

**Service User Member and Carer Member for the**

**Pharmacy and Safe Use of Medicines**

**Engagement Advisory Group**

***Project Overview***

The Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG, formerly Health and Social Care Board) are responsible for working with over 500 community pharmacies throughout Northern Ireland.

Pharmacies offer a range of services including dispensing and supply of medicines, vaccinations and offer advice and treatment on everyday health conditions and lifestyle risk factors that contribute to ill health.

***Involvement Opportunity***

In order to ensure service user/carer voices are heard, the SPPG are establishing a new Pharmacy and Safe Use of Medicines Engagement Advisory Group to work in partnership with the SPPG pharmacy team to provide advice and input to the development of pharmacy services and promote on the safe use of medicines. Initially, the Engagement Advisory Group is expected to be in place from June 2024 until June 2026.

Expressions of Interest are now being sought for service users and carers to form the Engagement Advisory Group.

***Aim***

We are asking people who are service users and carers to sit on an engagement advisory group and have their voice heard.

The Engagement Advisory Group will be responsible for:

* Improving the experience for people who use pharmacy services and ensure the safe use of medicines and;
* Helping the SPPG pharmacy team understand how to provide better pharmaceutical services and safer use of medicines.

***Who do we mean by the term Service User and Carer?***

***Service User***

We can all access GPs and other health and social care services. So, in some sense we are all users of services. However, for the purpose of recruitment of a Pharmacy and Safe Use of Medicines, Engagement Advisory Group, we are looking for individuals who frequently use and have a greater experience of pharmacy and health and social care services.

***Carer (not in paid employment as a Carer)***

The term ‘Carer’ has many varied interpretations, including: paid care support worker roles; those who occasionally help out a family member or friend; and those who, without payment, provide more substantial care. For the purpose of this Pharmacy and Safe Use of Medicines Engagement Advisory Group recruitment process, we are looking to define the term ‘Carer’ in line with the Health and Social Care definition. Carers from the HSC perspective are individuals who are not employed, but who provide a substantial amount of care, on a regular basis, for a person who would be entitled to the provision of health and social care support. People who come under this definition would normally be entitled to a Carers Assessment by their local HSC Trust. These individuals may also be referred to as unpaid or family carers.

***Your Role***

As a Service User member or Carer member you will provide advice and support in the area of Personal Public Involvement. (for more info on personal and public involvement please refer to [www.engage.hscni.net](http://www.engage.hscni.net))

Members of the Engagement Advisory Group will be required:

* To share their experience, knowledge and insight on the use of pharmacy services
* To review and comment on pharmacy related papers, proposals and plans.
* To provide a service user / carer perspective on pharmacy services.
* Actively promote Involvement, Co-Production, Partnership Working, engagement and involvement of Service Users and Carers.

This role is about pharmacy services across Northern Ireland as a whole and not an individual pharmacy service.

***Skills and experience required***

* Have personal experience of using pharmacy services or caring for someone using pharmacy services.
* Have the confidence to question and/or challenge areas of work which will be considered by the Engagement Advisory Group.
* Have the ability to build relationships with other service user/carer groups.
* Have good written and verbal communication skills.
* Ability to listen to the views of others.
* Undertake further training as required.
* Have awareness of, or willingness to be informed about pharmacy and safe use of medicines in Northern Ireland.
* Have access to on-line systems and a working knowledge of on-line communications platforms, (e.g. Zoom or Microsoft Teams) or the ability to become quickly acquainted.

***Time commitment***

The Engagement Advisory Group will be in existence from June 2024 for initially 2 years, however it is anticipated that the Engagement Advisory Group will become a permanent group which will advise on pharmacy related service developments and workstreams, including safe use of medicines. The membership will be reviewed every two years and refreshed as required.

At this stage it is anticipated that members will be required to:

* Undertake pre-reading prior to meetings.
* Attend up to 4 formal meetings annually (currently all meetings take place via an on-line platform). The group would seek to have the first meeting in June 2024 face to face.
* Undertake work between meetings to review and comment/respond to documentation.

The role asks for input of time, skills and influence. Out-of-pocket expenses incurred as a result of becoming involved in this work will be covered. This can include travel, subsistence, replacement care, individual support needs, childcare costs or any other potential costs incurred in relation to Service User or Carer involvement with prior agreement.

All members will be asked to declare any Conflicts of Interest before each meeting. A conflict of interest occurs when an individual's personal interests – family, friendships, financial, or social factors – could compromise his or her judgment, decisions, or actions as a member of the advisory group.

***Key Information***

Our expectation of all members of the Engagement Advisory Group is that they will work in a way which demonstrates respect and tolerance and in line with the HSCNI values of:

* Working Together,
* Excellence,
* Openness and Honesty,
* Compassion.

The Personal and Public Involvement Core values are important as they help us work in a meaningful way with others:

* Dignity and Respect,
* Inclusion and Equality,
* Collaboration and Partnership,
* Transparency and Openness.

As a Service User member or Carer member you will be supported to carry out your role. This includes an induction and training to ensure the effectiveness of involvement and the safety of its participants. For meetings, you will receive papers in advance and, if helpful, in other formats. There will also be support meetings to enable you to discuss your involvement and ask questions.

Support for your participation will include:

* An Induction meeting to provide an introduction to the programme of work.
* A named contact to support your involvement at meetings and also to support your knowledge development.
* Help to enable you to utilise technology to support involvement via online communications platforms (e.g. Zoom, Microsoft Teams).
* Reimbursement of out of pocket expenses in line with HSC guidance, e.g. travel and caring costs.
* Training as identified.

We recognise that participants may also be Service Users and by definition are likely to have complex conditions, ill health, disabilities, or be carers and this may mean making bespoke arrangements to support their involvement. Service User and Carer members should ensure they make the Engagement Advisory Group Chair aware of any accessibility needs. It is the responsibility of the Engagement Advisory Group Chair and project support team to ensure that these needs are met as far as is practicable.

***How to Apply***

Complete the Expression of Interest (EOI) form and Equality Monitoring form. These can be completed online at: <https://consultations2.nidirect.gov.uk/hsc/pharmacy-safe-use-of-medicines-advisory-group>

Alternatively, you can return by email with attachments. In some circumstances we will accept an EOI submitted on paper. Please notify us if you need to arrange to apply in writing.

Once we receive your application we will:

* Acknowledge receipt in an email unless otherwise arranged. If you do not receive acknowledgement, please contact James McAuley on sppgpharmacyengagementadvisorygroup@hscni.net or call 028 9536 3513.
* EOIs will be shortlisted by a panel including the lead contact and project owner.
* EOIs will be assessed against the skills and experience criteria using the information provided by you on the form.
* If shortlisted you will receive an invitation to an informal discussion about the role in an email (unless otherwise arranged). The email will include all of the arrangements.
* All EOIs will receive a successful or unsuccessful notification by email (unless otherwise arranged). The successful notifications will include information about next steps.