective.



# Complaints feedback

With our complaint review project, we are now able to understand better what the problem is, and can act to improve services. In our six month study, we found that a third of all complaints were about values and behaviours of staff.

To combat this, we have developed a multi-faceted action plan:

- We are launching a social media campaign to promote positivity in the trust and boost morale.
- We are introducing values and behaviours champions
- We are creating a reflection toolkit for staff and providing more training for managers to better support their teams

We shortened and improved patient surveys to increase the accuracy of the results

We increased training by the Experience of Care team from 1 session a year to 10

We introduced Writing Champions to assist case handlers in offering advice, and our community partners now audit samples of our complaint response letters

This year we have seen the number of complaints received annually decrease by 12%. This decrease can primarily be attributed to the increase in early resolution phone calls that we have been having through out the year reaching out to more people who have raised a concern.

We co-produced an easy read patient survey to increase accessibility

Our PALS function handled 702 service concerns in this reporting period compared to 658 in 2021-22 an increase of 6%. The Trust aims to provide early resolutions to service concerns within a quick timeframe which should not exceed 5 working days.

Complaints duration from start to finish reduced from 51 days to close to 48



# Volunteer action plan

In 2022/23 we developed a volunteer action plan which sets out our co-produced plan for developing the way we work with volunteers to support our services.

Streamlined our recruitment process

Increased roles available to our volunteers

Increased diversity by recruiting more young people and ethnic minority volunteers

Supported 18 teams and services across the trust

Organised 53 placements for volunteers

We have reviewed our volunteer recruitment processes and increased the roles that we have available, resulting in an improved match between volunteers and our services.

We have also increased our outreach into our communities, regularly attending community events to recruit more volunteers particularly from ethnic minority communities and young people so that we can continue to increase the diversity amongst our volunteer workforce.

Volunteering not only supports our services to give services a better experience it can also have a positive impact on the volunteer.

## Paula's story

I actually retired from my paid job in Adult Social Care at the end of January 2022 and was then approached to do some voluntary work again but this time supporting the MSK team at Solent NHS Trust. Once again, it's really good to feel that you are doing something useful to support the NHS and staff who are dealing with really long waiting lists. The draw of this particular role is that I can do it from the comfort of my own home as it involves telephoning patients who are on the waiting list for treatment, from physiotherapists.

# Notes

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