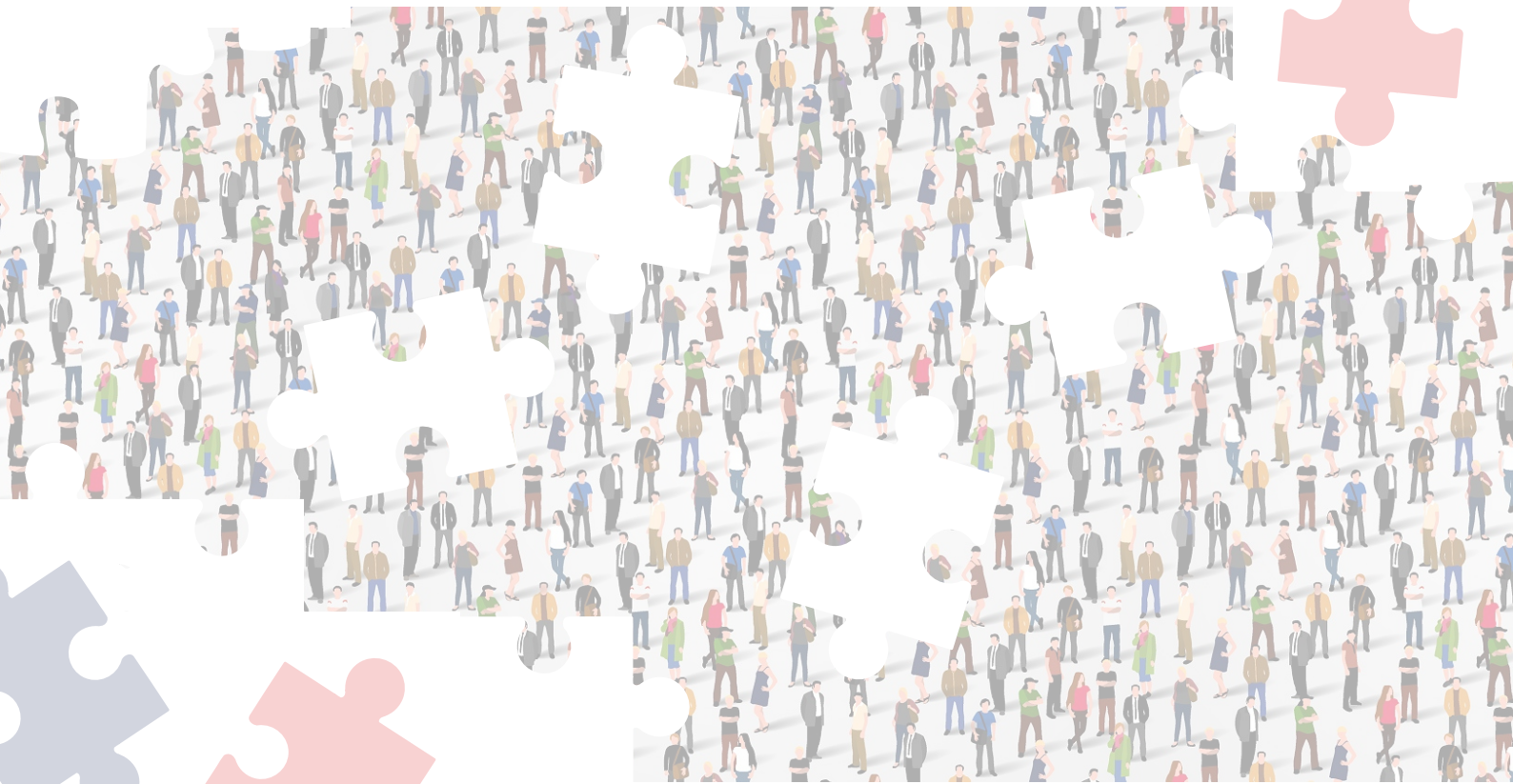




Isle of Man
Government
Reiltys Ellan Vannin

Engagement Strategy 2022-2025

'Let's start a conversation'



Department of Health and Social Care

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Clarity approved by
Plain English Campaign



Engagement strategy 2022-2025

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Introduction

Under section 8 of the Manx Care Act, which was introduced on 1 April 2021, we now have a legal obligation to consult with the public and to tell them how we develop health and social care policy. Equally important, we have a moral obligation to make sure that those affected by our policies are involved in shaping them. We want to develop a health and social-care system that puts the people who rely on our services right at the heart of the process of developing them. To do this, we need to understand, respect and respond to the experiences of our residents.

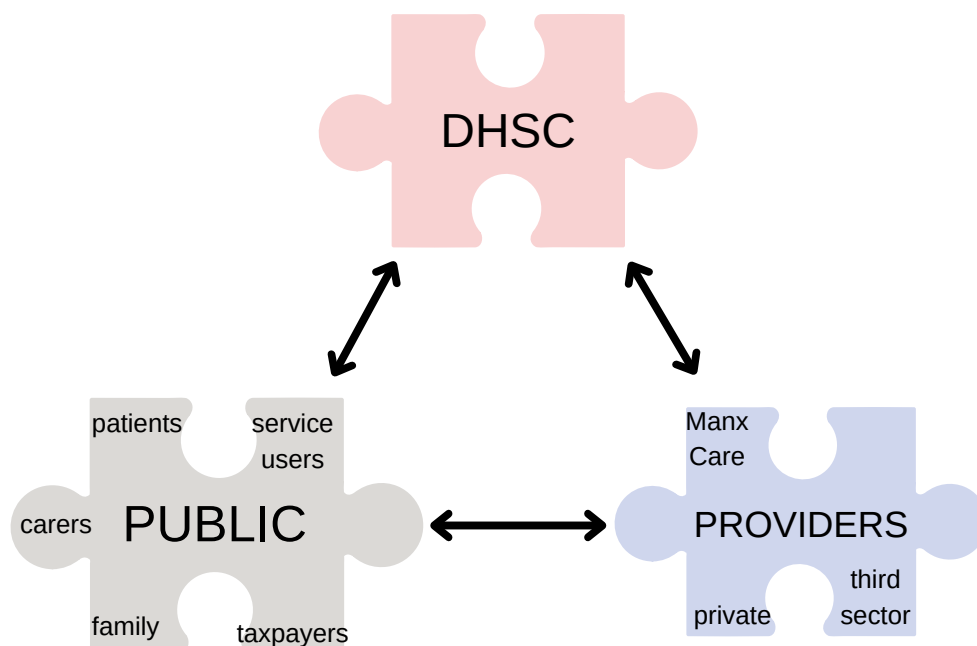
The first recommendation of Sir Jonathan Michael's Independent Review of Health and Care Services (which we have adopted as a priority for 2021-2022) was to:

'Embed the principle that patients and service users are fully engaged in, and at the centre of, all aspects of planning and delivery of health and social care services.'

This engagement strategy sets out how we plan to do this.

What is engagement?

Engagement is a process of having conversations with the people who rely on health and social care services, and the professionals who provide care.



It is a process of the public and our providers telling us about their needs, values and experiences, to help us shape high-quality care that meets the current and future needs of our residents. But conversations go two ways. Engagement is also a process of us making sure that the public and our providers understand what our policies and strategies are, how our decision-making processes work, and why we make the particular decisions we do.

Our legal obligation to consult and inform means that we have to gather and act on information from those who receive or provide our services, as well as making sure that people get the right information, at the right time, and in the right way.

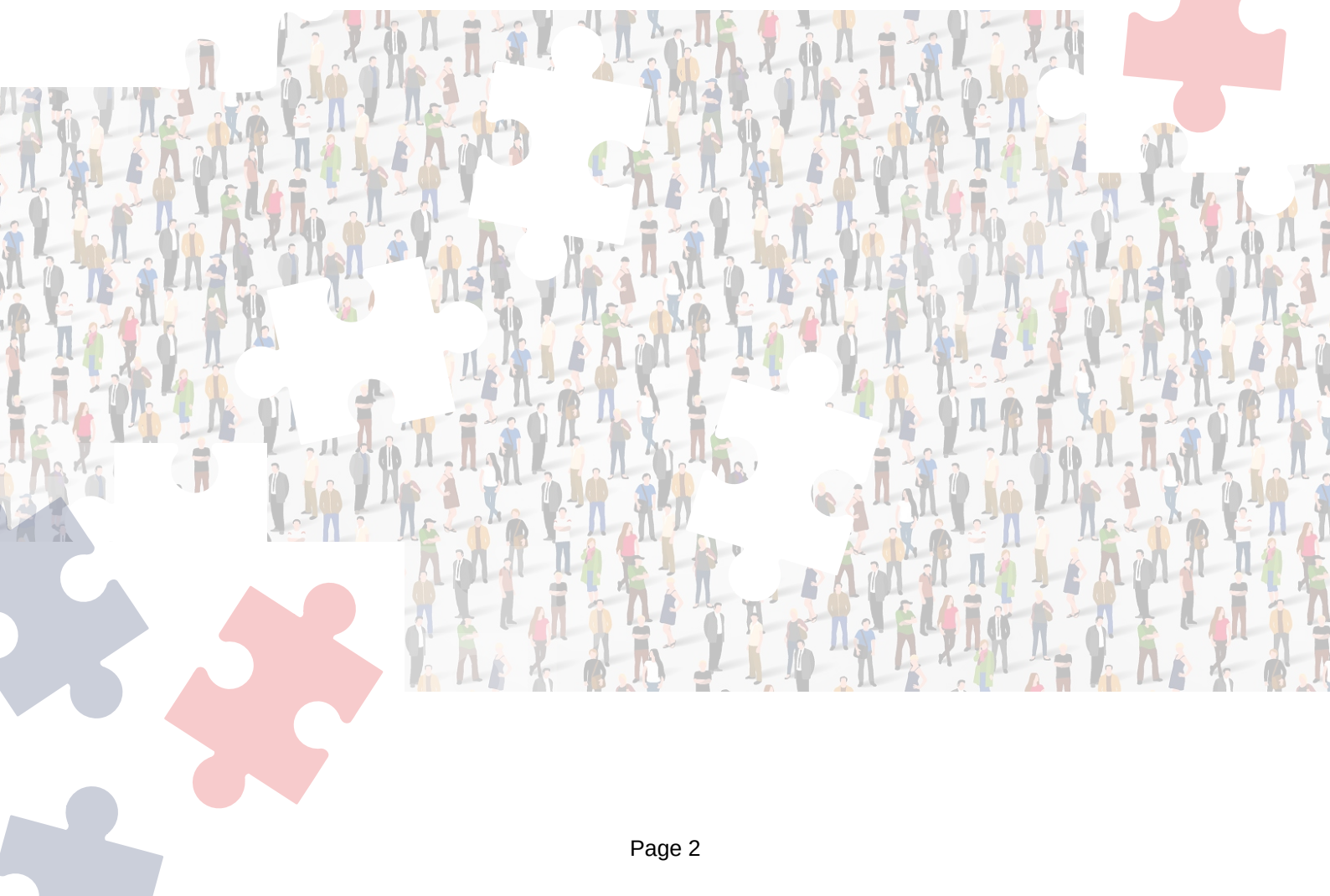
Why engagement matters

The benefits of engagement go beyond simply meeting our legal and moral obligations. Unless we know what people's health and social-care needs are, and how well our services are working in practice, we cannot make meaningful improvements.

When we gather information about people's needs and experiences, we gain valuable insight into how well our health and social-care system is working. This helps us to identify difficulties, track performance, and continuously improve.

Listening to patients and service users also helps us to spot emerging trends, which we can take account of in our strategic planning. It allows us to target services where they will provide the highest value for residents, and it helps us to meet our regulatory duties by giving us a fuller picture of our services.

Finally, engagement increases public trust, and improves outcomes for patients and service users by giving them a say in their own care and making sure their most important needs are met. Giving the people who rely on health and social-care services a voice in how those services work is the right thing to do, and it is also vital to us achieving our objectives as a department.



Our engagement strategy - ask, listen, inform

Conversation is a continuous process, and we should think of engagement as an ongoing cycle of activities. The engagement cycle described below shows how information should be gathered, used and shared in order to create high-quality care.

The Engagement Cycle

1. We ask patients, service users and the wider public about their needs, values and expectations. This helps us to establish our priorities for health and social-care policies.

We also ask providers for information about the realities of delivering high-quality services. This helps us to avoid making unrealistic promises to the public, and helps us to develop services which offer the best value for taxpayers' money.

2. We use best practice and evidence to develop specific health and social-care policies, and we tell people how these policies will help us to deliver our priorities.

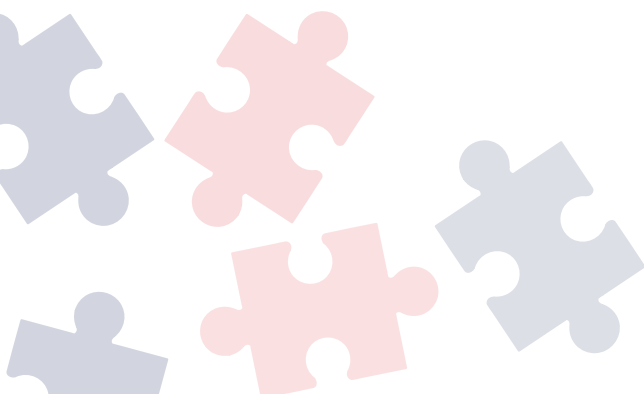
3. We collect evidence about the effectiveness of our policies by asking service users and providers about their experiences. This helps us to measure outcomes and evaluate performance.

4. We give the public and our providers information about how well our policies are working so that we can have honest conversations about how to continuously improve our health and social-care services.

5. We learn from unsuccessful initiatives and adapt our policies when outcomes aren't meeting the required standards.

6. We ask for feedback to establish next steps and future directions, and the engagement cycle starts again.

Our strategy for generating and maintaining this cycle is to focus on the three pillars of a productive conversation - we need to **ask**, **listen**, and **inform**. If we get these three things right we can develop a world-class health and care system that is fully centred on the needs of our population.



Ask

We need to ask questions in a genuine way. It is crucial that we go beyond 'lip service' and ask for input that can meaningfully affect the outcome of our decision-making processes. This means asking the right questions at the right times.

We need to ask for information that can genuinely influence the development of policies. Some of the decisions we make are based on factors which can't be changed by consultation (for example, the public's expectations may not always be in line with legal requirements, and providers' preferences may not be possible within budgets). But when decisions can be led by information about people's needs, values, experiences, expectations or circumstances, we need to actively seek that information.

Asking for input at the right time is just as important as asking for the right input. We need to put people at the centre of the process of developing policies, and prioritise the things that will deliver the highest value to patients and service users. This means we need to ask for input at early stages of policy development, and make sure that we adapt our work to reflect the input that we get.

Listen

We need to listen to others, with the intention to learn. We need to keep track of how well our policies are working by gathering feedback and performance details from our service users and providers. Just as importantly, we need to be committed to acting on the feedback and evidence we collect.

We need to monitor our performance by actively encouraging feedback, and we need to be open to learning by incorporating that feedback into our decision-making processes.

For people to feel that they've been listened to, rather than just been heard, it is important that we explain how their feedback has influenced our decisions or policies. We need to generate a 'closed-loop' feedback system that keeps people informed about how we have used their input, and what difference their feedback has made.

Inform

We need to inform others openly and honestly. This means more than just making sure information is given clearly, and in good time, to the people it will affect. It means taking responsibility for maintaining the highest standards of honesty and accountability. We need to be clear, direct and upfront in the way that we share information with the public and our providers.

We need to actively try to keep everyone informed. This means using the most appropriate platforms, media and methods to reach specific groups of people. It also means making a commitment to providing information that is accessible and following best practice when planning communications campaigns.

Creating an engagement culture

'Always events'

In order for this strategy to work, we need to focus on creating a strong culture of engagement within the department. We need to take responsibility, across all levels of our organisation, for promoting partnership-working in everything that we do.

Taking part in conversations where we listen to, reflect on and share views needs to become, quite simply, what we do. Creating a strong focus on productive conversation with others, both inside and outside the department, will demonstrate to the public, our providers and all other stakeholders that meaningful engagement is 'business as usual' for us.

We have adopted a new set of department values, and we will incorporate these values in our engagement activities by committing to a series of 'Always events' – standards that we aim to meet all of the time.

Our values	Always events
<p>Communication 'Using plain English and avoiding jargon and acronyms'</p> <p>We make sure that what we are saying is clear by checking that people understand us, rather than just assuming that they do.</p>	<p>We will always be accessible We will provide information in the clearest ways possible, and try to make sure everyone has access to the information we provide.</p>
<p>Transparency 'Encouraging people to speak freely and engaging in open dialogue by creating an environment where they feel confident and safe to do so'</p> <p>We scrutinise our work and acknowledge when things go wrong.</p>	<p>We will always be transparent We will publish the results of all consultations, audits, and reviews.</p>
<p>Honesty 'Being ready to admit when we don't know the answer to something, and creating a safe environment to challenge each other respectfully'</p>	<p>We will always be honest We will be open and upfront in explaining our reasons for making decisions.</p>
<p>Respect 'Welcoming diversity and encouraging inclusion'</p> <p>We believe that we should listen to and acknowledge everybody's views without being biased.</p> <p>We appreciate our colleagues for their individual qualities and remember to let them know this.</p>	<p>We will always be respectful We will be fair and unbiased when we listen to the different views, values and experiences of our patients and service users.</p>

Our values

Always events

Innovation

‘Challenging the status quo and being open to looking at things differently’

We look for opportunities to move away from ‘usual’ solutions, and make use of the skills, knowledge, experience and creativity of our colleagues.

Adaptability

‘Being responsive, flexible and learning quickly. We remain steady in the face of adversity or ambiguity, and we use our skills to meet every situation, no matter how unpredictable’

We can adapt and flourish when there are changes to our environment.

We will always be inclusive

We will work hard to make sure that everyone affected by our services gets a say in how those services are designed and delivered.

We will promote partnership-working to make the most of the efforts of all organisations involved in health and social care.

We will always be open to learning

We will actively seek information about how our services are performing, and respond to new information or learning points by changing the way we do things.

The information in this leaflet can be provided in large print or audio tape on request