



**HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE NI  
(HSCNI)**

**INVOLVEMENT & CONSULTATION  
SCHEME**

**PUBLIC CONSULTATION REPORT**

**2025**

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INVOLVING YOU, IMPROVING CARE




Health and  
Social Care



# Background

Involvement of and consultation with service users and carers is critical in the commissioning, development, design and delivery of Health and Social Care (HSC) Services. To comply with our statutory duties in regards to Involvement and Consultation, as set out in the Health and Social Care Reform Act (NI) 2009, all HSC organisations, to which the legislation applies, must have a Consultation Scheme in place, which sets out how they meet their statutory responsibilities in this field.

Working together through the Regional HSC Personal & Public Involvement (PPI) Forum with service users, carers, experts and advocates in the fields of Involvement and Consultation and with other HSC partners, the Public Health Agency (PHA) and HSC Trusts co-designed a common, generic template, in order to update our respective Schemes. Each updated Scheme, uses the same core template as its basis, but each will differ in terms of how their respective organisation has set out what its structure and arrangements are for addressing each component of the Scheme. In adopting this approach, our new Schemes, we believe, will encourage a raising of standards and can aid the HSC to deliver an improved consistency of approach to the active and meaningful involvement of service users, carers, and effective Partnership Working with our Community & Voluntary sector partners and the wider public.



These new Involvement and Consultation Schemes, address both the commitment to the statutory duty to Involvement and Consultation and support our wider policy obligations in respect of PPI. The PHA and HSC Trusts have come together to undertake a consultation on our respective updated Schemes.

Through this collaborative consultation process, the public and other stakeholders had the opportunity to consider and comment on any, or all of the Schemes individually.



## Overview of responses

The public consultation on the Involvement and Consultation Schemes ran from 19/08/2024 to 25/11/2024. Members of the public were offered three ways in which to participate and give feedback. These included in-person and online sessions and a questionnaire, which was available online.

These were conducted via a partnership approach between the PHA and HSC Trusts. There were two in person workshops on the Involvement and Consultation Schemes in addition to an online session. A total of 28 people participated in the in-person workshops.

34 participants took part in the online questionnaire advertised through various avenues including, Trust communication channels, PHA connect, partner newsletters and online sites and via the Engage website ([engage.hscni.net](https://engage.hscni.net)) the HSC online resource for Involvement, Co-production and Partnership Working.

This summary report of responses is broken down into the three categories using the questionnaire structure, with key themes identified from all feedback received.



# Who responded:

Online


In-person



## Responses per HSC organisations Scheme




BHSCT   NIAS   NHSCT   PHA   SHSCT   SEHSCT   WHSCT



# **Section 1:**

## Scheme

# Understandability



The questions in this section of the Involvement and Consultation Schemes was primarily about understandability.

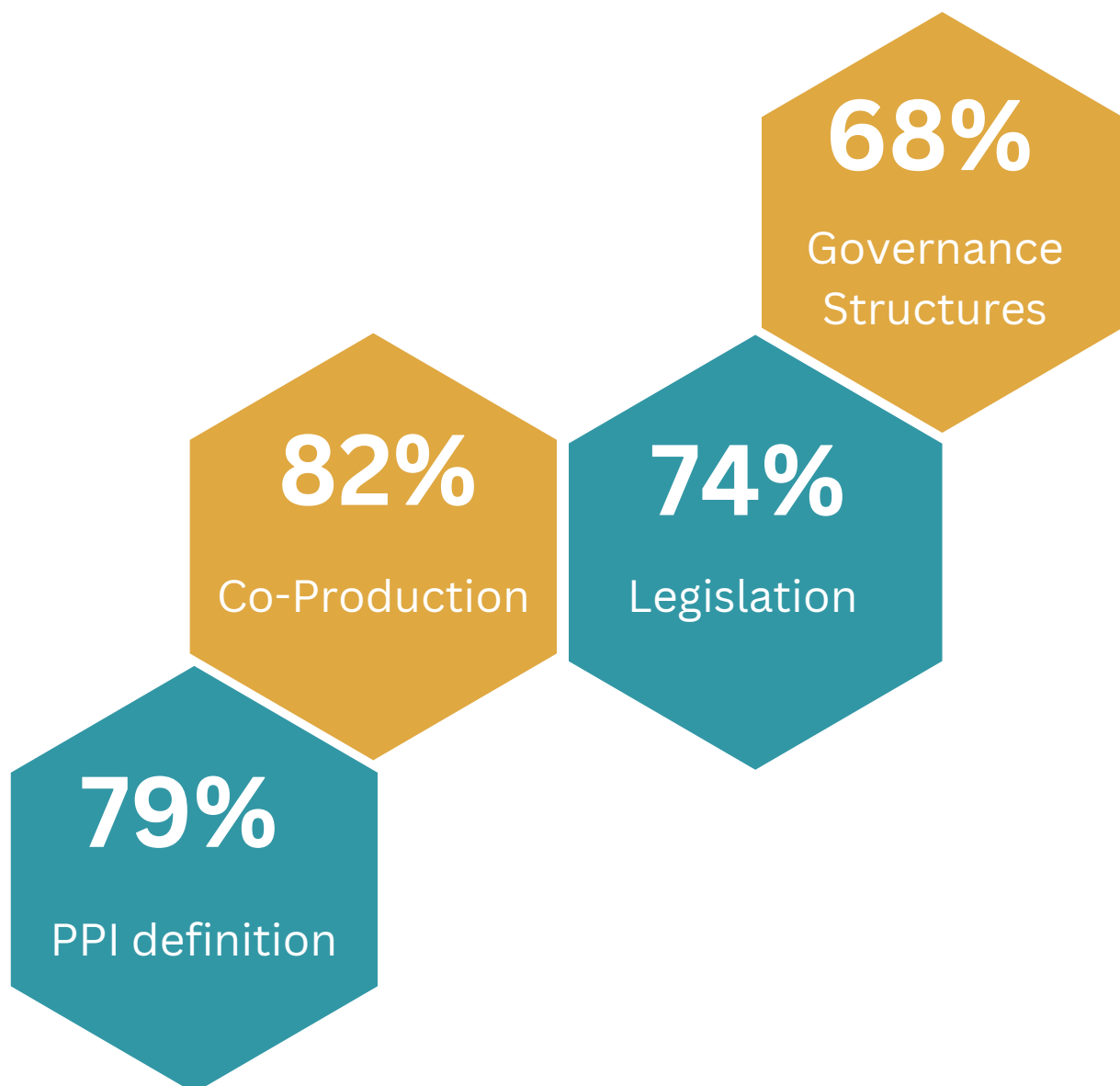
We asked participants to tell us if the information contained in each section was easy to understand.



**80%** of participants who completed the online questionnaire, strongly agreed or agreed that the information contained in section one was easy to understand.

This was in line with the discussions at the in-person workshops.

The questions in this section refer to the users understanding of the definitions used to describe PPI, Co-Production, the relevant legislation and the governance and structures of PPI as detailed in the Schemes. Percentages given are of those who strongly agreed or agreed to understanding the definitions given. A similar level of understanding of the definitions was reported at the in-person workshops.








## Feedback & Comments:

- What do these terms mean in plain English?
- It would be worth having simplified language or an explanation of the meaning.
- Simplifying some of the language would make the document more accessible to a wider audience, particularly those without a background in health and social care.


## For consideration

Produce a Plain English version of Schemes.



# **Section 2:**

## Organisational arrangements for Involvement



In this section, participants were asked to consider how the Involvement and Consultation Schemes set out organisational arrangements for ensuring compliance with PPI and Co-Production.

## Opportunities for Involvement



74% of respondents strongly agreed/agreed that the Schemes clearly demonstrate how the organisations create and promote opportunities for Involvement in consultations.

## Feedback & Comments

- Opportunities are promoted both on HSC Trust and Engage websites.
- Opportunities are promoted to marginalised groups.

## For consideration

Explore ways to more effectively promote involvement to marginalised groups.

Make better use of Engage to promote opportunities.



# Support for service users and carers

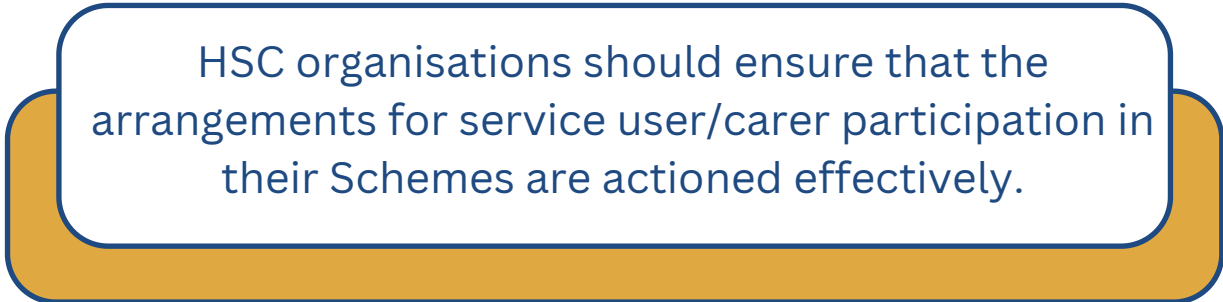
During the in-person workshops participants were very positive about how the Schemes committed the HSC organisations to supporting service user and carer involvement. They appreciated the range and depth of support, including clarity around role descriptions, reimbursement of out of pocket expenses and the provision of training.

**75.5%** of the on-line respondents strongly agreed/agreed that the Schemes clearly demonstrates how the organisation will support service users and carers in involvement & consultations

## Feedback & Comments:

- Greater clarity about how service users/carers can be recruited, how barriers to participation can be addressed and the availability of reimbursement.
- Consultations should outline how they will engage with disabled people and other Section 75 groups.

## For consideration:



HSC organisations should ensure that the arrangements for service user/carers participation in their Schemes are actioned effectively.

## Embedding Involvement



**71%** of respondents strongly agreed/agreed that the Schemes clearly demonstrated how Involvement and Co-production was embedded within the directorates of the organisation.

## Processes for Consultation

**68%** of respondents strongly agreed/agreed that the Schemes clearly demonstrated that the processes for consultation as described in the document met expectations



## Partnership

**68%** of respondents strongly agreed/agreed that the Schemes clearly demonstrates how the organisation partners with other HSC and external organisations



## Feedback & Comments

- Good to see collaboration between HSC organisations and other partners in the development of the Schemes.
- The framework largely meets expectations, additional information on how feedback will be collected, acted upon, and communicated back would be helpful.

## For consideration:

HSC organisations should build on their collaborative approach to involvement and consultation and continue to share good practice.



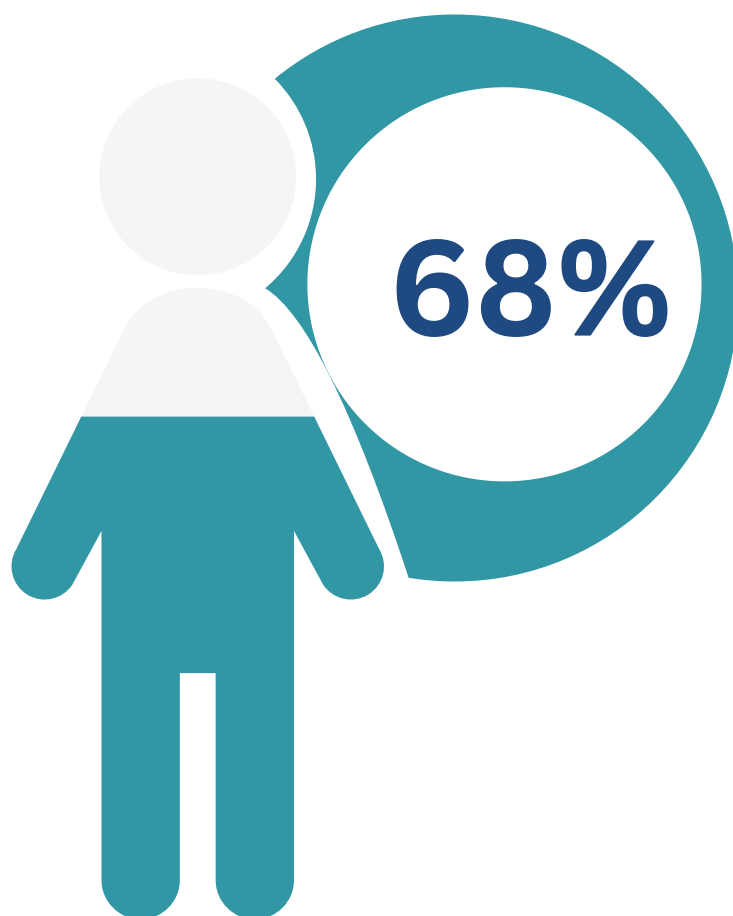
# **Section 3:**

## **Governance, Reporting and Monitoring**

# Governance, Reporting & Monitoring

In this section, participants were asked to consider how the Involvement and Consultation Schemes set out how the organisations will implement their governance, reporting and monitoring arrangements in respect to involvement.

**68%** of respondents strongly agreed/agreed that the Schemes clearly demonstrated what the governance arrangements were for the organisation in terms of Involvement and what the organisation's commitment is to monitoring and feedback for Involvement



There were additional written and verbal comments received about relationships with other partners in respect to involvement and consultation. One referenced the relationship with/role of Patient Client Council (PCC). Another referenced the role of the Department of Health (DOH), their consultation scheme and policy development role.





## Feedback and Comment

- Participants wanted greater understanding of the DOH and PCC roles in involvement and consultation generally.

## For consideration

Greater clarity around roles and responsibilities should be examined through the strategic approach to public engagement that is currently underway.



# **Final comments & considerations:**

# Moving Forward

In conclusion, those who responded were in the main impressed with the consistency of approach in the PHA and HSC Trust, Involvement and Consultation Schemes.

There was agreement that the new Schemes provided much greater clarity and understanding about what the consulting organisations meant about involvement and consultation and how they would discharge their responsibilities in this area.

There were a number of suggestions for the Schemes and more specifically for their active implementation.

Consistent use of terminology

Use of plain English /different formats

Be creative in our communication

Track how is information is being distributed

Publicise benefits of PPI

Clarity of organisational responsibility

Use graphics to illustrate governance structures

Final amendments using feedback from the consultation will be made and Schemes put forward for DoH consideration and organisational implementation.

