

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

May 2025 to July 2025

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 May 1 2025 to July 31 2025.

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.

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.

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.

3. PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY

3.1 Nationally-Determined Service Change and NHS Reform

Work is taking place nationally to prepare for nationally-determined service change and NHS renewal.

An initial meeting arranged through the national Engagement Practitioner Network took place at the end of last year to look at some of the considerations around engagement which will be required, and the role to be played by local Partnerships and NHS Boards.

We have been advised that the work will be broken down across four themes - Vascular, Oncology, Diagnostics, and Remote, Rural and Island – and starting off with Vascular.

However, we continue to link through the national Engagement Practitioner Network awaiting an update on this work.

3.4 Primary Care Engagement

At the December meeting of Dumfries and Galloway Integration Joint Board, members agreed a proposal to take forward work aimed at developing a vision for general medical practices and services in Dumfries and Galloway.

The pre-engagement phase of the General Medical Services (GMS) review concluded in May, with planning moving into the delivery of the wider public engagement programme.

This programme is set to include a series of public workshops taking place from August to September 2025, designed to explore how general medical practice in the region is running, and to help identify priorities for sustaining and developing services. Members of the public are invited to attend, with advance registration required and attendance from the start of each session.

These workshops take place as follows:

- Wednesday 20 August 2025, early evening – Castle Douglas
- Wednesday 03 September 2025, early evening – Annan
- Tuesday 09 September 2025, early evening – Newton Stewart

- Thursday 11 September 2025, morning – Dumfries

For those unable to attend in person, a virtual public workshop was held on Wednesday 13 August 2025 from 10 am to 12 pm.

On the same in-person dates, afternoon sessions are to be held for GP practice teams, focusing on topics such as digital tools and workforce challenges. To enable participation, GP practices in the relevant localities will close for the afternoon, with urgent care remaining available and information provided to callers.

A campaign to promote the workshops and the work being undertaken has been carried out, with regular messaging via social media and significant coverage in local press.

In addition, information on the workshops has been shared to all local elected members, community councils and other identified stakeholder groups.

Representatives of the team carrying out this work have been attending meetings of the Consultation and Engagement Working Group.

3.5 Greening the Estate

Activity around the Mountainhall Greenspace has continued to develop over the May–July 2025 period, with both practical land management work and community engagement playing a central role.

In late July, the stakeholder group met to plan the upcoming joint meeting between the Stakeholder Group and the Community Panel, scheduled for the end of August.

This will mark the first time the two groups meet together, representing an important step in shaping the future direction of the project. The meeting will help identify committed Community Panel members to work alongside NHS Dumfries and Galloway and other partner organisations, and will include proposals on communication strategies and group structures. The process will be supported by the DesignHOPES research team from the University of Strathclyde.

Practical conservation efforts have also been undertaken during the quarter. Community volunteers responded to a call for help with landscape management, focusing on removing Himalayan Balsam before it could flower and seed. This early intervention will help reduce its spread, and the area will be monitored next year to check for regrowth. The work was complemented by continued public engagement on biodiversity, including a notable sighting of a Comma Butterfly at Mountainhall — an uncommon species in Dumfries and Galloway.

Online community engagement has remained strong through the Mountainhall Greenspace Facebook page, where members share photos, ideas, and updates. The group has encouraged more people to join, either online or in person, and is promoting the use of the iNaturalist app for biodiversity recording.

A public survey on the project remains open, with the deadline extended to 22 August 2025 to allow more residents to provide feedback.

3.6 Midpark Hospital

Initial conversations have taken place with the team who have been asked to undertake work looking at how the service provided by Dalveen Ward at Midpark Hospital can be developed and improved.

The team are currently looking to engage with people who have used the service to obtain feedback, and derive a qualitative understanding of their experiences.

The team have met with the Patient Experience Manager and Communication and Engagement Manager to look at how this work can be undertaken, and are also scheduled to attend the next meeting of the Consultation and Engagement Working Group on Monday May 19.

3.7 Public Health Screening

The Public Health Screening Team have been working with partners from a range of third sector organisations across Dumfries and Galloway to raise

awareness of the adult screening programmes that people are entitled to access. A co-developed screening awareness training package and associated resources have been delivered to staff and volunteers. Third sector organisations involved include Alcohol and Drugs Support SW Scotland, D&G Carers Centre, Bethany Christian Trust, LGBT Plus, Wheatley Homes, Kate's Kitchen, Fed-up Café, Veteran's Groups and Apex.

3.8 Involving Communities

In June 2025, the NHS Dumfries and Galloway Board Management Team formally agreed to take forward the proposals set out in the Involving Communities discussion paper. These proposals set out a framework for strengthening how lived experience and community voices are embedded within health and social care decision-making, drawing on approaches such as Planning with People, the Community Champions model, and Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD).

This agreement reflects the Partnership's ongoing commitment to a community-centred model of care, with the aim of moving from a consultation-led approach to one rooted in co-design, shared ownership, and long-term relationship building. The discussion paper identifies practical ways to achieve this, including:

- Expanding the use of trusted community intermediaries to reach seldom-heard groups.
- Supporting frontline teams to adopt asset-based and co-production principles in daily practice.
- Embedding cultural change that values lived experience equally alongside clinical and operational expertise.

A meeting is scheduled for September to set out the implementation plan, agree initial priorities, and identify the resources required. This will include consideration of pilot projects to test and adapt the recommended approaches within Dumfries and Galloway, alongside evaluation methods to measure their impact over time.