

# Dumfries and Galloway Health and Social Care Partnership Participation and Engagement Activity – Quarterly Report

July 2024 to October 2024

## **1. INTRODUCTION:**

This report provides an overview of the engagement and activity carried out by Dumfries and Galloway Health and Social Care Partnership during the period July 1 2024 to October 31 2024.

The report provides a comprehensive overview of the partnership's efforts to engage with the community, stakeholders, and service providers. It examines the various activities and initiatives undertaken to address emerging challenges and enhance the delivery of health and social care services in the region.

The partnership has prioritised community engagement as a cornerstone of its decision-making process.

Over the past quarter the partnership has seen a decision made by the Integration Joint Board in respect of options consulted on in Wigtownshire around maternity services, and also in respect of options for four cottage hospitals which were the focus of consultation within Right Care, Right Place.

The partnership has demonstrated its commitment to listening to the needs and concerns of the community and using this valuable input to shape the future of health and social care services in the region.

## **2 PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRUCTURES**

### **2.1 Consultation and Engagement Working Group**

As formally agreed by the Integration Joint Board, the Health and Social Care Partnership has an established Consultation and Engagement Working Group featuring representation from many different aspects of the partnership.

The group continues to meet monthly, chaired by the partnership's Communication and Engagement Manager and with members who are either trained in engagement or consultation and/or have direct, active experience within this area.

A number of significant pieces of engagement and consultation work have now become standing items on its agenda.

These include the Right Care, Right Place and Greening the Estate.

The group continues to play an important role in overseeing the significant engagement and consultation work being carried out within the partnership, providing advice and co-ordinating efforts, and signing off on formal public consultation in line with the agreed Framework.

## 2.2 Participation and Engagement Network

NHS Dumfries and Galloway holds the responsibility for maintaining the Participation and Engagement Network (PEN).

It serves as a communication channel to foster involvement from a wide array of community members, service users, and stakeholders.

Members are provided information on engagement activity and opportunities highlighted by partners in the multi-agency Participation and Engagement Working Group.

Over the last couple of years membership of the PEN has increased substantially. We have taken advantage of the significant engagement on issues such as maternity services and Right Care, Right Place to grow the membership to currently stand at 274.

A newsletter went out in the summer offering an update on engagement opportunities.

The PEN will also be employed to invite participation from a patient perspective in the NHS Annual Review on September 18.

### 3. PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY

#### 3.1 Maternity Services Review

On September 24 2024, at their meeting in Annan, the Integration Joint Board arrived at decisions in respect of maternity services in Wigtownshire.

This was informed by the results from the formal public consultation which focused on the two leading options which emerged from the independently-led service review.

Members discussed the findings of the consultation, which were presented in the thematic analysis produced independently by Sleeping Giants.

The decision, ultimately, was to retain the existing arrangements for maternity services in Wigtownshire for the foreseeable future.

This decision was communicated out to local stakeholders and media.

There was considerable media coverage, much of which featured a combination of material from the press release issued following the meeting as well as responses from local elected members and campaigners.

A detailed explanation had been provided, along with links to the papers which had gone to the IJB and a publicly-accessible video recording of the meeting hosted on the DGHSCP website.

No specific questions were received in response to the decision.

Members of Galloway Community Action Group invited further engagement from the IJB at a public meeting they arranged to take place at Stranraer Library on Saturday October 26, but it was communicated that no member of the IJB would be present.



### 3.3 Right Care, Right Place – Engagement and Consultation

Consultation on the future role of four cottage hospitals within Dumfries and Galloway came to a close on Friday 27 September.

The period of consultation on cottage hospitals in Moffat, Thornhill, Kirkcudbright and Newton Stewart had been extended as a consequence of the General Election earlier in the year – during which time in-person events and promotion of the consultation had been prohibited.

Consultation had included in-person public drop-in events at 15 different locations, consultation with staff and stakeholders, virtual sessions and the opportunity throughout to participate online.

In total, 1229 formal responses were received.

Healthcare Improvement Scotland – Community Engagement had enjoyed a role throughout the process helping to support the engagement/consultation activity within Right Care, Right Place. They also had a role to play in ensuring that all of this work was carried out in line with all standards and expectations, and Planning With People guidance, and that it all adhered to their newly established framework for major service change.

Some of their work included attending the consultation sessions, engaging with people who were participating with the consultation, and obtaining feedback through their own survey document focused on the way the consultation was undertaken.

At the conclusion of the consultation, HIS-CE very kindly produced a comprehensive report which provided some final advice, but which noted that the consultation had followed the correct processes and had been carried out in line with what is set out in Planning With People.

A great deal of information was provided to Dumfries and Galloway Integration Joint Board ahead of their extraordinary meeting, which took place in Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary on Tuesday 29 October.

For each of the four settings, the decision taken was to pursue Option 3, which will see their development as community health and social care hubs providing a range of outpatient services.

The outcome was shared with stakeholders, including every consultee who had provided contact details with a desire to hear the outcome as well as every member of the Participation and Engagement Network.

A video of the five-hour meeting, with the full deliberations, was made available within hours of its conclusion on the DGHSCP website, highlighted in a briefing notice and a press release.

### 3.4 Primary Care Engagement

A meeting was held on October 4 between senior officers in Primary Care, local elected members and representatives of communities in upper Nithsdale, including community councillors.

The meeting was focused on continuing concerns within the community about access to general medical services delivered through Upper Nithsdale Group Practice in Sanquhar.

The gathering followed previous meetings which have taken place, looking to improve communications between the practice and local people, and to address concerns.

A lengthy meeting took place at Mountainhall Treatment Centre, which saw Primary Care take on board and document the continuing concerns, with a promise to undertake more work.

A report from the meeting was to be provided back to participants, along with a pledge of continuing engagement on this matter.

Meanwhile, a small number of practices have been continuing to employ a newsletter template provided to them as a means to communicate with patients. The templates can be individually tailored for each practice that wishes to employ this medium.

Only a small number of practices have so far taken up this opportunity, but the GP Sustainability Communications Group believes this is an effective means to engage directly with patients, and more work is being done to encourage practices to take up this free offer.

Meanwhile, a video has been produced locally by the communications team showcasing how practices are working and the many different roles within practices, with the hope that this can be employed shortly. Changes have been made to incorporate data on the level of busyness within practices.

A video is meanwhile being readied focused on dentistry within the region, aiming to engage with dentists about to undertake vocational training (VT) and encourage them to consider Dumfries and Galloway as a destination.

### 3.5 Greening the Estate

Work has taken place to prepare for further stakeholder engagement around land surrounding Mountainhall Treatment Centre, and how it can support environment-focused goals.

Two part-time members of staff have now been appointed to support this work, thanks to financial backing from the NHS Dumfries and Galloway Endowment Fund.

Meanwhile, assistance around further community engagement has been volunteered through local third sector organisation The Stove Network.