

Warrington's approach to citizen engagement in H&SC integration

Top ten tips in setting up a select committee inquiry approach

1. Do not underestimate the planning and time involved in setting up a Select Committee – it is critical that the following are taken into account: the balance of representation on the Select Committee of the public/patients, care professionals, etc; the prior knowledge of the committee members; the views as well as the job roles of the witnesses; the importance of external witnesses; a warm up event for committee members and witnesses; clear written guidance on process; the opening questions. Administrative support is crucial.
2. Engagement is an important part of the inquiry, for it to be successful make sure you:
 - a. Map and understand the network of patient and professional insight.
 - b. Don't underestimate the difficulties in engaging care professionals and patients/service users in what can appear a dry subject if not presented in a compelling manner. Engagement is the most time-consuming, unpredictable but important part of the Inquiry.
 - c. Don't assume that groups, forums and organisations will want to share information and be part the work.
 - d. Don't assume that just because powerful and influential sponsors are engaged that this message has reached middle management or care professionals you need for the Inquiry.
 - e. Engage with a mixed group of witnesses to provide evidence: those with important real life stories, health and care professionals and academics and provide a safe environment for honest speaking and testing any hypothesis.
3. Select Committees can be quick – once engagement was achieved and dates were in diaries, the three hearings were held in four weeks.
4. Relationship management – it is important to keep a constant key set of committee members and keep in touch regularly.
5. Appoint an independent chair, who has the vision, understanding and commitment to drive change forward.
6. Appoint an Inquiry Manager to engage participants, plan, produce material and drive the Inquiry forward
7. Involve communications and engagement experts to support the Inquiry Manager
8. Ensure the Committee are clear about the outcomes and benefits (for care professionals, patients/service users, organisations) they expect from their recommended changes
9. Ensure that any survey is simple, and the language used is easily understood by all. Involve target audience from the outset in its development. Pilot the survey with your target audience(s)
10. Be continually guided by the principles of the Select Committee approach – openness, transparency, fairness, balance, independence, inclusivity and rigour