

Involvement and equalities charter



Who we are and what we do

The Involvement and Equalities Team is a multi-disciplinary team, based in the Improvement Support Section, Strategy and Improvement directorate. We work together to ensure that people who use care services are at the centre of our work. Equality, inclusion and dignity are integrated into all our work across the organisation.

Involvement and equalities are at the heart of all we do and will drive us towards our vision for world-class care that is characterised by individuals receiving high quality care, experiencing positive outcomes, and having their rights respected. The Care Inspectorate exists to further improve the quality of social care and social work. We can only do that by involving people who experience care, many of whom will have protected characteristics or face disadvantage and exclusion.

We believe that the people who use services are experts in knowing what works for them. By using the information they share, we can strengthen the scrutiny and quality improvement work that we do. This is a person-centred and human rights approach which will help to improve the quality and consistency of social work and social care services in Scotland.

How we make sure you are at the heart

Aligned to the [Corporate Plan 2022–2025](#), our Involvement Charter and the [Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2021-2025](#) puts people who experience care right at the heart of our work. It also focuses on how we can help strengthen communities and reduce inequalities.

Our involvement and equalities activities aim to be meaningful and beneficial to the people who work with us so that they feel:

- included in matters that are important to them
- their voice is heard



- safe to share their lived experiences
- supported and empowered to participate in discussions that support decision making
- like they have been treated with dignity and respect.

Our Involvement and Equalities charter

Co-produced with our volunteers, the charter sets out our organisational commitment and aims for involvement. The charter's purpose is to make sure that people who experience care feel listened to, respected, included and valued. We recognise that everyone's voice matters.

The Care Inspectorate will:

1. Welcome people from a wide range of cultures, communities, circumstances, backgrounds, and ages.
2. Involve and support people who experience care services, their carers and those important to them in our activities.
3. Recognise the commitment and contribution of people we involve ensuring that we always provide feedback so that everyone feels respected and valued.
4. Make sure that the involvement opportunities we offer people make a real contribution to the work we do.
5. Offer a range of ways to be involved.
6. Use the skills and experiences of everyone involved practically, flexibly, and creatively so people are comfortable with how they are involved.
7. Be clear with people about the purpose of their involvement and how we will use their contributions.
8. Ensure information about being involved in our work is accessible and transparent .
9. Measure, review, and report on the outcomes of our involvement activities.
10. Work with relevant organisations and agencies to develop and share good practice.

Why do we involve people?

We involve people in our work for several reasons. Many people who experience care and support may be at risk of not having their voice heard, and we play a vital role in ensuring it is both heard and acted upon.

We also think that involving and including people who experience care in scrutiny and quality improvement support enhances our work. People bring their own personal experience of care and can help us understand how people might be feeling or what people might need, even when they cannot describe that themselves. We also know that some people are much more willing or comfortable sharing their experiences with their peers, rather than an inspector.

The law requires us to involve people who experience care in our work. The Duty of User Focus requires us to put people who experience care and their carers at the heart of our work. This helps us to improve the quality of design and delivery of care across Scotland as well as making a significant

impact in shaping our business and national policy developments. The duty is set out in the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 which requires the “involvement of users of scrutinised services in the design and delivery of scrutiny functions in relation to those services and the governance”.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Like other public bodies in Scotland, we are required to meet the requirements of the General and Specific [Public Sector Equality Duties](#), as set out by the [Equality Act 2010](#) and the [Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2012](#). We report on our equality obligations under the legislation every two years.

Here is a link to our latest [Equalities Mainstreaming Report](#).

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that the Care Inspectorate has important duties to promote equality between groups of people with protected characteristics and those who do not. Because many of our volunteers, and people experiencing care and support, have protected characteristics, our involvement work is a crucial part of this. It creates an opportunity, to further embed and promote equality throughout our processes with a view to advancing equality, tackling discrimination and fostering good relations.

Community empowerment

There will also be a growing emphasis on community empowerment. The Care Inspectorate has an important role to play in helping assess how well this is working, and to support improvements which empower people. Our involvement work works on an asset based approach to play a key role in helping to empower people, hear their voice, and support them to be involved in their own communities.

What do we mean by involvement?

There are many ways people who experience care and carers can be involved in our work. For people to be empowered they should be able to choose how and when they get involved. This might mean simply giving their views on care services or on a particular issue at an organised event or meeting. Alternatively, they may wish to become more involved in project group work and policy development on an ongoing basis; for example, by taking part in staff interviews, strategic groups, and inspections.

There are many different levels of involvement. Here are some examples.

<p>Co-producing with you</p> 	<p>Working in partnership as equals at the outset of a project or programme of work to achieve better outcomes and improved efficiency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development projects for policies, guidance and standards. - Recruitment activity - being involved on interview panels and decision making. - Being part of high level decision making groups on our work. - Improvement projects/ programmes and improvement support to services and/or providers.
<p>Engaging with you</p> 	<p>Ongoing mutually beneficial, two way partnership where decision making should be shared between all parties involved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working with us on scrutiny work (inspections and complaints). - Being part of strategic teams for local area inspections. - Giving advice and input on regulatory areas such as registration. - Inputting into improvement support ideas.
<p>Consulting with you</p> 	<p>Asking for and listening to views for example on a policy or a new area of work. These are used to influence decision makers or changes where appropriate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involving People Group. - Specific focus groups. - Consultation events and meetings. - Surveys and questionnaires. - Events/questions to inform equality impact assessments.

<p>Informing you</p> 	<p>Sharing information of interest with others in a variety of different ways for example inspection reports, leaflets, through websites and social media, emails, or letters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sending out newsletters (like Involve). - Emails and letters around particular subjects. - Social media (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn). - Inspection reports. - Letters. - Improvement updates, newsletters, evaluations and reports.
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Involving you

We use involvement as a term for all the work and activities we carry out with people who experience care and carers from information sharing to co-production. We offer a range of opportunities including inspecting with us, influencing our work and plans, being a member of our board and taking part in our consultations. Whatever you do, you will be making a positive difference for everyone experiencing care.

Volunteers and young inspection volunteers play a crucial part in our inspections. They talk to people experiencing care services and their relatives, ensuring their views contribute to our findings. Volunteers are members of the public who use care services, have used a care service in the past or care for someone such as a family member or friend. They help us to get the views of people using care services.

The volunteer scheme is a crucial mechanism for supporting the involvement of people who are receiving care services, and/or their carers. This is key to our ethos of 'putting people at the heart of regulation'.

As our volunteers have a background of using care services or as a family carer it means they can be well placed to communicate with people who have the same or similar experiences. They can also use their own experiences to add value to the inspection.

They spend time with people who experience care during the inspection and ensure the views of people using the service and carers are reflected accurately in the inspection.



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The Prince's Responsible Business Network
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