



Make a difference in England

What's this fact sheet for?

It's here to help you get your views across on health care issues in England. 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 [your location] health services
- 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 a few places to start.

Local Involvement Networks

These should be your first port of call. Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) are made up of individuals and local groups all coming together to make their views heard on NHS services. The only downside is that coverage is patchy, so you'll need to check the [LINKs website](#) to see what's available in your area.



GP Practices and NHS Trusts

If you're not near an active LINK, try asking your **local GP practice** about joining their **Patient Participation Group**. It's also worth looking online for the website of your local **NHS Trust or Foundation Trust** to see if they have any details on getting involved. Every NHS Trust has a duty to involve patients and carers in decision-making, so you should find some guidance on how this works.

Cardiac Networks

There are 28 **Cardiac Networks** across England. They're a kind of 'virtual' organisation linking up health professionals, managers and commissioners from many different areas, including ambulance services, but all with a common interest in improving cardiac, stroke and vascular care for patients. Most of these networks have a 'patient engagement' function – in other words, a way of getting people involved. So track them down and get in touch.

The Department of Health

The Department of Health regularly has open consultations about health care decisions. Have a look at their website to see whether any of them affect you. You'll also find some great information on patient rights and Patient and Public Engagement initiatives. This is a good place to get updates on future NHS restructures too.

National Voices

National Voices is a coalition of health and social care charities in England. Their aim is to strengthen the voice of patients, service users, carers, their families and the voluntary organisations that work for them. You'll find some useful information and resources on their website.

Useful Links

NHS LINKs

<http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/links/Pages/links-make-it-happen.aspx>

Health Services Near You

<http://www.nhs.uk/servicedirectories/Pages/ServiceSearch.aspx?ServiceType=GP>

Patient Participation Group

<http://www.napp.org.uk>

Find your local GP Practices NHS Trust

<http://www.nhs.uk/ServiceDirectories/Pages/AcuteTrustListing.aspx>

Cardiac Networks, in England

<http://www.improvement.nhs.uk/heart/CardiacNetworks/tabid/97/Default.aspx>

Department of Health

<http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/category/publications/consultations/consultations-open/>

National Voices

<http://www.nationalvoices.org.uk/who-we-are-and-what-we-do>

Care Quality Commission

<http://www.cqc.org.uk>

