

# Building the case for participation

Grounding

Building

Applying

One of the biggest challenges in championing participation can be bringing others with you. When resources and time are pressured, investing in a participatory approach isn't always the top of everyone's agenda, even if they may in principle support it. So how can you get others on board? Here are some of the key questions those around you may have, and some of the evidence.

# Making the case for participation

Is participation a priority for NHS England?

Yes, NHS England has made clear in all policies around children and young people's mental health, including Future in Mind that the participation of children and young people and their parents and carers is a priority and must be promoted across all settings. This includes participation in care and treatment, and in service design and delivery- as well as in commissioning.

What's more, standards in children and young people's mental health including those set by CQC and those set out by the Quality network for Community CAMHS make clear that participation is an essential component of outstanding, excellent care.

See the [Amplified Grounding Pack: Participation in Policy](#) for more info.

Can participation make a difference to services?

Yes, there are many ways that participation contributes positively to services, including:

- Service users who are more involved report increased satisfaction with services
- Involvement of service users and carers has been found to reduce complaints in some services by increasing early communication about issues
- Participation has been found to improve relationships between clinicians and service users

Does participation impact care?

Yes, shared decision-making has been found to help young people feel more involved in their care and more committed to following their care plans.



# Making the case for participation

How can we resource participation? We don't have any funding for it.

Many services have been able to embed a culture of participation with limited resources. While funding can enable specific projects to be set up, the minimum that's needed to get started is travel expenses for participants (plus other reasonable expenses like carer expenses) and refreshments for meetings- plus staff time. Starting to see change can help build the internal and external case for specific resourcing.

There are many free participation guides and tools available that you can use to get started and if you don't have resources for your own meetings, there will be local groups of children and young people already set up that you could begin by visiting. Once there is a system in place for young people's views and experiences to influence decisions, however it starts, you can build from there.

You can also use digital group decision-making platforms (many are free) to involve young people routinely without needing to meet face to face every time.

How can participation help us make best use of limited resources and add value to what we do?

There are two main sources of potential economic value that can be generated through participation:

1) **The value of self-management and peer support** –NHS England reports that 'Around 15 million patients with long term conditions (LTCs) provide 4,800 hours of self-care for every four hours of NHS care' so it makes sense focus not just on improving the four hours of health-care but also increasing the capacity of people to undertake effective self-care.

2) **Cost saving made by more effective use of services** e.g. through prevention and earlier intervention or making services more effective so that young people secure better outcomes sooner.



## Making the case for participation



Does participation actually make a difference to the individuals involved?

Participation can in itself lead to positive outcomes for young people. NICE reports that participating at a community level in healthcare planning and delivery can lead 'to a range of important health-related and social outcomes, such as improved self-confidence, self-esteem, social networks and social support' and all participation has the potential to support the development of core skills like communication and agency.

Nesta have reported that self-management programmes can contribute to raised self-confidence, better quality of life, improved clinical outcomes, and greater achievement of goals that are important to the individual.



How can participation help us address health inequalities and improve care for the most vulnerable?

Commissioners have a duty to do address health inequalities. But beyond this it is crucial to have a local health economy that has the understanding to behave proactively rather than react to each crisis - if you engage vulnerable groups early, you have more idea where future need may be.

Getting local systems right for more vulnerable groups of children and young people requires their active participation in the design of pathways and services. Participation can promote positive outcomes for this group and help ensure local systems better meet their unique needs.

**Amplified** is about building participation right across the children and young people's mental health system through providing participation training and consultancy, sharing good practice across the country and promoting access to participation tools and resources.

It is an NHS England funded programme, led by YoungMinds and NEL Commissioning Support Unit.

Visit: [www.youngminds.org.uk/amplified](http://www.youngminds.org.uk/amplified) to find out more or email: [amplified@youngminds.org.uk](mailto:amplified@youngminds.org.uk) if you have any questions.

## Amplified Training and Development

The Amplified training and development programme provides participation focussed capacity building for NHS England funded organisations working in children and young people's mental health, including: mental health services (community, inpatient, community eating disorder services), clinical commissioning groups and clinical networks, health and justice commissioners, education settings, local authorities and children's services and youth justice settings.

There are three levels within the training and development strand:

**Grounding** Resources providing foundation knowledge about participation in children and young people's mental health and signposting to other useful participation resources.

To access the Building and Applying events and resources sign up to the Amplified professional Voices network: [LINK](#)

**Building** Practical guidance on delivering the nine CYP-IAPT participation principles delivered through webinars and resources. The focus is on showcasing practice from within the system and promoting conversation and shared learning between professionals, children and young people and parents and carers around participation in mental health.

**Applying** Setting and profession specific participation events, resources and webinars aimed at addressing the specific types of participation in mental health services; commissioning; youth justice and education- with a focus on peer learning and leadership. Delivered in partnership with services and other partners across the system.



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