

# PATIENT STORIES MAKE ME BETTER AT MY JOB



**Patient  
Opinion**  
Every voice matters

**GUY BROOKES**

ASSOCIATE MEDICAL DIRECTOR  
ADULT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES



## How Patient Opinion makes a difference to Guy

"When I hear the individual stories from Patient Opinion I am reminded that, though we build our services to be responsive to people's needs, this does not always work for everyone."

"This was the case in a number of stories about adult mental health services, in particular the need to provide individual and effective responses to people's needs outside of usual working hours."

"The stories have illustrated the need for us to expand availability of 'out of hours' care. Making it accessible to more people, and ensuring the help they are offered relates to their personal needs and individual circumstances."

"For me, **having that direct contact with people who tell their story provides a lot of detail that otherwise would not be understood.** It becomes a constructive and collaborative process. It's not about having all the answers all the time, but rather about working together on understanding the issues and finding solutions."

It's not about having all the answers all the time



**I MADE SURE MY MUM COULD STAY IN TOUCH**  
HILARY

Talk to us to find out more at [www.patientopinion.org.uk](http://www.patientopinion.org.uk)

**This is about listening, learning and changing.** Patient Opinion exists so that patients can help you to provide the best care possible.

### Here's how it works:

#### 1. A patient shares a story

"My mother was admitted into ES Hospital last week. I live 3 hours journey from the hospital but have managed to visit most days (6 hours travel per day).

I bought her a mobile phone and put money on it only to discover that her Ward has no phone signal. I try to phone her every morning but rarely does anyone answer and they cannot bring a phone to her bed. There are no portable landline phones in this ward.

I feel this is a really significant shortcoming as the morale of patients directly impacts on their physical wellbeing. Why cannot something be done about this?"

See the original story here [www.patientopinion.org.uk/opinions/69464](http://www.patientopinion.org.uk/opinions/69464)

#### 2. Organisations listen, respond and make improvements

Response from Ian Mackenzie, Director of Information and Facilities, Surrey and Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust on 02/07/2012 at 12:52

"Thank you for your comment about telephoning patients whilst they are inpatients at East Surrey Hospital.

Having received this comment I went down and looked at a number of wards to check what was currently available. Some wards have handsets that can be passed to patients and some don't.

I have therefore arranged for all wards to be upgraded to portable handsets; this will take a couple of weeks to arrange. I have however ascertained which ward this comment refers to and a portable handset is being put in that ward this afternoon."

#### 3. Lots of people read it\*

##### Activity

- 17** staff members have read this story
- ▶ 1 at Royal College of Nursing
  - ▶ 11 at NHS London
  - ▶ 1 at Croydon Healthwatch
  - ▶ 1 at Harmoni
  - ▶ 2 at Croydon Health Services NHS Trust
  - ▶ 1 at Sadiq Khan's Office, MP for Tooting

\*On average, each story is viewed >2000 times

#### 10% of stories lead to an improvement

##### CHANGE MADE



This story led to a **change**

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## A professional perspective

**“In the ‘social era’, openness confers competitive advantage, because it harnesses the enormous potential of many connected individuals to create better ideas that are owned by all.**

Social media and the web is completely changing the way we all interact, and have conversations, by providing a cheap (often free) platform with a reach that could not have been imagined just a few years ago.

And it offers huge opportunity for hospitals and healthcare services to learn from patients, and improve as a result.

Like many, we were a little wary of Patient Opinion at first – about the impact of stories and conversations that reflected badly on our services being played out in public. We responded, but cautiously. Now, we are engaging actively and finding it very rewarding indeed!

We are learning a lot and having good conversations, usually with satisfactory outcomes for both parties.

I would urge NHS organisations to put aside cynicism, and wariness, and a tendency to secrecy, and instead to embrace this new world. It is generally positive, constructive, and helpful. It is ‘social’, and people mostly want dialogue, a genuine response, and action taken where necessary.

It is truly rewarding, I promise you.”

**DR MARK NEWBOLD**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE,  
HEART OF ENGLAND NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

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## About Patient Opinion

Patient Opinion is a not for profit social enterprise, founded in 2005 and is the UK’s leading independent feedback website for healthcare. We exist to promote meaningful dialogue between patients and services.

**Working with Patient Opinion gives you access to:**

- online patient feedback that is insightful and relevant to your organisation - sent to just the right people in your organisation
- a supported, moderated place to hold genuine dialogue with service users and to signpost service improvement based on feedback
- real time reports, to assure regulators about the quality of your services
- expert training and best practice advice to support your staff
- extensive resources and materials to help you get the most out of feedback
- workshops and events to provide learning from peers and stimulate ideas for your staff

## Getting it right

**This is about celebrating what you do well, and being honest about what you could do better.**

*Improving in ways that matter to our patients.*

“If someone uses Patient Opinion to tell us that something isn’t right, I can respond there and then, in minutes, and I can often make changes very quickly. Most of the time, people just want something small to change – they’re not asking for the world.

Working with Patient Opinion says that you have the confidence in your organisation to talk about it honestly, and enable other people to talk about it in the same way.”

**IAN MACKENZIE, DIRECTOR**  
SURREY AND SUSSEX HEALTHCARE NHS TRUST

“Patient Opinion is shining a light on what matters to patients in a new and very modern way”

**ROS MOORE,**  
CHIEF NURSING OFFICER, NHS SCOTLAND, MARCH 2013



**YOUR  
STORIES  
HELP US  
KNOW  
WHAT  
MAKES A  
DIFFERENCE**  
BARBARA

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## Why does this matter?

**Listening to your patients, and using their feedback to improve what you do and how you do it, keeps you responsive and ensures that you are delivering compassionate care as standard.**

All NHS organisations have to prove that they are:

- “Putting patients at the centre of decision making”
- “Maintaining a strong grip on service performance”

**(2012/13 NHS OPERATING FRAMEWORK)**

In the wake of the Francis Inquiry, this is more important than ever.

Stories allow people to articulate what really mattered to them, what did or could have made a difference. They tell you how your services are doing, and they show you what you could do to improve care for the next person.

### A patient on patientopinion.org.uk:

Update posted by [Sleepless in suburbia](#) (the patient) on 15/05/2013 at 20:56

Wow! When I wrote my entry I thought that it would merely be a way for me to vent my frustration into the electronic ethos before it was thrown into a virtual bin.

Not so, the item was checked & posted within hours, then within 72 hours a lengthy detailed response from somebody who has obviously read & considered my entry, not just some standard statement from a body just going through the motions.

Well done, I find it really encouraging when technology allows exchanges like this instead of just electronically going through the motions.

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## Not just for providers...

### Why commissioners should work with Patient Opinion

- Easily access feedback from the people who use the services you commission.
- Track which providers are responding to feedback, and which are making improvements in response, using our real-time responsiveness metrics.
- Identify particular issues of concern for your providers, and easily create reports about particular services or areas of concern.
- Use this feedback to help you develop or transform services based on patient needs and preferences.

### How commissioners use Patient Opinion

- Triangulate and validate with your other quality data, and support your CQUIN delivery.
- Access the views of hard to reach patients. We have years of expertise of successfully reaching out to those with problems with substance misuse, mental health, self-harm, sexual health, continence issues etc.
- Deal with the repercussions of the Francis Report by proactively giving patients a proven, public and safe place to feedback, which enables you to monitor how providers engage and respond to online feedback.

“Publication of comments online, good and bad, is a powerful tool for patient choice and in forcing providers to address, in public, criticisms made. While making a response is not mandatory, failure to do so is likely to cause the public to draw adverse inferences... encouragement should be offered to impressive contributions made in this field by organisations such as Patient Opinion.”

**ROBERT FRANCIS QC,**  
FRANCIS INQUIRY, FEBRUARY 2013

“The NHS will actively encourage feedback from the public, patients and staff, welcome it and use it to improve its services.”

**NHS CONSTITUTION**

**NOW MY  
AMBULANCE  
CREW KNOW  
THE DIFFERENCE  
THEY MADE**

**SHEILA**



“We are excited by the opportunities that the new functionality of Patient Opinion brings to us as commissioners. Understanding what patients are telling us about the services we commission on their behalf is key. We look forward to actively using Patient Opinion tools to listen, respond and make changes to services, improving them for the population we serve.”

**DR DAVID HEGARTY,**  
CHAIR DUDLEY CCG

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## TALK TO US

A standard subscription to Patient Opinion with full access to reports, training, support and workshops from our expert team costs £10,950 + VAT per year and is less for smaller organisations and CCGs. Contact us to discuss your needs and bespoke options available.

### email

[team@patientopinion.org.uk](mailto:team@patientopinion.org.uk)

### or call

0114 281 6256

### Find out more at

[www.patientopinion.org.uk/info/professionals](http://www.patientopinion.org.uk/info/professionals)

Over 600 NHS organisations work with Patient Opinion including acute, mental health and community trusts, CCGs and Healthwatches.

CQC subscribe, as do many national charities. Over 68,000 stories can be read on [www.patientopinion.org.uk](http://www.patientopinion.org.uk) and we recently expanded to social care, with the DH funded development of [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk)

The NHS should be commended for its willingness to cooperate with Patient Opinion, exchange information with it and make use of its facilities.

**ROBERT FRANCIS QC,**  
FRANCIS INQUIRY,  
FEBRUARY 2013

