

## Care Opinion & the Third Sector

Care Opinion is a not-for-profit social enterprise, which runs a website where people share their experiences of health and social care services.

Care Opinion aims to make it quick, easy and safe for people and their families to give feedback about their health and social care experiences, and for service providers to respond to and make use of feedback for improvement.

### Who set this up and who runs it?

Care Opinion was established in 2005 by Dr Paul Hodgkin, a GP in Sheffield who devised Care Opinion (previously Patient Opinion) as a way for people to share their experience and help busy health & social care services staff to hear about those experiences. Care Opinion has been working with services across the UK for over 12 years and in Scotland since 2011.

Care Opinion is run by an enthusiastic and committed team with its own independent board.

### What does Care Opinion do?

Care Opinion provides a [website](#) where anyone can share their recent experience of local health and social care services, and see what others are saying. Stories can be submitted to the site online, or by post or telephone.

When a story is published on the site, Care Opinion can automatically tell relevant health and social care services, who may then respond online. If this response shows that a change has been made to the service, the Care Opinion website highlights this, for everyone to see.

When the response is published, Care Opinion automatically tells the author of the story as well as other interested organisations.

The result is short, public online exchanges which show how people are experiencing services, and how services are listening and responding to that experience.

All stories posted on Care Opinion are read before publication. Postings which are commercial, offensive or defamatory will not be published – though we publish 95% of the postings received.



## How can Third Sector advocacy & support organisations get involved?

We offer Third Sector advocacy & support organisations free registration to encourage their involvement in online conversations.

With Care Opinion, you can:

- Get immediate alerts to the latest stories relating to your area of interest, e.g. stroke, diabetes, depression (these stories can also be selected by location);
- Use this feedback to inform discussions with your local health and care providers;
- Identify emerging themes in stories related to the organisation's area of interest;
- Respond to stories online, putting across your view, raising your online profile and widening public understanding of your role;
- Keep track of which services are responding to and acting on feedback;
- Show you take feedback seriously by bringing it onto your own site with our API feeds and easy to install widgets.

### Activity

**10** [staff members have read this story](#)

- ▶ 1 at Skin Conditions Campaign Scotland
- ▶ 7 at NHS Lanarkshire
- ▶ 1 at Elaine Smith's office, MSP for Central Scotland
- ▶ 1 at Partnership for Change

[Who has Care Opinion told about this story?](#)

## How can Third Sector provider organisations get involved?

Third sector organisations providing services for adults registered with the Care Inspectorate are encouraged to register with Care Opinion, so that you can start to receive and respond to stories about your services. All we need are contact details of two members of staff authorised to respond on behalf of the organisation. Ideally, one should be a strategic lead and one an operational lead.

## How can you get the most from Care Opinion?

- To hear what your communities (& what the people you support) have to say about their health and social care experiences we need your help to raise their awareness of Care Opinion. After all, we can't have stories coming out without stories coming in.
- Inviting us to speak at events is one way to achieve this, others include distributing flyers and posters to individuals in your networks, as well as allowing people to tell their story on Care Opinion via your website itself (don't worry - its easily accomplished!).

## Want to know more?

If you want to know more about working with Care Opinion in Scotland, please get in touch with us.

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