

What is co-production?

The term co-production refers to a way of working whereby everybody works together on an equal basis to create a service or come to a decision which works for them all.

It is built on the principle that those who use a service are best placed to help design it.

What is great about co-production?

- * Everybody is equal.
- * The outcomes are meaningful and positive.
- * People who use your services, carers and families are seen and recognised as assets.
- * Your service will improve.
- * It is a fun and productive way of working together.
- * You have the opportunity to see different perspectives that may differ from your own.

Ten top tips for co-production

Key elements

1. Co-production must start as an idea that blossoms with everybody involved having an equal voice.
2. Come to the table with a blank agenda and build it with people who use your service, their carers and families.
3. Involve people who use services, carers and their families in all aspects of a service – the planning, development and delivery.
4. In order to achieve meaningful and positive outcomes, everybody involved must have the same vision, from frontline staff to management/board members.
5. Start small and build up to bigger projects, letting people lead, not professionals.
6. Acknowledge that a range of skills are needed for co-production.
7. Recruit the right people who support co-production.
8. People who use services, carers and families should be clear about what their expectations are and be fully engaged in the process.
9. People who use services and their carers know what works, so you can't get it right without them.
10. Don't take responsibility for solving every problem – allow the group to find collective solutions.

How can you support co-production?

- * Ensure appropriate and adequate resources are available to support co-production (participation fees, expenses, easy read documents and access needs).
- * Ensure frontline staff have everything they need for co-production, including time and flexibility.
- * Ensure no one group or person is more important than another. Everyone can contribute given the right support.
- * It is important to have good facilitation and listening skills, and to reflect and act upon what is heard.
- * Acknowledge and respect what people who use services, their carers and families say.
- * Ensure everything in the co-production process is accessible to everyone taking part.
- * Before you start the work, decide together how you are going to work and what will make it successful, then stick to it.
- * Accept that sharing power means taking risks. Take a chance!
- * Learn to share power. Doing things differently means we can work across a whole range of issues that confront us.
- * Work with the group to support a clear set of identified values with a collective sense of direction.
- * Don't use jargon or acronyms, plain English is better for everybody.
- * Create the expectation that people who use services, carers and families will be involved in every aspect of service planning, design/development and delivery at every level.