Co-production Information and Support Overview

Our co-production information and support aims to help to translate Richmond Co-production Charter expectations into practical actions for staff and partners across the health and social care system. More detailed support and information can be requested through our contact form.

What is involved in co-production can be divided into different areas that each address a critical element of successful, co-production. For example:

1. Defining Co-production
2. Accessibility and Co-production
3. What makes a project Co-produced?
4. Providing effective feedback about Co-production

Defining Co-production and Power Sharing

- What is Co-production?

Co-production is a way of working that involves people who use health and care services, carers, and communities in equal partnership; and which engages groups of people at the earliest stages of service design, development, and evaluation.

- Why the word Co-production?

You may be more familiar with the words information sharing, consultation, involvement, and collaboration used to talk about engaging residents and people who use care and support services.

These words fall within the concept of a "ladder of participation" in which information is at the bottom of the ladder and co-production is at the top. The various forms of engagement can meet different needs, for example consultation may be mandatory.

Co-production however goes beyond information sharing, consultation, and engagement – it gives people equal power and input, making sure that their views are embedded all the way throughout the process and lived experience is valued.

We believe that working with residents in this way is the best way to develop services that meet the needs of people who use care and support services.

- What is power sharing?

Power sharing is key part of making co-production effective. By taking active steps to minimise power imbalances between the Council or other organisations and the people who use their services, or support them as unpaid carers, who are involved in co-production, we can create the most equal partnership possible.

Accessibility and Co-production

Accessibility for residents and people who use care and support services is a key principle of co-production to ensure everyone can take part on an equal basis.

Co-production activities should ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to ensure so those with physical or mental impairments can be involved equally. A commitment to accessibility ensures that everyone has the same opportunity to take part in an activity fully, in the way that suits them best.

- Equality and diversity - Co-production recognises and values the involvement of seldom heard groups and those protected by the Equality Act 2010 . This ensures co- production solutions are fully informed by, and reflective of, these diverse experiences.

It is also important to recognise the importance of cultural competence and awareness in order to address bias and support more inclusive practice.

- Plain language in Co-production - As well as physical access, making sure that information is accessible and provided in appropriate formats is a key part of making co-production effective.

Co-production activities should aim to use plain language where possible. The use of Easy Read should also be considered where appropriate. .Where it is not possible to avoid jargon including acronyms, terms should be explained. Common phrases and terms can be and explained in a glossary.

What makes a project Co-produced

- Where possible Co-production needs to be a part of the project and its intentions from the very beginning and throughout
- Adequate financial support should be put in place to cover the whole coproduction process for those involved
- Ensure that people's accessibility requirements (physical, training, and the use of language) have been considered
- It is helpful to define The roles of staff and residents in involved in Co-production using a working agreement or terms of reference.
- Evaluation methods also need to be co-produced, in order to understand what works and what doesn't when it comes to co- production.
- The results and impact of co-production on the project should be shared

Providing effective feedback on Co- production activities

The council or others organising coproduction should record and celebrate contributions, providing feedback on the results of involvement, including changes made, final decisions, and clear reasons for what has not changed.

When co-producing with larger organisations such as the council, there may be rules about how decisions are made which can lead to a gap between actively working together to coproduce, when a decision gets made and what it includes.

The council or other organisations should always ensure that when there are delays or limitations these will be communicated.