

Let's all co-pro



Learning event during Co-production Week



Introduction

To celebrate Co-production week 2021, the Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE) hosted the Lets all co-pro event to explore how co-production and partnership working supports us to achieve a shared purpose and to launch Scotland's Community of Practice – Lived Experience.

The Community of Practice – Lived Experience builds on previous work of the ALLIANCE such as **Humans of Scotland** and aims to recognise and promote the growing practice in Scotland to ensure that people with lived experience are meaningfully involved in decisions that affect them, and that people's voices are at the centre of policy and practice.

The session provided an opportunity to:

- Hear more about managing power dynamics when working with others.
- Explore what tools and techniques can support creating a shared vision.
- Discuss ways co-production can strengthen our work to broaden its reach.

As the session started participants reflected and shared 'what does co-production mean to you?' This captured a myriad of important terms people associate with co-production.



The event shared the co-production experiences, insights and key messages from three organisations. These contributed to good discussions, which flowed into small, facilitated small group conversations.

Georgina Charlton, Programme Manager, The ALLIANCE

Georgina shared learning and insights from **Scotland's Reducing Gambling Harm programme**, which aims to put the voice of people affected by gambling harms at the heart of actions and at the forefront of policy discussions, to make better and faster progress in reducing gambling harms.

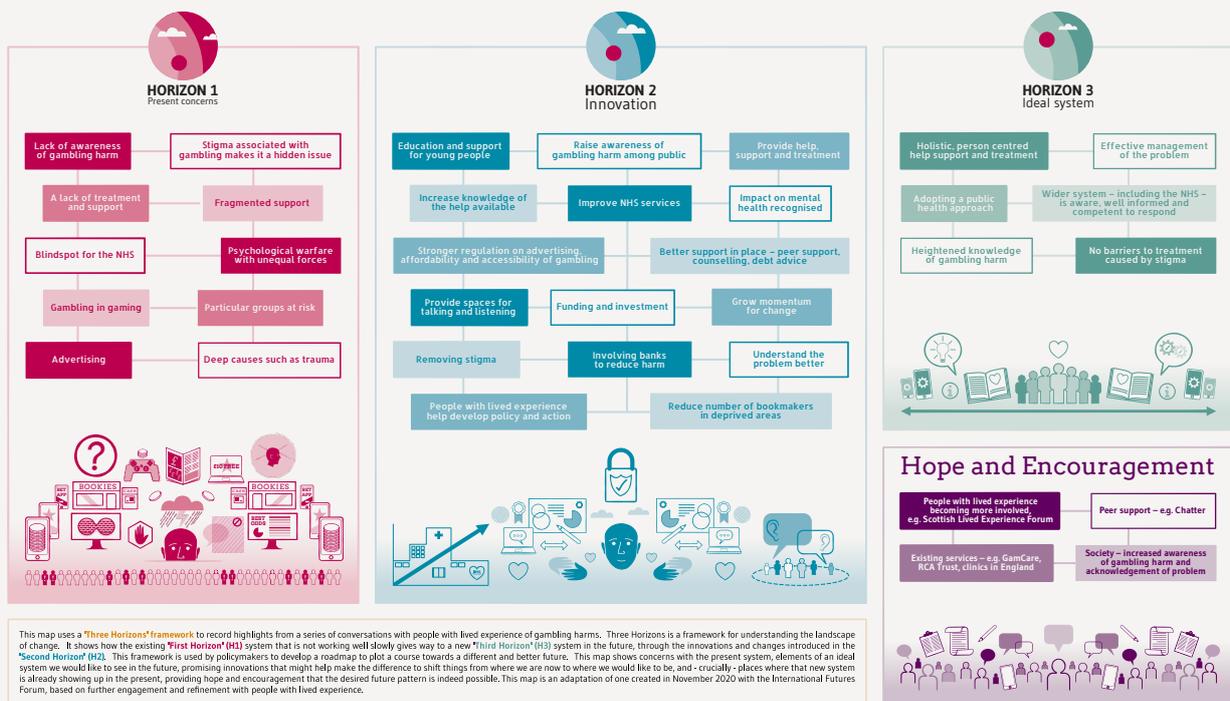
To do this the programme is engaging and working with people throughout Scotland affected by gambling harm and to set up a lived experience forum to support and empower individuals to build their capacity and capability to influence change. The forum's co-produced ethos informs the

programme's wider work and priorities to accelerate the delivery of the **National Strategy to Reduce Gambling Harms** launched by the Gambling Commission in April 2019.



**SCOTLAND
REDUCING
Gambling Harm**

Three Horizons of Gambling Harm



Full size version: <https://www.alliance-scotland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/reducing-gambling-harm-three-horizons-infographic.pdf>

Insights from the forum are strengthening the programme's activities:

- It is essential to work with forum participants as they are the experts. They have unique experience of being impacted by gambling harm, but also how the current support structures work or don't work for people with lived experiences.
- Using the IFF three horizons framework the forum described the first horizon; which is understanding the current system, landscape, and what needs to change. The second horizon highlights the emerging changes that can be seen which can help us push towards this new system. The third horizon captures the future system.

In establishing the forum Georgina shared the useful tools and guidance utilised to support the forum, including developing and defining the role of the group and their terms of reference, including an ongoing accountability mechanism.

The importance of taking time, at the beginning, to establish form, function and roles for all in the forum is supporting equitable contributions whilst being aware of power dynamics. The richness of participants' experiences contributes to an active forum.

"My role as programme manager is to amplify people's voices and experiences without distorting them whilst being mindful in ensuring the forum is a safe space for all and to be reactive to internal power dynamics within the forum."

Mark Kelvin, Director, The Glasgow Alliance to End Homelessness

Mark shared the work of the Glasgow Alliance to End Homelessness, which is a network of organisations and people with lived experience of homelessness. Mark highlighted that all members of the Alliance have equal power, which is really important.

The learning from the Alliance's co-produced approach and ways of working are:

- Participants involved are people who are or have experienced homelessness.
- Governance: all involved co-produced the Alliance's framework through inclusive and equitable decision making that has the best for people experiencing homelessness at its heart. A separate group of GIFT Associates who have experienced

homelessness support and audit the decision-making processes.

- Structures and systems: they think about equitability and behaviours. It is important to know that those who have experienced homelessness do not make up a homogenous group; everyone's experience is different.
- Culture: through listening and feedback Alliance members discouraged the use of lanyards as this can have negative connotations, particularly for those who have had experience of the criminal justice system. Members typically do not use job titles when introducing themselves, to promote equality rather than hierarchical relationships.

John Beaton, Network Officer, Scottish Recovery Network

John shared his own experiences and reflections of co-production to make a positive change. He emphasised the importance of creating spaces where those working in the third sector can meaningfully form relationships with the people, supported through the Scottish Recovery Network. The value is placed on creating co-productive safe spaces, 'human spaces', where there is shared power rather than hierarchical relationships.

We are all on a journey, with the common thread of co-production and creating the space for empowerment, as often we move from the one thing we hold dear and making decisions in our own lives, to these being made by health professionals.

The need to involve people early enough, ideally from the outset was re-emphasised including the need to make an investment to allocate resources and also the need to realise that time is a resource as is also the

places and spaces we create. That investment is key, and it is about doing the right things at the right time. You need to invest in the creation of co-productive spaces:

- We need to throw the table away, "if you aren't at the table, you are not on the menu".
- We need to challenge assumptions and start asking the right questions, focusing on what matters to you.
- We need to create spaces for people to share their stories, where those with lived experience and public servants are linked.
- We need to acknowledge that power dynamics will always exist between people and groups and think about how to best manage them.

We need to think about creating human spaces and having safe spaces to deepen relationships, but also brave places where we can challenge the status quo.



Launch of the Community of Practice – Lived Experience

Kerry Ritchie, Programme Manager, the ALLIANCE launched the Community of Practice – Lived Experience. This group aims to recognise and promote the growing practice in Scotland to ensure that people with lived experience are meaningfully involved in decisions that affect them, and that people's voices are at the centre of policy and practice.

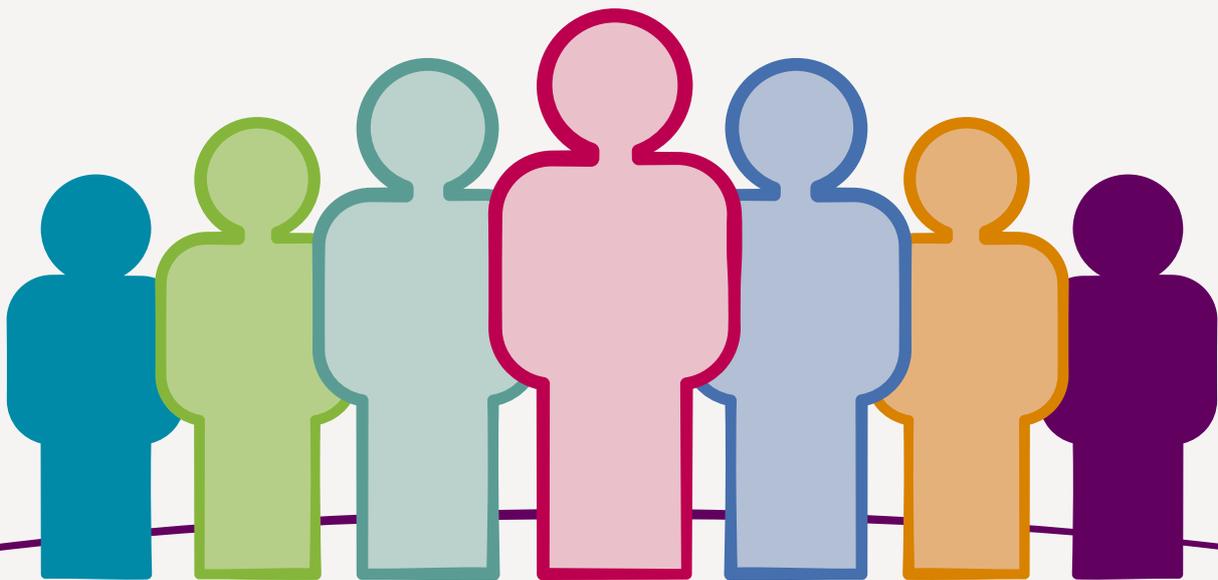
This is an evolving shift which is still developing, as currently there remains occasions where involvement of people with lived experiences are given insufficient time or resources, and where the scope to influence feels limited to those involved.

If we are to realise the ambition where people are meaningfully able to share their lived experience to influence decisions and actions taken at a policy level, it is essential

that networks and structures are put in place to learn from and build a collective practice informed by, from and with people's lived experiences.

Taking a collaborative and partnership focused approach, we will co-produce and develop a community of practice of people working in this space to connect, and share learning, challenges, and ideas and ultimately work towards involving people with lived experiences in meaningful and equitable ways. This community will sit alongside the established ALLIANCE's Involvement Network, of individuals living with long term conditions, disabled people, or people providing unpaid care.

If you would like more information or to be part of the Community of Practice, please email people@alliance-scotland.org.uk.



Small group feedback

Participants welcomed the opportunity to reflect on the three co-production examples and to consider:

- What are the key ingredients of good co-production and why?
- How can co-production strengthen your work and broaden reach and impact?

The small group work in breakout rooms facilitated by the ALLIANCE generated rich discussions, with participants sharing their own experiences, learning, and ideas on co-production. Key learning and feedback included:

- Being genuine and not tokenistic
- Respecting experiences
- Building individual capacity
- Being flexible and facilitating discussion in safe spaces,

comfortable for those taking part and allowing spaces for reflection

- Importance of taking sufficient time, setting the intention and of active listening
- Remuneration and valuing people's contribution
- Promoting equal status and understanding the need for diversity
- Importance of person centredness and using a common language
- Connecting on a human level
- Acknowledging the mistrust about co-production
- Changing the power dynamics, sharing of information and to be 'valued and valuable'.

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