







How your views and experiences help

When you take the time to share your experiences with us and other people, it is important that we can give you an understanding of how they will make a difference. Service user involvement can sometimes take a fair amount of time to make a difference but it is still important for you to know that you have not gone unheard.

Viewpoint has service user and staff representatives in many different groups and at many different levels. We will always endeavour to have our members be the ones who share the views of their peers, but we also support them to do this or sometimes do it on their behalf. This leaflet looks at some of the areas where we use your feedback and explains the role which different levels play in the commissioning, design and delivery of services. It is a complex system and it is our job to ensure your feedback goes to the right place. If you want any further information, then just speak to one of the project workers at Viewpoint.

Commissioners:

The commissioners are the people who tender for, and then manage contracts for service delivery. For example, they may feel that there is a need for a service which supports people with complex needs. They will then develop a service specification, give it a value, put it out to tender and then interview all the organisations which compete for that tender. When they have chosen a provider, they will contract manage the provider on an ongoing basis to ensure they are delivering what they said they would.

Viewpoint influence:

Viewpoint works with commissioners in Hertfordshire for both Mental Health and Drug & Alcohol services. We are represented, along with a service user representative, at the main strategic commissioning meetings. This enables us to feedback directly to the people who contract most of the services which are provided in the county.

Providers:

The providers are the people who actually deliver the service. In Hertfordshire, the majority of statutory services are delivered by:

Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Trust (HPFT) for Mental Health

Spectrum (sometimes known as CRI) for Drug and Alcohol

There are also a significant amount of services which are delivered by various Third Sector (or charitable) organisations such as Mind, Rethink, the Living Room and Resolve.

These providers are paid by the commissioners to deliver a service, according to a set service specification. Their performance is reviewed regularly and they are often instructed within their contract to ensure that they involve service users in the delivery of their services.

Viewpoint Influence:

For the main providers, Viewpoint is represented on many different groups. For mental health, these include high level meetings such as the HPFT Governors Board meeting and Stakeholder meetings, through to the Service User Council. For Drug and Alcohol, Viewpoint host the Service user council, attend the Integrated Governance meeting and meet regularly with the County Service manager to work together on issues.

Particular Projects:

Depending on issues raised by our members or due to local priorities, Viewpoint is often involved in particular projects or pieces of work which have a link to mental health. This may be as a representative on a group, or perhaps by leading on a project to improve services or fill a gap. Examples include the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and in particular, the needs of the Trans* community. We are also part of the Crisis Concordat which looks to improve care for people in crisis across many different services.

Viewpoint Influence:

This understandably varies depending on the project, but we will always aim to maximise how much you can influence services. We will usually consult our members on particular projects as the experiences needed may be quite specific.