



Make a difference in Northern Ireland

What's this fact sheet for?

It's here to help you get your views across on health care issues in Northern Ireland. This matters because when people like you get involved, it makes a big difference to decision-making. Often much bigger than you think.

So how do I go about getting heard?

Things vary depending on where you are, so the key is to ask questions and do some research. This is as simple as having a chat with the right people, or try a quick search online.

A chat with who exactly?

It could be anyone at your GP surgery, your local hospital or your specialist clinic – whichever feels most important and relevant to you. Any services you use should have a method in place to gather your feedback. The process is usually known as 'Patient and Public Engagement', although sometimes other names are used. Either way, members of staff will have that information easily to hand, so feel free to ask.

What about online?

You'll find a lot of information in a few clicks. Here are a few search terms to try:

- Have your say in [your location] health services
- Get involved in health services in [your location]
- Patient and Public Engagement [your location]
- Patient feedback [your local hospital]

Any of those should bring up some useful information for you to follow up.



Is there any more help out there?

Plenty. Here are three organisations who will help you have a voice.

1. The Patient and Client Council

This should be your first port of call. **The Patient and Client Council** exists specifically to help create 'a health and social care service in Northern Ireland where the voice of patients, clients, carers and communities is heard and acted upon.' Their website has a wealth of information and offers a great free membership scheme that will put you at the heart of the action.

2. Health and Social Care (HSC) in Northern Ireland

Check out the **HSC website** to find out more about local and national services. They have links to all the relevant services in Northern Ireland, as well as a section called 'Involving you'. This is a good way to track down information on your local GP, clinics and hospital services. Contacting these services directly and asking how they collect and act on patient and carer views is a good way to get your foot in the door.

3. Northern Ireland Cardiac Services Network

This was established in 2006 to promote better communication and joined-up thinking across cardiac services in Northern Ireland. They have an involvement section on **their website**, which is well worth checking.

Useful links

The Patient and Client Council

<http://www.patientclientcouncil.hscni.net>

Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland

<http://www.healthandcareni.co.uk/>

Northern Ireland Cardiac Services Network

<http://www.nicardiacnetwork.org>

