

# Quality Markers

## Peer Reviewers and Experts by Experience

### The art and science of co-producing quality and quality monitoring in social care

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## Abstract



This poster highlights two areas of innovative practice within social care in Warwickshire, both based in the ethos and framework of using Co Production.

### 1. The Peer Review Programme

We highlight the challenges and benefits of these two projects and pose wider questions to the Research Community about communication and interactions, which we see as the basis of qualitative research. We challenge the assumptions that engaging people who use services, isn't rigid and solely about language based questionnaires and focus groups, that other forms of creative data collection and ways of communicating are important and are valid research tools.

We highlight the value in recognising the role of people who have used services, or are carers, as 'Experts by Experience' and supporting and using those skills to enable them to act as 'co-researchers' to gather data in new ways, and that this has a huge impact on how we can measure and assess the quality of our commissioned services from a Customer perspective.

### 2. The Creative Consultation

#### Why Co-Production?

- Gives a framework to do things in a different way
- Sees people who access services as assets, co-designers, co-deliverers, decision makers, experts, evaluators, social researchers.....not problems to be 'fixed'.
- Personalisation Agenda .....moves people from being passive 'Users' to active 'Consumers' able to exercise choice and control.
- Fiscal challenges, budgetary constraints lend an urgency to do things in new ways.
- Demographic changes mean people are living longer and have skills to offer their communities.
- Increased Citizen expectations, people want transparency and want to contribute to decisions and hold Authorities to account.
- Allows Citizens and the Government to work jointly to achieve outcomes and cost reductions using creative solutions.

#### Why do things more creatively?

- Encourages innovation
- Responds to different communication preferences
- Generates data from those previously unheard
- Recognises and utilises the expertise of 'lived' experiences
- Encourages challenge to current practice...moves from 'that's how we always do it' to 'how can we do it differently?'

## 1. Peer Review Programme

- 19 trained and Open College Network accredited Reviewers, who work in pairs to visit Warwickshire County Council commissioned Providers to assess service quality, using a set of standards, from a Customer perspective.
- All are Customers /carers so are Experts by Experience
- Based on an Appreciative Enquiry approach

### What the Reviewers say.....



#### Being a Peer Reviewer

- I enjoy doing the visits and I have support to do them, but I lead them.
- I'm a volunteer
- I use my experiences about the services I've had and what was good and bad and how that made me feel. So that makes me an 'Expert by Experience'
- I want to make things better for people with learning disabilities, especially people with higher support needs



#### Pilot Studies

- I did some reviews as part of a pilot study
- I have been involved in the Programme from the start
- These were evaluated and were so successful that Peer Reviewers are now part of the Councils way of measuring quality.



#### Training

- We all had some training that gave us a certificate from the OGN
- There was a gap in this training though, to help Reviewers communicate with people with higher support needs.
- I went to London and did some specialist training with MENCAP
- This showed me lots of creative ways to communicate with people who don't use words
- Its important that everyone can be heard and asked about how things are for them during a Peer Review, even if they don't use words.
- I will now train other Reviewers on Communicating well with people with higher support needs.

#### What I do as a Reviewer

- I think about what I will ask when I know where the visit is
- I go and I speak to Customers, Carers and staff but my role is to mainly talk to the Customers and I enjoy that
- I find out what's good and what's not so good about the service they get and I ask them why.
- After my visit I write a report about what I saw and heard from people and I tell the Provider what I think they do well or if there's things they need to change.



#### What I've found out in my Reviews.....

- That some people are well supported and can live fun and rich lives and make choices.
- That some people have OK support but could have better
- I went to a supported living house. I was shocked to see an adult playing with kid's cups and saucers. I thought the staff should be supporting the person to do more adult activities. I said that although the customers may have learning disabilities, they should be treated like Adults not children just because they have learning disabilities.



#### Why Peer Reviewers are important

- We know and see things that Staff might not
- People tell us things because we are not staff
- We have a unique understanding of how having a service feels
- We can help make sure that everyone has a voice, however they communicate

I talk more about being a Peer Reviewer here  
<http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/peerreview>



## 2. Creative Consultation

- Used the expertise of lived experience to identify issues (data) and shape a responsive strategy
- Creative practice provided a 'critical' challenge to the traditional and business as usual data gathering techniques
- Took the focus away from being language driven and gave a platform and opportunity to people who have huge expertise and something to say, but have previously been unheard and historically viewed as unable to contribute data meaningfully.
- An innovative approach that formed part of a wide ranging consultation process.
- Commissioned an artist, using an Artists Brief that was sent out nationally.
- Recruited and appointed after staff panel interview and assessed workshop with a group of young people. Ensuring the artist could blend 'art and science', therefore skilled in their arts medium but also able to evaluate and manage data generated effectively
- Delivered workshops in 7 non mainstream schools and 4 colleges working with 147 children and young people in total

## Conclusions

1. Understanding communication is the key to gathering effective data.
2. Both the Peer Reviewers and the Creative Consultation offered and utilise different communication tools and methods to support a co productive approach and gather data in new ways, often from people previously unheard.
3. Raise questions for the wider research community in terms of the linkages between the R & I community and Co Production on the ground. If we can all respond to and embrace new ways of data collection such as this, it will build a more robust evidence base.

### More information

@PeerReviewerWCC

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