

Patient Opinion

NEWS



Patient
Opinion
Every voice matters

All the latest news, views and reviews from the Patient Opinion team

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY PATIENT OPINION

Amazingly, Patient Opinion has now been providing an online feedback service for 10 years. So in November we celebrated our tenth birthday in style with an event called "The Power of Connection", in partnership with the Guardian Healthcare Professionals Network. The past decade has seen a lot of changes in how people are connecting and communicating online. When we started in 2005, it was unheard of for people to share feedback about NHS services online – yet now it is mainstream. So to mark this anniversary, we wanted to explore how online communication creates "networked citizens" – patients and staff, who are connecting to create change in the services they use, or

provide. We believe this change will have profound impacts on the future of health and social care.

The event was opened by Professor Fiona McQueen, chief nursing officer of NHS Scotland, who explained how Patient Opinion is changing the culture of the Scottish NHS. "Patient Opinion is on the side of patients," she said, "and also on the side of staff."

Our second speaker, Irenie Ekkeshis, director of the New Citizenship Project (and herself a patient activist), argued that we are in the midst of a shift from consumers to citizens – driven in part by new technologies.

Paul Hodgkin, Patient Opinion's founder,

addressed some compelling questions in relation to why the digital health era hasn't created a "Facebook or Uber of healthcare", we heard from patients, service users and staff, concluding the day was James Munro arguing that the future would be less about "big data", and more about the "small data" of real people sharing real stories about their care.

Remarkably, the tweeting from our event (#poco10) was so feverish that we began trending at number 3 in the UK.

We've posted a longer account of the event, with photos, on our blog.

Patientopinion.org.uk/blog

THE POWER OF CONNECTION

To celebrate Patient Opinion turning ten we launched an anniversary report. We wanted to explore how the networked citizen voice is changing health and social care. Over the past 10 years much has changed. In 2005 nobody spoke of "patient experience". Now it is a job title, a network, a topic. National policy reports – Francis, Keogh, Berwick – have urged the NHS to listen to the voices of patients, to make changes, to be transparent in their use of feedback.

This report, looks back on how far we've all come and identifies some of the learning and tips picked up along the way, both by us and our wonderful report contributors.

[Download and read the full report](#)

www.patientopinion.org.uk
the UK's leading independent feedback platform.

Or call us during working hours (local rate):

0114 281 6256

CARE OPINION: REACHING OUT TO THOSE LESS HEARD

Stories have been coming thick and fast in our pilot of Care Opinion in Scotland. Working in partnership with the Health & Social Care ALLIANCE, with funding from the Scottish Government, Care Opinion is currently being piloted in two areas in Scotland: Fife and Ayrshire and Arran.

Stories so far have been overwhelmingly positive (65%), where the quality of care given by staff is highly praised. Care at home services are widely valued, enabling people with support needs to continue to live safely in their own home and community. However, challenges clearly exist around issues such as continuity of staff and care; communication and timeliness of services.

Erik Sutherland, East Ayrshire Health & Social Care Partnership says "The feedback has been great. Where people's stories have flagged up areas for improvement, we've been able to respond directly and make small changes or offer a contact point. Services have used the stories to communicate improvements to

people using a 'you said...we did' format."

Commissioners and regulators of social care services are keeping a keen eye on Care Opinion, observing how providers promote and respond to stories about their services.

Helen McArthur, North Ayrshire Health & Social Care Partnership, "It lets us see, first hand, what people really think about the services we provide and commission. It's a safe platform for people to get their point across, knowing they will be heard and, where appropriate, see action from their words."

Bill Gray from South Ayrshire Health & Social Care Partnership says "We greatly value the feedback we receive through Care Opinion. As a commissioner of services, the stories we receive help us work with our partners to put in place services that are focussed on the needs of individuals and which will sustain them for as long as they are able at home or in a community setting.

Stories from the pilot can be found [here](#).

WORK SMARTER WITH OUR SMART ALERTS

The organisations getting the most value from Patient Opinion are those who involve the most staff in hearing, responding to and acting on feedback in real-time. And there are some amazing examples of such organisations on Patient Opinion, like Nottinghamshire Healthcare, NHS Lanarkshire, and Surrey and Sussex Healthcare. It is becoming quite normal for an organisation to have over 50 staff logging into Patient Opinion.

As the number of staff rises, so does the impact— but equally so does the complexity of keeping track. Who gets alerted to what? What if a story "gets lost in the system"?

With that problem in mind we've recently added "smart alerts" to Patient Opinion, creating some significant new possibilities for subscribers who are scaling up their use of feedback. Using smart alerts, you can make sure you meet your own standards for reading and responding.

For example, you might have a dozen service managers who we are alerting to just the feedback in their own departments. But what if something gets missed? Just add a smart alert that says "alert me to any stories about our organisation which we haven't responded to after a week". Of course, you can adjust the timescale, the departments included and even the story criticality too.

We have a related smart alert which commissioners are finding useful: "alert me to stories which haven't had any response from the relevant provider, after 2 weeks". Some commissioners are now taking a very active interest in the responsiveness of local providers.

Our smart alerts are just the first step on making it easy to involve more people in real-time feedback – there's more to come. Do get in touch if you'd like to know more, or need help.

A PLACE FOR SUBSCRIBERS

In October, we launched our new Subscriber Support blog. We want to share weekly hints and tips, updates and advice. Topics so far have included "The Secret to Receiving Feedback" and "10 Tips for Using Your CCG Subscription to its Full Potential".

We encourage all subscribers to read our

weekly blog (why not go ahead and bookmark it!). It is a valuable source of information, and a place to hear about new developments first. You can comment on the posts or contact us directly if you have questions about the information given or want our help with the tips and advice offered.

LEICESTER CCG TAKING PATIENT STORIES FURTHER

We were very grateful to Manjit Singh, Patient Experience Manager from Leicester City CCG for giving an inspiring webinar describing how he uses Patient Opinion's alerting and reporting tools to monitor the quality of local provider engagement with patients.

Manjit also explained:

- How he always starts his Quality & Clinical Governance report with a summary of PO stories, responses and service improvements
- How PO information also feeds into the contracts team reviews and helps support the CCGs unannounced quality visits
- How stories from PO, when collated over time, provided important trend information/ indicators that:
 - a) enabled a new KPI to be introduced requiring an acute provider to regularly report to the CCG on the patient feedback it receives, its range of sources, and the improvements to services that have been achieved as a result of that feedback
 - b) speeded up provider response times
 - c) provided indicators of possible issues/ areas of concern where further investigation could be undertaken to gain a more detailed insight
- Exploring how the CCG may respond on PO to make contact with patients as part of targeted survey or investigation work into a specific issue/service area

These methods of triangulating and systematically monitoring feedback, ensures quality monitoring and commissioning for the CCG.

PO is unique in that stories are tagged with multiple providers across health and social care, and give a much more complete picture of patient journeys across those services.

To find out more about working with us, please email Miriam (COO) on miriam.rivas-aguilar@patientopinion.org.uk or call Tim (Integration Dev Manager) on 0114 2816256.

Visit the blog: <https://www.patientopinion.org.uk/blog/41>

Is there something you want to know, or an idea you want to share? If you have an idea for a blog post, get in touch with Cally at Cally.bowman@patientopinion.org.uk.



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