

PATIENT OPINION AFTER 10 YEARS



**Patient
Opinion**
Every voice matters

ISSUE
21

10TH ANNIVERSARY
EDITION

Welcome to a special edition of the Patient Opinion newsletter. In November, we celebrated our tenth birthday in style with an event called "The Power of Connection" (or #POCO10 if you were following on Twitter!)

Here we cover highlights of the day. We also want to share with you some exciting and insightful extracts from our anniversary report: THE POWER OF CONNECTION - How networked citizen voice is changing health and social care.

These gifts of experience will transform health and care services

Back in 2005 nobody spoke of "patient experience". Now it is a job title, a network, a topic. National policy reports have urged the NHS to listen to the voices of patients, to make changes, to be transparent in their use of feedback. Some services -though far from all- now see that the insights of patients and carers are indeed essential to safe and effective healthcare. [...]

What must Patient Opinion do in the decade ahead? We must stay true to the

understanding that, at the heart of all meaningful, memorable care, we will find not x-rays, drugs or surgery but listening, caring empathic relationships. So we will continue to innovate in support of our mission: to carry the voices of patients and carers into the heart of the health and care system.

You can read James' full article in our 10th Anniversary report: <http://bit.ly/1j9dOFQ>

Dr. James Munro,
Chief Executive, Patient Opinion



FROM BUREAUCRACY TO CONNECTIVITY



We were proud to have Chief Nursing Officer for Scotland, Fiona McQueen, as our first keynote speaker at The Power of Connection. The Scottish Government's vision is to provide world class healthcare and Fiona stressed how much she felt Patient Opinion has made a practical difference in Scotland. She told the audience that Patient Opinion allowed them to move from bureaucracy to connectivity.

Speaking of her own experience in responding to stories, Fiona said, "With Patient Opinion, I didn't have to hide behind reams of

bureaucracy. Within hours of somebody being unhappy we would know about it".

"The impact that it has had on the Scottish healthcare system has been quite remarkable. It has released and energised people to do better and to go the extra mile. What it has shown me is that the NHS always had the power within itself to change, but Patient Opinion has allowed us to realise that change"

You can read more about the event and Fiona's talk on our [blog](#).



POCO10 video highlights

We had a blast at our 10year event and it was on honour to be in the room with so many movers and shakers in healthcare. We filmed the day, and created a short highlights reel. See what you missed or try and spot yourself:

<https://vimeo.com/153354625>

(plus you can also see full length films of each of our [inspiring speakers](#)).

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the UK's leading independent feedback platform.

Or call us during working hours (local rate):

0114 281 6256



Evaluating 10 years of stories



Undiluted accounts of what services feel like, good or bad

We use Patient Opinion to help us get an overarching picture of what people say about the services we commission. We find that people are more honest on Patient Opinion than they might be if they contacted us directly. We also monitor how the organisations we commission respond to their comments and how quickly they do so.

There is no doubt in my mind that for the NHS organisations to be successful, they have to engage with and hear what people who use, interact with or work for them think. Sometimes, even when it's really hard to hear, it is vital that something is done about the feedback we hear- and the best responses on Patient Opinion are those where change has come about as a direct result of a story.

You can read more about Sam's experience with Patient Opinion in our [10th Anniversary Report](#)

Sam Holden, Quality Assurance & Patient Experience Lead, South Devon and Torbay CCG

81%

of stories get a response

Total responses posted

99,617

Mean time to respond

5 days

Of patients who rate the response they get:

86%
Say helpful

14%
Say unhelpful



Most common tags used in stories

- THANK YOU
- STAFF
- TREATMENT
- MENTAL HEALTH
- APPOINTMENT

Patient Opinion enables us to LIVE OUR VALUES

As a clinician, hearing a problem instantly allows you to be able to help. We are in a caring profession and we want to be able to care. Someone may be worried, frightened, concerned, in pain or upset and Patient Opinion gives us the opportunity to know this quickly so we can offer to help. This is powerful in healthcare.

People worry about negative feedback but I see it as a symptom of a person's distress and an indication that we can help. I like to use the metaphor of dirty laundry. If a trust is worried about dirty laundry being aired in public, then I suggest it deals with the dirty laundry.

It may seem counter-intuitive but using Patient Opinion is good for our reputation.

People see us as a trust that is comfortable with criticism being shared openly.

In our trust, our clinical leads have signed up to be responders, and we expect them to reply within a realistic timescale. We use alerts and mobile technology so we can see stories and responses as they are posted. It is a challenge to keep up with, but we find patients are always pleased to hear from us, even if it has taken a little while to get back to them.

Dr Ben Mearns, Chief of Medicine, Surrey & Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust

You can read Ben's full article in our [10th Anniversary report](#).

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