

# Halton Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2014

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## Engagement and Participation

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Description	The document describes the local approach to the engagement and participation of children, young people and their parents in the development of local services.
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Related documents	Participation Strategy

## 1. National Legislative perspective

In the UK there is a duty to involve children and young people in all decisions that affect them. This has been the case since 1989 when Britain signed up to the United Nations convention of the rights of the child (UNCRC, 1989). The UNCRC has been particularly influential on children's rights and participation, specifically section 12, which states:

***'Every child and young person has the right to express their views and have their views given due weight in everything that affects them'.***

Since the UNCRC there has been a number of papers and legislation such as; Every Child Matters (2003), Children's Act (2004) and the Children's Plan (2007). More recently the OFSTED inspection framework has been updated indicating a focus on the journey, experiences and voice of the child. This is also the case in the new Children and Families Act 2014 which has a greater focus on child centered approaches and the involvement of children and their parents/carers when undertaking needs assessments.

### NHS requirement to consult

There are many definitions of consultation, but in essence it means the act of asking a person, communities and public for their views on a proposal or issue before a decision is taken.

Meaningful engagement with patients, carers and communities must comply with the strategic objective 2 of NHS Halton CCG's constitution or the requirements of Section 242 of the NHS Act 2006<sup>1</sup>. It means taking to people about their health needs and listening to what they have to say about their services. It will give the public a better understanding of the issues faced by the NHS and why their health services may need to change.

**Section 242** is the legal duty to involve current and potential service users or their representatives in everything to do with planning, provision and delivery of NHS services. The duty specifically applies where there are changes proposed in the manner in which services are delivered or in the range of services made available.

**Strategic Objective 2 of NHS Halton CCG** requires evidence of "meaningful engagement with patients, carers and communities". This means showing how the CCG ensures inclusion of patients, carers, public, communities of interest and geography, health and wellbeing boards and local authorities and how the views of individual patients and practice populations are translated into commissioning and shared decision-making.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.combined.nhs.uk/dc/Documents/Encl%203%20Appendix%204%20-%20legal%20advice%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.combined.nhs.uk/dc/Documents/Encl%203%20Appendix%204%20-%20legal%20advice%20(2).pdf)

## 2. Why participation is important

Meaningful participation, not only means listening and consulting young people but also to create opportunity for them to participate in decision making, enabling young people to be active citizens. Effective participation should enable and actively encourage children and adults to collaborate as equal stakeholders in the process from the planning stage through to evaluation. Youth participation within a children's rights context is often used interchangeably with the term 'active involvement'. Participation in this context is more than simply taking part in an activity; it refers specifically to the involvement in the process of identifying needs, exploring solutions, making decisions and planning action.

## 3. Participation in Halton

The involvement of children young people and their families in the process of policy changes and commissioning decisions is vital in developing policies, services and provision that is more relevant, more effective and more sustainable. In Halton meaningful involvement is achieved through a variety of coordinated pathways (as detailed below).

Currently there is a Children and Young people's Participation Strategy being written by young people, parents and professionals this strategy will be completed summer 2014 and will be available on Halton Children's Trust website

<http://www.haltonchildrenstrust.co.uk/index.php/participation-group/>

### 3.1 Halton Family Voice

Halton Family Voice is a forum group which links into Halton Children's Trust to represent Halton Parents 'VOICE' on a wide range of agendas and topics. The Group itself meets once a month and welcomes voluntary members from all parents or people with parenting responsibilities within Halton. The membership consists of representatives from many of the local parent or carer groups creating a structured network or pathway of two way communication, gaining a true representation of Halton Parents.

<http://www.haltonchildrenstrust.co.uk/index.php/halton-family-voice/>

### 3.2 INVOLVE

INVOLVE is a 'Participation advisory Group' the group's main role is as a critical friend to Halton Children's Trust and its partners on participation. The group also acts in an advisory capacity on participation, advising on how best to involve parents, children and young people in decision making processes.

INVOLVE is made up of lead engagement and participation professionals and Young person and parent/carer representatives from: Youth Cabinet, Canal Boat, Halton Speak Out, Halton Carers Centre, Children in Care Council, Cheshire Police, Cheshire Fire and Rescue, Halton Family Voice, Clinical Commissioning Group(CCG), Healthwatch, Young Addaction and Community of Youth.

INVOLVE is currently developing the children and young people's participation strategy which will be a useable document on how to involve children, young people and their families. Feedback is a vital part of participation and shows value to stakeholder's contribution or involvement. INVOLVE has developed a task request and feedback form for professionals wanting to seek advice and support from the group. This document can be downloaded on <http://haltonchildrenstrust.co.uk/index.php/participation-group/>

### 3.3. Children and Young People's Voluntary Sector Forum (CYP VSF)

The forum promotes the involvement of the voluntary and community sector in the development of local and national policy affecting children and young people. It is an open and inclusive forum that represents and supports voluntary and community sector organisations that deliver services to children and young people. There is the opportunity to develop consortia and partnership working in order to deliver sustainable and high quality services to children and young people.

<http://www.haltonchildrenstrust.co.uk/index.php/voluntary-sector-forum/>

### 3.4. People's forum – CCG

NHS Halton CCG have established a Halton People's Health Forum to enable patients and the public generally to influence and shape its strategic plans and commissioning of local health services. It meets regularly every 3 months, alternating between day and evening meetings and between Runcorn and Widnes to try to be as accessible to as wide a population as possible. There is a steering group which shapes the meeting and enables members of the public who live or work in the area to give their views on local, regional and national health services in the area.

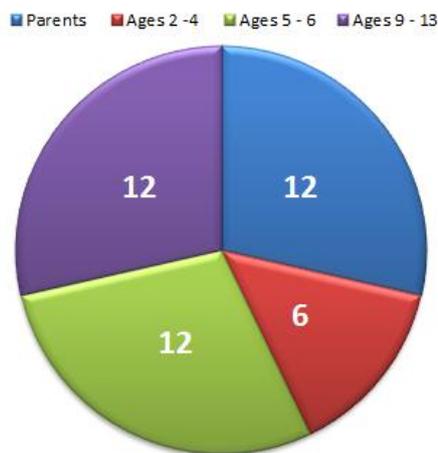
At the events and elsewhere, people receive information about local health services and broader health issues to enable them to find out how and why decisions are made about health services in the area. There are also opportunities to get involved in health and



Children and young people of all ages were invited to enter a Halton wide competition, in which they could use art, poems, short stories or phrase to show what ‘healthy Halton’ was for them. In order to support the children and families in the competition two creative workshops were organised during February 2013 half term with a writing facilitator to support the children and young people’s work.

The first session was held in Halton Lodge children’s Centre, Runcorn and the second at CRMZ, Widnes. Workshops were open to Parents/carers and their children. At the workshops children and young people were invited to think about what they thought being healthy in Halton meant and were asked to produce a picture, a poem, a short story or a phrase to show their view. 42 people took part, 12 parents and 30 young people of various ages.

Figure 1: Age breakdown



This work was published as a booklet [LINK](#) collating the views of health across children and families of all ages. The initiative resulted in a prize giving event in where health services and messages could be promoted to families.

### 3.6. Case Study: Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Service review

Halton Clinical Commissioning Group and Halton Borough Council have been engaged in a joint service reviews for CAMHS, starting in the summer of 2013. A range of engagement and stakeholder consultation activities have taken place:

- CAMHS stakeholder event 10 July 2013
- Young people from Canal Boat adventure project have been heavily involved in focus group sessions and through a questionnaire, this has influenced the service specification. Focus groups took place September 2013 & February 2014.
- Young men accessing a range of services.

- Draft service specification shared with: all delegates of CAHMS Stakeholder event, INVOLVE, CAMHS Board membership, All GP's. HBC Children's Commissioning Team. This covered professional stakeholders, young people and parents.
- Parent/young person representative now attending CAMHS steering group.
- Young people will be on the panel through the tendering process.

### 3.7. Case Study: Children's Commissioner Takeover Day 2013

The day was a national event led by the Children's Commissioner for England. It gave children and young people the opportunity to be involved in local and national decision-making by working alongside adults at all levels and across sectors. They got the chance to understand how and why decisions are made and how to influence future actions. Children benefit from the opportunity to experience the world of work and make their voices heard, while adults and organisations gain a fresh perspective on what they do.

The 2013 Children's Commissioner's Takeover Day was the seventh, planned to co-incide with the same week as Universal Children's Day, which was established by the United Nations in 1954 and aims to promote the welfare of children. This links in with the Children's Commissioner's Takeover Day ethos to promote the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), in particular Article 12, which says that children should have a say in matters affecting them, and their views must be taken seriously. Article 3 states that adults should make decisions in the best interest of children by thinking about how their decisions will affect them.

Takeover Day fulfils this by giving children and young people the chance to voice their opinions and organisations a chance to listen to them. The day will create a lasting effect for both the child or young person and your organisation.

Young people from across Cheshire took part in the event. In Halton young people 'took over' Halton Clinical Commissioning Group on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November.

The Children's Commissioner outlined a range of benefits such as:

- Improved links with customers or service users and the local community
- Fresh ideas, insight and creativity and ways to improve what organisation's do
- A better understanding of how children and young people experience issues involved in your work
- The chance to demonstrate your commitment to listening to young people, and encourage their commitment to the success of your organisation.

By getting involved in Children's Commissioner Takeover Day you will be providing a valuable service to young people. Children and young people can benefit from the chance to gain skills, knowledge and inspiration; the chance to develop a better understanding of how organisations are run and the processes behind the decisions which affect them;

experience of leadership and decision-making; and knowing their opinions are valued, leading to higher confidence, self-esteem and aspirations for the future.

### 3.8. Case Study: Urgent Care Units consultation

During summer 2013, residents and key stakeholders were given the opportunity to respond to a consultation regarding urgent care health services in Halton. The two areas of urgent health care that were being consulted on were the proposal for urgent care centres in both Widnes and Runcorn and the proposal for a CDU (Clinical Decision Unit) based at the Halton Hospital Site.



There were a number of opportunities for residents and key stakeholders to take part in the consultation. These were:

- Healthwatch Halton Meetings
- Two Public events held at Select Stadium Halton and Runcorn Town Hall
- GP and Practice Feedback Questionnaire
- Young Persons Questionnaire via Catch-22 and Halton Speak Out
- Online / Paper questionnaire available for the public to complete via <http://www.haltonccg.nhs.uk/urgentcare> and also distributed via local community groups and advertised in 'Inside Halton' - a quarterly magazine that is

distributed to every household in the borough.

The overwhelming majority of attendees at the meetings, as well as those who responded to the GP and practice feedback questionnaire and those who responded to the questionnaires are in favour of the proposals.

9 young people took part in the consultation.

Figure 2: Characteristics of young people who took part in the Urgent Care Centres consultation



They were asked the following questions:

**Do you think it would be good to have a Walk-in Centre in both Widnes and Runcorn?**

All 9 respondents stated that it would be good to have a Walk-in Centre both in Widnes and Runcorn. They asked:

- If someone needed an x-ray but they didn't understand would there be someone there to help them? Or if they needed other treatment?
- Will this effect staff numbers in the area?
- Would both Walk-in centres have the same facilities?

**Do you think it would be good to have a Clinical Decision Unit in Halton?**

All 9 respondents stated that it would be good to have a Clinical Decision Unit in Halton.

They asked:

- How will it be publicised?