



**London
South Bank
University**

EST 1892

The People's Academy Manifesto

A new partnership between citizens and professionals



The People's Academy Manifesto

The People's Academy is all about partnerships.

We bring together a diverse group of people who use their own experiences of health and social care to improve services for themselves and for others. We form a committed group of activists determined to shift the emphasis within the NHS from one in which patients are passive recipients of care to one in which they are effective collaborators in their own care and play a central role in all healthcare quality improvement.

Our aims are:

- Sustainable healthcare for everyone in the UK
- An improved understanding of health and well being
- Citizens involved in every aspect of the NHS and health policy decisions

Together, we collaborate to inform government, shape policy, assist recruitment, develop quality health and care services, support health and care leaders in co-production, and improve perceptions and understanding. The People's Academy is an essential resource of first-hand knowledge helping to shape the future wellbeing of our nation.



About the Manifesto

We believe that where citizens work in partnership with health and care professionals everyone benefits.

This partnership improves the health and wellbeing of people,

Our beliefs, based on evidence, are that partnership working:

- Improves the health and well-being of individuals and populations
- Improves confidence, knowledge and self-care
- Brings new assets to improvement and innovation
- Improves quality and safety by focusing on what matters most to people
- Reduces the reliance of citizens on healthcare services

Put simply, working in this way improves healthcare and benefits people, health professionals and the health and care system.

Each day we are inspired by the humanity, courage, commitment, steadfastness and motivation of the majority of people that work in healthcare. We know the difficulties these same people face in their work. We are inspired by citizens who step up to enable changes in health and care, bringing communities together to solve their own problems, and we are outraged by the lack of respect and support for citizens making significant and vital contributions to service commissioning, policy and delivery.



What we see that inspires us

As people using NHS Services

- When professional people show that they understand how it feels to be vulnerable
- Knowing that staff care about what happens to us
- When someone explains what is happening and why
- When we are able to contribute to decisions about our own care
- When staff go out of their way to help us

In the NHS

- Its highly skilled and committed paid workforce
- The generous and skilled volunteer workforce
- Professionals who go above and beyond their official remit
- When people and their carers are partners in their own healthcare
- The many examples of improvements and innovation that happen every day



What we are determined to change

As people using NHS services

- Lack of respect, understanding and compassion
- Assumptions about our situation, abilities, value and worth
- Language that depersonalizes people
- How we are often defined by our problems or our diagnosis
- Staff too busy or tired to think about our experience or improving their service

In the NHS

- Dominance of the old fashioned medical model of health and illness
- Decisions which are made through prejudice or unfounded assumptions
- Professionals not doing what they say they are going to do
- Where organisations and leaders have not learnt from past mistakes or examples of excellence.
- The scarcity of genuine collaboration with citizens, service users, patients and families
- The huge amount of wasted or hidden talent; and The underutilization of the assets of people as partners and volunteers.
- The difficult some groups have accessing care.



People as partners in health and care

We know people can and do make a huge contribution across health and care.

As users of the NHS and care services

- a) Choice: They make choices about their health, about which services they access, and about which treatments they will have
- b) Voice: They can provide feedback on the quality of services
- c) Coproduction: They can participate as equals in understanding problems, co-designing and delivering solutions, and evaluating the impact of these
- d) Education: They can share their lived experience and wisdom with future health professions
- e) Research: They can contribute to the development of new knowledge

As leaders

- a) Accountability: As co-owners of the NHS they can help to make sure limited resources are used effectively, via consultations at a strategic level and in the commissioning process
- b) Advocacy: Those in leadership roles can to advocate for improvement in services and the needs to address health inequalities
- c) Governance: Citizens working as non-executive board members can help NHS organisations to make decisions about services which matter most to the population they serve
- d) Advise: Citizen leaders can be a valuable resource for policy-makers and think tanks



We believe that in every context, service users must be seen as equals, as people with different roles but as peers to health professionals. All too often there is lack of clarity about people's roles and muddle about the relationship between the NHS and citizens who participate in service development.

The NHS is inclined to confuse these roles and have a muddled relationship with citizens who participate in service development. To avoid this, we know it is essential for everyone to:

- Be able to work differently in genuinely collaborative relationships, to listen, hear and work differently.
- Have clarity about the work being done and the role which is needed
- Have a shared understanding about roles, their power, influence and ability to bring about positive change and service developments

The People's Academy Manifesto

Our beliefs

Our beliefs are lived out in what we do and how we thoughtfully engage with others

In the work of the Peoples Academy	
We believe:	This means that in our work:
People are able to take responsibility for their own health and well being.	We respect people's choices to get involved with the Academy and recognise the need to put their own health first.
In equality in partnership.	We work collaboratively in an environment in which no one is any more important than anyone else. Roles differ, value doesn't.
In seeing people as independent collaborators and equal partners in all NHS improvement work.	We work this way ourselves and forcefully foster this perspective in others.
In working with people's strengths, abilities, assets and diversity.	We take time to discover assets in people and communities, with a presumption of their capacity not incapacity.
That the NHS can make sustainable change with the help of the ideas, efforts, and commitment of citizens and communities.	We will provide a supportive infrastructure, where information and ideas are readily exchanged, in which people have the confidence to express their opinions.
People must be given the opportunity to 'heal' the NHS together.	We are getting better at knowing how to ask people to participate; we work hard to build mutual respect and understanding and are mindful of cultural differences. We start with an open and curious mindset rather than assuming that the solution is known.
Patient' leaders who tell their stories change the perspective for everyone, although we know sharing vulnerability and exposing personal experience is difficult.	We support each other to tell our stories effectively and safely, through peer support, co-supervision and our collaborating networks.
People determine their own health care and everyone has the freedom to make unwise choices.	When citizens and professionals work in collaboration we approach each other with open minds and respect each other's choices or views.

Scarce financial resources have to be used well with transparency and accountability.	We are transparent about our own decision-making and the allocation of funding to projects.
It is important for people to understand the work that is going on to improve services and the NHS.	We produce accessible materials and disseminate information which is aimed at improving people's health choices and opportunities to influence healthcare improvement.
We believe in learning together from our successes as much as from our failures.	We share knowledge through learning together, by knowing who can help us to achieve positive change and how to make best use of their skills and time.
We believe people learn best when information is relevant to their situation.	We co-create information resources that can meet people's learning needs and requirements.

In the NHS more widely	
We believe:	What this means in practice:
People are realistic about the context for health and care decisions. Ones about rationing are done better with the public than without it.	Those making difficult decisions about resource allocation should be open about them so people can fully participate in making challenging choices.
That demand for NHS and Care Services can be reduced by working with communities.	The identification of problems and the solutions to them should be embedded in communities. The aim should be to find local solutions to local problems, so that those common problems, such as isolation, anxiety, and managing chronic health conditions, can be helped by people in their own community.
When people are as independent as they possibly can be and skilled in looking after themselves their care is of better quality and often cheaper too.	Healthcare should promote independence whenever possible. Dependency creating practices need to be challenged and changed.

In innovation	
We believe:	What this means in practice:
Innovation is essential if the NHS is to continue to provide safe and effective care for everyone in the UK.	Successful innovation improves the wellbeing of individuals and communities and results in less need for services.
You can't improve any service or part of one until you understand how it is for those on the receiving end.	Giving feedback after every experience of care should be the norm which citizens come to expect. It is also important to value tacit knowledge and encourage constructive 'better if' criticism.

You can't achieve sustained improvements from a partial perspective.	Lay people need to have access to the same data and intelligence as professionals. Data gathering should be purposeful and shared widely in an easily understood format.
Solutions to complex problems are best generated and implemented with people as partners in the improvement process.	Intractable problems usually need co-produced solutions in which lay people work together with multi-agency professionals. Co-production for improvement means people participating as equals in defining the problem(s), co-designing solutions, testing and evaluating those solutions, and then re-evaluating outcomes and impact on stakeholders before spreading any innovation.

In terms of value	
We believe:	What this means in practice:
People's contribution to health and social care is of equal valued to that of the professionals they work with and should be rewarded.	People can be rewarded in a variety of ways, including financially. The arrangements for payment and reimbursement of expenses must be clear to everyone and fairly reward someone for their time.
You can't do effective co-production if you don't understand or respect your collaborator.	It takes time for people to 'step into each other's shoes' with honesty, patience and openness to find the shared values and core principles that are essential to working well together.
The work of public engagement is as important as the work on financial management.	We need to have properly and adequately funded partnership projects to harness their potential to reduce costs
We need to have properly and adequately funded partnership projects to harness their potential to reduce costs.	To drive a change in the culture of the NHS and its relationship with its 'customers' needs support from senior leaders over the long term. There has to be a commitment from everyone to help each other navigate difficult times and to learn from setbacks.

The history and context of the People's Academy

The People's Academy was established in March 2015 at London South Bank University. It was the product of passion, commitment to a better future, outrage, frustration and a determination to use these powerful feelings to effect change. We knew that giving people agency in their own care and opportunities to contribute to healthcare improvement was not only a good idea but essential if the NHS is to survive and continue to provide safe and effective care to everyone who needs it.

The People's Academy started out by supporting clinicians in training and by undertaking research. The People's Academy now provides leadership development for emerging and senior leaders in the NHS, and supports change programmes to reduce demand in primary care, as well as providing advice and support to service and practice driven innovations.

Like many people we remain worried about our future NHS and the threats to its original values and survival. We have evidence from data our own experiences, and other people's individual stories about the impact of structural inequality as a result of austerity. People are rarely fully involved in decisions

about their own care or helped to understand the choices they have, including the freedom to sometimes make what professionals would see as unwise choices.

The complex NHS bureaucracy and frequent re-design processes mean we have a system without clear accountability. The overdependence on hierarchy makes it hard for those working at the clinical practice levels to bring about change. In an interdependent system, determinants of health outcomes depend as much on social and economic factors as they do on NHS services and yet examples of genuine multi-agency, inter-professional working are all too rare.

Services where the quality of health care is poor, makes it almost impossible for organisations to learn from models of excellence elsewhere in the NHS, or in the world. There are all too few opportunities to effectively engage the public in quality improvement, policy, think tanks or 'rationing' decisions, whether that is locally, regionally or nationally. Time and again we see how 'PPI' initiatives have failed to achieve demonstrable impact or bring about systemic change, despite a huge investment in them and the

rhetoric of 'patients at the heart' of NHS services.

People who use NHS services have too few opportunities to constructively contribute to improving them. The skilled and motivated lay workforce remains largely untapped, just at a time when the NHS needs it more than ever. When people do get involved, it is rare for their contribution to be properly valued, supported or remunerated.

We have seen brilliant and inspiring examples of change co-produced with local people, and the impact that has on the resilience and resourcefulness of communities to resolve their own problems. It is this culture of partnership and the innovation of taking an asset perspective that we are fostering in the People's Academy. Come and join us make a difference.

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