



Hertfordshire Co-production Board

Co-production Standards for Adult Care Services in Hertfordshire

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1. Definition

We believe that those who use a service are best placed to help design it.

Co-production is about developing equal working partnerships between people who have experience of using care services (experts by experience), carers and paid officers; bringing together different ways of seeing things, knowledge and experience to design and help make services better.

In Hertfordshire Adult Care Services it means people with lived experience of care services, their families and carers will be involved, included and work with the council to influence the way that services are designed, commissioned and delivered - from the very start to the end of any project.

The Director of Adult Care Services has signed up to a co-production pledge. You can read it here: [ADASS Co-production Pledge](#). **These standards were coproduced by members of Hertfordshire's Strategic Co-production Board.**

2. A different way of working

Co-production is a really different way of working - challenging, inspiring, spirited and ambitious. It's more than just inviting people to meetings and it's not about ticking boxes. Best practice co-production standards are set out by [Think Local Act Personal \(TLAP\)](#).

SCIE has written a [guide for co-production](#) (You may need to register on their site). They say for co-production to work effectively, change will need to happen in each piece of the jigsaw:



culture – the beliefs and values that define an organisation and the way that it works

structure – the way the organisation is arranged and the systems it has set up to carry out its work

practice – how the organisation and the people who work for it carry out their work

review – monitoring how the work is

carried out and the outcomes or impacts that result from the work.

Co-production: It's a long-term relationship!

Co-production

Co-production is an equal relationship between people who use services and the people responsible for services. They work together from design to delivery sharing strategic decision making about policies as well as decisions about the best way to deliver services

Co-design

People who use services are involved in designing services, based on their experiences and ideas. They have genuine influence but have not been involved in 'seeing it through'.

Engagement

Compared to the consultation step below, people who use services are given more opportunities to express their views and maybe able to implement some decisions, but this depends on what the people responsible for services will allow.

Consultation

People who use services maybe asked to fill in surveys or attend meetings; however this debt may be considered tokenistic if they do not have the proper the power to influence or affect change.

Informing

People responsible for services inform people about the services and explain how they work. This may include telling people what decisions have been made and why.

Educating

The people who use services are helped to understand the service design and delivery so that they gain relevant knowledge about it. That is all done that is all that is done at this stage.

Coercion

This is the bottom rung of the ladder. People who use services attend an event about services as passive recipients. Their views are not considered important and are not taken into account.

3. When should we co-produce?

Co-production is the gold standard. It's clear we can't coproduce everything and it's still really valuable to engage, educate and involve people. This table based on the commissioning matrix will help you decide if co-production is appropriate:

Strategic Planning

Assessing needs	Engagement
Reviewing service provision	Engagement
Deciding priorities	Co-production

Procuring services

Designing services	Co-production
Shaping structure of supply	Engagement
Procuring providers	Engagement

Monitoring and evaluation

Managing performance	Engagement
Seeking service user and carer views	Engagement
Personalised care and support planning	Co-production

4. Top Tips for co-production

- Agree where you are on the ladder of co-production and what shared decision making there will be
- Come to the table with an open mind, a blank agenda or with what you want to be achieved
- Involve people with experience of using services, carers and their families in all areas of your co-production project – the planning, development, performance and delivery.
- Agree a joint vision at the beginning and be clear on the parameters
- Start small and build up from there – let people lead, not paid officers
- Acknowledge that a range of skills and backgrounds are needed for co-production and some training may be needed for everyone involved.
- Problems need to be solved collectively.
- Co-production takes time and money – but will save money later on.

5. How we treat each other

- We will be respectful of people's time. It is good practice not to cancel meetings late in the day or not turn up so try and send a deputy who has been briefed.
- We will treat each other with respect by valuing what everyone says.
- We will listen carefully to what each other has to say and not talk over people.
- We will encourage everyone to take part.
- We will use plain English and avoid jargon.
- Be clear about whether the views we say are our own or those of a wider group.
- Everyone should take responsibility for something in the project and be accountable for actions taken on.
- We accept people will have their own experiences to share – but will keep the discussion relevant to the agenda topic.
- We will agree what is confidential and what we can share outside of the board.
- Agree some ground rules at the first meeting.

6. Participation

Co-production projects need to carefully consider who should be involved and what skills are needed to make the project a success. If there is an expectation that people represent wider groups, make this clear. It may be that training, support and organisational information and context will need to be provided at the start.

- Everyone needs to be clear of their role and who they represent.
- Co-production should be as inclusive and diverse as possible. Extra effort may be needed to make sure seldom heard groups are included.
- Venues must be accessible – it's the project lead's role to ask and agree what suits everyone.
- Pick times that don't exclude people.
- Offer a range of ways for people to be able to take part – for example by Skype.
- Make sure papers are accessible – short, simple and easy read if required. Allow people plenty of time to prepare for meetings.
- Involve people in monitoring and feedback.
- People need to get something back for putting something in.
- Always do a final check that what you have produced was co-produced.

7. Resources

Working in co-production means that people are valued equally. It is good practice to offer a fee for involvement where you are asking people with experience of care services and carers to take part in co-production projects, alongside paid officers. This will depend on the project and budget – but should be discussed and agreed at the start of the project.

- People and organisations should not to be left out of pocket or be put at risk of being financially worse off as a result of their involvement in co-production.

- Agree at the start of the project what people will be paid for. There is shared responsibility to ensure that co-production projects offer value for money and that costs are as low as possible.
- People with experience of care services and carers who are in receipt of benefits should access information, advice and support.
- There may be costs involved in providing transport, training and other support.
- There is a small central budget for inclusion payments. Email coproduction@hertfordshire.gov.uk.

See [The Co-production Payment Guidance](#) for more information on payment.

8. Supporting people

People need to be supported and have the right skills for co-production so they can take part. This could be making sure everyone has enough background knowledge on the council services. It could be presentation skills or meeting chairing skills. It could be making sure everyone understands how co-production works and how to make sure equality and diversity is taken into account.

9. Communication

- Ask people how they would like to be communicated with. Consider using a range of ways to communicate with people and produce accessible information if needed. For example, easy read or videos with sub-titles.
- Information should be sent round in plenty of time to allow people to prepare. Ask people how much time they will need.
- Give people the chance to feed back on a regular basis. Sometimes a questionnaire can help with this.

10. And finally....

Always evaluate your project and ask for feedback:

- Was this true co-production?
- What did you learn for next time?
- Did people feel they made a difference?
- Was there any improvement for people using the service?

Agree what will be reviewed and how it will happen. You can adapt the ADASS questionnaire to do this.