



Partners in Policymaking™

REPORT

Session 1 – “Lest we forget”

History – where have we come from, how have we got here?

To: Dr Colleen Wieck and Mary Jo Nicols, Minnesota Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities

Copies to: Lynne Elwell, CSIP
Lawraine Hails, North East Partners
Sam Clarke, Inclusion North
Ruth Hicks, Inclusion North
Fiona Walker, Inclusion North
Bill Norman, Newcastle Borough Council
Derek Birtwhistle, Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council
Nicola Bailey, Hartlepool Borough Council
Chris Binns, Stockton Borough Council
Paul Davies, VPST
Jackie Sochocka, SHA
Julia Erskine, Merseyside Partners
Maria Rules, Yorkshire and Humberside Partners
Jane Myers, Eastern Region Partners
Caroline Tomlinson, Wigan Partners
Pauline White, Wirral Partners
Vicky Raphael, East Midlands

Prepared by: Liz Barraclough

INTRODUCTION

The second North East wide Partners in Policymaking™ course took place on 1st/2nd December 2006. This report has been prepared to evaluate the first session and make any changes necessary in readiness for the second session which will take place on 5/6th January 2007. It has been prepared for the licensor, Dr Colleen Wieck but shared with the funders of the course and other key stakeholders.

FINDINGS

Applicants

There were 30 places available through grant funding from Inclusion North and additional funding from Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland, Hartlepool and Newcastle Borough Councils. All places were filled and of the 30 successful applicants to the course, 29 people attended on the first day and 30 attended on the second.

Information

The successful applicants had been sent a pack of information prior to this session including a schedule; biographies of the organizers; a profile to ascertain any particular needs of the participants; details about how partners started and details of how to get to the Venue. The organizers worked hard to create the right atmosphere and ambience in the room. Each delegate was provided with a pack of information containing articles, poems, government policies relevant to the session. Posters, articles, pictures and poems were also displayed around the room. There were also tables around the room which had items of information and books for delegates to borrow and/or look at during the weekend. These were arranged into the following categories – person centred approaches, government policies, rights and justice, education, transition, health issues, housing, jobs, working together.

Schedule

Partners in Policymaking™ is a dynamic course. Some changes have been made to the overall course to reflect the changing policymaking agenda in Britain. Please see appendix two for an overall outline of the course. Some of these changes took place following a national meeting of all Partners coordinators which took place in Blackpool in March 2006.





The schedule for the weekend can be found in appendix three. We were fortunate to have the national lead for Partners, Lynne Elwell, in attendance. It was also heartening to see the involvement of partner's graduates from the North East and Yorkshire and Humberside courses to help their further skills and development. We also value our partnership with Moveable Feast Arts,

SNUG and OUTS (Opportunities under the Sun). Several young people from the OUTS group supported the overall organization of the course including catering, waiting and PAX technical services.

Evaluation

At the end of the weekend, delegates were asked to complete an evaluation form. This had two parts to it – the first section asked delegates to grade their responses to a series of statements. The categories were Yes!, Mostly, Not Well, No. Pictures were used in addition to words. Some of the self advocates were supported to complete the forms – it was encouraging that this support often came from other participants. The second section asked for more qualitative statements to ascertain what delegates enjoyed most about the course; what could have been better; their favourite food; how they would use the information and where they heard about Partners in Policymaking™. There was also a section for other comments.

23 evaluation forms were returned on the day – 9 identified themselves as self advocates and 15 as parents (one person ticked both boxes). Some delegates ticked more than one box. The responses to the first section are shown below.

Please circle your response to each statement	Yes!	Mostly	Not well	No
				
1. I can describe the history of services for, and perceptions of, people with developmental disabilities.	13	9	1	0
2. I can describe the significant contributions of the parent, self-advocate, and independent living movements.	12	9	2	0

3. I understand the ways in which self-advocacy differs from advocacy for others and why the difference is important.	14	8	1	0
4. I can describe People First Language and why its use is of critical importance.	10	9	3	2
5. The speakers presented the information clearly.	20	3	0	0
6. The handouts and audio/visual aids were valuable.	19	3	0	1
7. I received new information that will help me improve my advocacy skills.	19	2	1	0
8. The homework assignments and/or skill-building activities during the session were valuable.	15	2	0	0
9. My general reaction to the program was positive.	22	1	0	0
10. The program met my expectations.	23	0	0	0

It can be seen that the course has been very well received by all delegates. Some delegates felt that they had not personally obtained the competencies of using people first language etc. This competency should be reinforced by one of the homework tasks set where delegates were asked to look out for images/words showing disabled people in a negative or positive light. We are also aware of the delegate needs regarding the presentation of information. We have arranged for some support for him where he lives but also discussed how we can adapt the information to meet his needs.



A summary of the comments given in the second section is shown below.

The thing I liked most about this session was:

The organizers noticed how well people seemed to bond together as a whole group – lots of natural alliances were made during the group exercises in particular. There were fourteen individual comments around this theme. Delegates either made general comments about getting to know different people and hear different stories or mentioned particular people. For example –

“The relaxed and friendly atmosphere. The people I met and friendships that have started.”

“Getting to meet new people, who want to make changes and have similar issues”.

“Meeting new friends, meeting Eric”

There were sixteen comments which highlighted particular speakers or parts of the programme. For example,

“MFA set the tone of the session”

“Hearing from Di and seeing things from a different perspective”

“Learning the history of disabled people and the services that surround them, interesting area that I hadn't really thought about before although bits and pieces were familiar. An area I wouldn't mind looking further into.”

“The passion and knowledge of the speakers”.

Two people specifically mentioned the food – “I have never been this well fed. Thank You.”

The session would have been better if:

Delegates were then asked if anything could be improved. Nearly half of participants (12) left this section blank. Two people had specific requests regarding the layout of information which we shall address. One person felt that they needed more information regarding advocacy. This will be addressed as one of the information gathering exercises was to find out more about advocacy on the internet or through local groups. One person wanted an opportunity to meet with other delegates which will be addressed in the second session where for each group exercise we ensure that people work with different people each time.

In what ways will the knowledge and skills gained this weekend be useful to you?

Delegates were asked how the knowledge and skills gained would be useful to them in their own lives. Seven comments were made around improving their own advocacy and speaking up for individual's rights.

For example,

"It has helped me be more self aware and think about issues much more deeply."

"Being more able to shout up and think of what people are saying".

Four people specifically mentioned confidence, for example,

"I now feel that I am on an equal footing with other people with respect to the historical aspects of the disability movement."

"Start to make me more confident and look forward to following weekends."

Two people mentioned how it would help them in their work, for example,

"For my work at Partnership Board and Skills for People".

Six people made reference to how it might help their personal situation, for example,

"It has made me feel happier and think about what I want more".

"It has made me realize that my beautiful 15 year old daughter Katie is not a baby. I must let her grow up. Thank you."

"Help me to focus on what to do next and what direction to take".

Other comments

Of the eighteen comments made, most were to thank the organizers and appreciation of being included on the course, for example,

"It has begun a journey of self awareness for me and "The battle has begun". Thank you for your commitment and hard work from myself and my son."

"It's a great course. I'm over the moon to be included in it!"

Several people reinforced meeting people and the friendliness of people.

"I will be looking forward to our next weekend. I was apprehensive and worried about the time spent away from home, but it has been great, most enjoyable and informative. Lovely people, lovely food. Thank you for having me and for all the wonderful hosts".

A couple people mentioned how it had made them think, for example,

"Given me such a lot to think about. The thing I will take away from this will be "Light a candle".

Where did you first hear about Partners in Policymaking?

An overwhelming majority of delegates were there because of personal contacts with co-coordinators or other partner's graduates (seventeen responses). A couple of people received information through their partnership boards. Three people from written information such as press articles and letters.

Support

The steering group of North East Partners and co-coordinators would like to acknowledge the help and support provided by various parties. One of the main supports has been the advice and guidance given by Lynne Elwell from CSIP and the NWTDT who was instrumental both in bringing the first Partners course to Britain but also in promoting Partners throughout the UK. The steering group was formed following a National Academy held in February 2003. Advice and guidance has also been provided by Dr Colleen Wieck from Minnesota, USA who devised the Partners programme. Support has also come from Inclusion North and the other funders which is very gratefully received.

Liz Barraclough 6th December 2006

Appendix One

List of Participants

Jo	Siou
Richard	Shotton
Lynsey	Best
Wendy	James
Kath	Ferrar
Emma	Crouchley
Sandie	Jones
Eveline	Waring
Helen	Birch
Julie	Fletcher
Stephen	Waterfield
Lynne	Morrison
Karen	Snowdon
Graham	Newton
Lucy	Liu
Kevin	Horspool
Shirley	Leggett
Stephen	Storey
Heather	Clegg
Paula	Knight
Linda	Dickinson
Geoffrey	Hudson
Angela	Turford
Stuart	Saunders
Michelle	Bayliss
Martin	Roberts
Deborah	Miller
Gail	Walker
Emma	Williams
Martin	Smith

Appendix Two – Overall outline of the course
North East Partners Programme 2006 – 7

- Session One “Lest we forget”
History – where have we come from, how have we got here?
1/2nd December 2006
- Session Two “Things can only get better”
Person centred approaches
5/6th January 2007
- Session Three “The struggle for inclusive, or any, education”
Education
9/10th February 2007
- Session Four “Just because I can’t speak, doesn’t mean I don’t have anything to say”
Communication and technological aids
*23/24th March 2007*changed due to availability of speaker**
- Session Five “I got life!”
Making sense of individual budgets and I n Control
20/21st April 2007
- Session Six “Yes, Minister!”
I nfluencing politics and policies
18/19th May 2007
- Session Seven “Don’t think a small group cannot change the world. Indeed, it is the only way it has ever happened.”

Margaret Mead
I nfluencing local politics
8/9th June 2007
- Session Eight “One small step for me, one giant leap for us”
Using the knowledge in your communities
20/21st July 2007

Partners in Policymaking™

Session 1: History

“Lest We Forget”
The Venue – Stanley

Friday, 1st December 2006

10.00 am	Registration – tea and coffee
10.30 am	Welcome and Introductions Liz Barraclough
11.15 am	“Everyone Is” Moveable Feast Arts
12.30	<i>Lunch</i>
1.30pm	What is Partners in Policymaking™ Lynne Elwell
2.30 pm	History of Services and Perceptions of Disabled People Lynne Elwell
3.30 pm	<i>Break</i>
4.00 pm	People First Language Lynne Elwell
5.00 pm	Dinner
6.30 pm	Getting to Know Each Other Liz Barraclough Lawraine Hails



Partners in Policymaking™

Session 1: History

“Lest We Forget”
The Venue – Stanley

Saturday, 2nd December 2006

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|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9.30 am | History of the Parents Movement
Sheila Coltman |
| 10.45 am | <i>Break</i> |
| 11.15 am | Setting up a Pressure/Support
Group Exercise
Sheila Coltman |
| 12.30 pm | <i>Lunch</i> |
| 1.30 pm | History of Self Advocacy Movement
Maria Rules, Diane Lofthouse and
Debbie Oates |
| 3.00 pm | <i>Break</i> |
| 3.30 pm | Evaluations, Information Gathering,
Details about Next Session |