Healthcare Improvement Scotland

Evaluating Participation

A guide and Toolkit for health and social care practitioners

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NHS SCOTLAND

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Section 1 - Introduction

This guide has been developed by Healthcare Improvement Scotland as a tool to support the evaluation of public involvement and participation in health and care services. It is aimed at staff undertaking internal self-evaluation and less of a guide for experienced evaluators conducting independent evaluations. It does not set out to be a definitive guide to evaluation, but aims to provide resources, references and tools to help you develop your own evaluation.

The guide aims to:

- **Support the development of effective frameworks for evaluating participation in health and care services**
- **Offer adaptable tools and templates to assist with a range of evaluation projects, and**
- **Direct users to further resources and guidance on evaluating engagement and participation**

Who is this guide for?

This guide is for anyone working in community engagement, public involvement or participation for the purpose of planning and improving health and care services. Whilst it will be of particular interest to those working in health and social care, it may be of interest to other sectors. It is designed both to be a useful starting point and to add to the existing resources and tools of the more experienced evaluator.

Key highlights include:

Purpose of Evaluation: Evaluation is a systematic process of collecting information to inform decision-making and enhance learning. It can assess the process of engagement and/or the outcomes achieved.

Importance of Evaluation: Evaluating participation helps improve service quality, ensures meaningful engagement of patients and communities, and supports the continuous development of health services.

Frameworks and Guidance: The guide outlines important frameworks, such as the *Planning with People* guidance and the *Quality Framework for Community Engagement*, which provide standards for effective public involvement.

Evaluation Essentials: The guide covers essential evaluation terminology, principles for developing an evaluation framework, and types of evaluation (process and outcome) to guide practitioners in their evaluation efforts.

Methods and Ethical Considerations: A range of evaluation methods is discussed, emphasising the need for ethical considerations when collecting data from participants.

Using Findings for Improvement: The guide stresses the importance of applying evaluation findings to drive improvements in future participation activities.

Toolkit Resources: The guide also includes practical tools and templates, such as checklists, evaluation question banks, and consent forms, to assist practitioners in their evaluation projects.

Evaluation of engagement looks at two aspects: the engagement process and outcomes.

Using the guide

You can use the guide in its entirety or simply dip into the sections or tools that are most relevant to your needs. The guide draws on a number of sources which are referenced at the end of the guide, so you can delve into particular aspects of evaluating participation in more detail. The Toolkit section provides a range of flexible tools and templates for you to adapt and use to evaluate your projects.

What is evaluation and why it is important?

Evaluation is when information is collected in a systematic way to inform decision-making and enhance organisational learning. Evaluation of engagement, therefore, is a process of assessing the way in which an engagement project is undertaken (process) and assessing the results of that activity (outcomes).

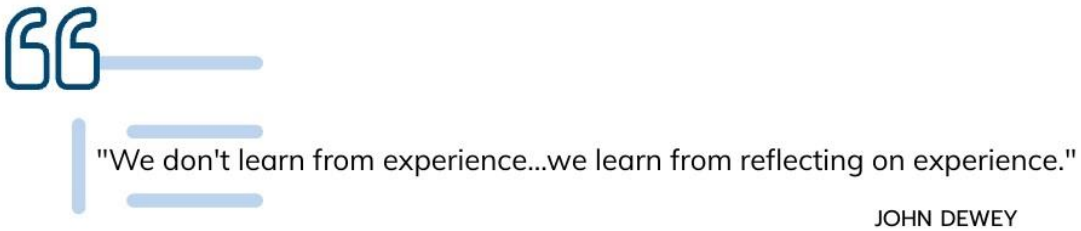
What do we mean by participation?

Participation is an umbrella term used to describe how people get involved in decisions which affect or are important to them. This can be in their local communities, as part of interest group campaigns, or in health and social care policies, decisions and service delivery. Sometimes this can be referred to as public involvement or community engagement.[1]

Benefits of evaluating participation

NHS Boards and health and social care partnerships have a duty to involve people in decisions about their care and in the development of local health services. Our own research suggests that meaningful engagement[2] makes services safer and more efficient and improves person-centred care and effectiveness.

Evaluating your work is important because it helps to support individual and organisational learning – it reveals what is working well and what can be further improved.



Evaluation of engagement is important, as it helps ensure we continue to improve how we involve patients, carers and communities and learn from what they say. A comprehensive and methodical approach to evaluating participation improves our understanding of where, when, why and how public participation works and does not work. Evaluation also helps stakeholders and practitioners understand what type of participation, and under what circumstances, leads to what results.

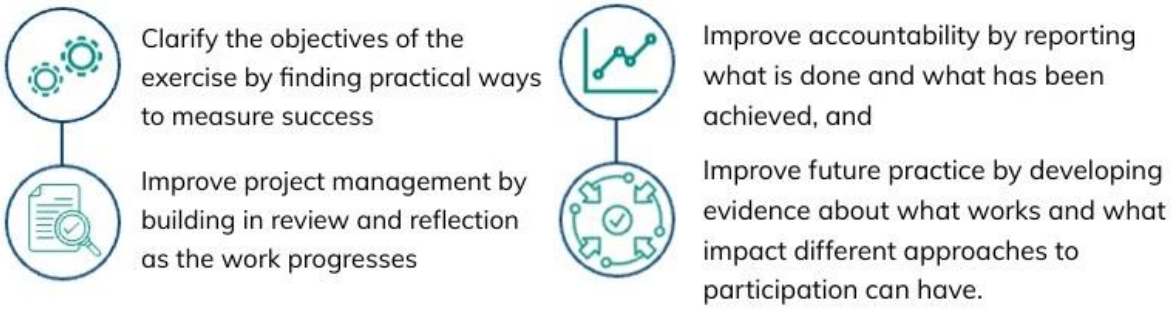
Specifically, effective evaluation can enable health and care services to improve public participation programmes and ensure that they are useful and beneficial.

Based on Scottish Government's Participation Handbook:

[1] https/:www.gov.scot/publications/participation-handbook/pages/1/

[2] Meaningful engagement involves engaging people affected by a particular policy, event or change and ensuring people of all backgrounds can take part and have their voice heard and acted upon.

Different types of evaluation can help our understanding of public involvement and participation in four main ways. It helps:



Evaluation of engagement helps us improve how we involve people and learn from what they say.

Section 2 - Evaluating participation in the Scottish healthcare context

Evaluation and *Planning with People – Community Engagement and Participation Guidance*

In the context of Scottish healthcare, the following are examples of guidance that outlines how individuals and communities should be involved and the role of evaluation and other activities for ensuring the quality of this involvement.

Planning with People – Community Engagement and Participation Guidance, which was co-produced by the Scottish Government and COSLA (Convention of Scottish Local Authorities), sets out national guidance for NHS Boards, Integration Joint Boards and Local Authorities when engaging with people and communities. It clarifies how members of the public can expect to be engaged when health and care services are being planned, commissioned and delivered.

The guidance considers public bodies' statutory duties for involvement. It reflects national policy and learning which says that meaningful community engagement and the active participation of people is essential to ensure Scotland's care services are fit for purpose and lead to better outcomes for people. Some examples of this include service change reviews which can be accessed here: https://www.hisengage.scot/service-change/reports/

Planning with People aims to support greater collaboration between:

In this way it supports public services to consider how people and communities can be meaningfully involved in developing services that meet their needs. The value of evaluation is threaded throughout the guidance, with the four main areas being:

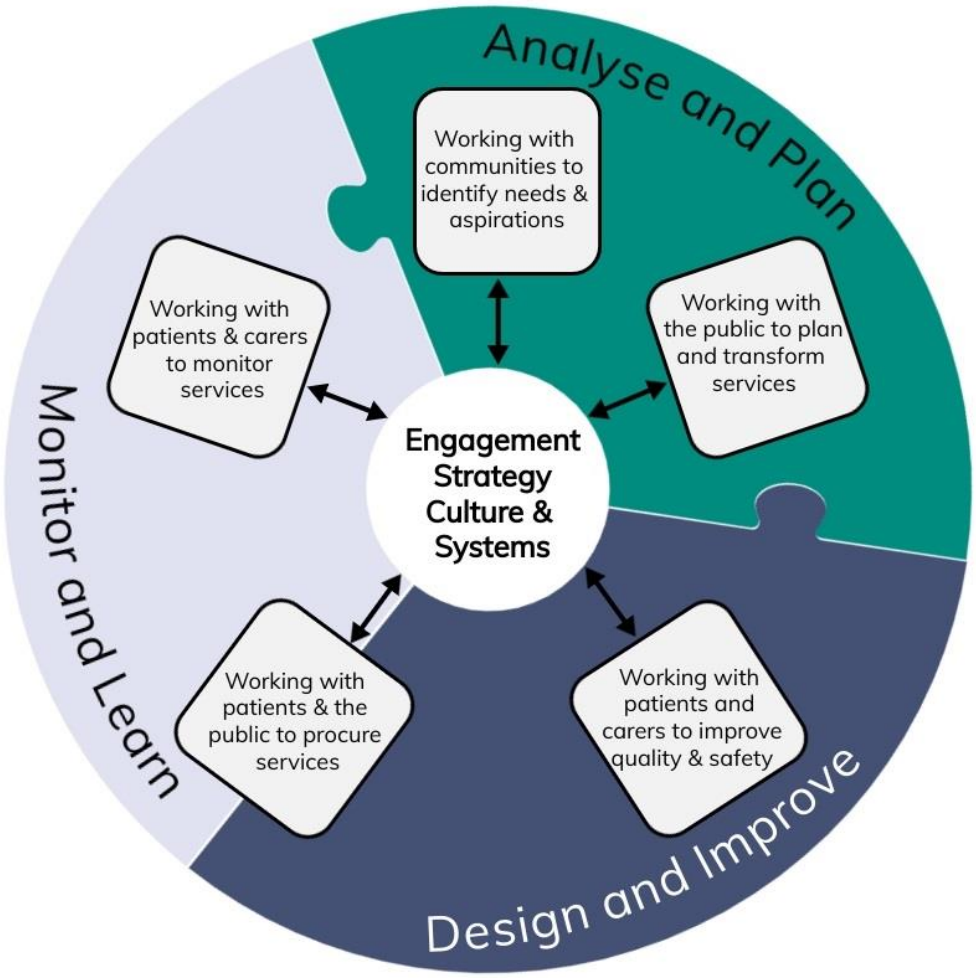
1. Planning evaluation from the outset

2. Ongoing evaluation during the process (active listening and adapting your process to what people tell you) - Formative

3. Evaluation to inform future learning - Summative

4. Self-evaluation (for example, using the Quality Framework for Community Engagement and Participation)

The latter three areas are specifically referenced in the 'Engagement Cycle' seen below.



Evaluation and the *Quality Framework for Community Engagement and Participation*

Healthcare Improvement Scotland designed the *Quality Framework for Community Engagement and Participation* with key partners (including the Care Inspectorate) to support both self-evaluation, and external quality assurance and improvement activity. The framework focuses on three areas where self-evaluation can be used:

- **Ongoing engagement and service user involvement**
- **Involvement of people in service planning and design**
- **Governance, organisation culture and leadership**

The framework highlights the importance of self-evaluation and applying the resulting ideas for improvement and learning towards improving the quality of engagement. This helps NHS Boards, Integration Joint Boards and Local Authorities to understand what good engagement involves and how it can be evaluated and demonstrated.

When completing the self-evaluation, health and care services should focus on outcomes rather than activities. This could include a description of the impact of engagement, changes made because of feedback, or information on how potential impact is being monitored.

Involving stakeholders in evaluation is essential in line with the approach set out in *Planning with People – Community Engagement and Participation Guidance*. To understand the quality of your engagement activity you need to know the views of the people who participate or have participated. Feedback should be sought from patients, the public, service users, family, carers, staff, communities, the third sector and wider stakeholders.

Following the self-evaluation process as outlined in the Quality Framework will help to identify good practice and show where improvement is needed. This can then be shared more widely, where appropriate, to support more collaborative and innovative ways of working.

Section 3 - Evaluation Essentials

Common evaluation terminology

To help you get to grips with the terminology often used when discussing evaluation, we have defined some key evaluation terms below that are used in this guide and are common to various evaluation approaches. A more comprehensive glossary of evaluation terms is included in the NHS Evaluation Toolkit: Glossary - NHS Evaluation Toolkit

The importance of evaluation is highlighted in both *Planning with People* and the *Quality Framework for Community Engagement and Participation*

Table 1: Key evaluation terms

Key evaluation terms	
Impacts	Broader or longer-term effects of a project's or organisation's outputs, outcomes and activities. Often, these are effects on people other than the direct users of a project, or on a broader field, such as government policy.
Inputs	Human, physical or financial resources used to undertake a project, such as costs to the participants or costs to the organisers.
Outcomes	The changes, benefits, learning or other effects that result from what the project or organisation offers or provides. Outcomes are all the things that happen because of the project's or organisation's services, facilities or products. Outcomes can be for individuals, families, or whole communities.
Outputs	Measures of what an activity did such as how many workshops, interviews, or meetings took place; how many people attended. Outputs are not the benefits or changes you achieve for your participants; they are the activities you make to reach your outcomes.
Stakeholders	Those that feel they have a stake in the issue either because they may be directly affected by any decision, or be able to affect that decision. Stakeholders may be individuals, communities, or organisational representatives.
Qualitative data	Qualitative data is information expressed and analysed in the form of words. It involves gathering data from what people say and feel, and what is observed and deduced, and provides for description and interpretation. Examples of methods used to collect qualitative data are interviews and focus groups.
Quantitative data	Quantitative data is information expressed and analysed in the form of numbers. It involves collecting numbers and statistics, and is about measurement and judgement. Examples of methods used to collect quantitative data are surveys and questionnaires.

Principles of developing an evaluation framework

There is no single approach or method for evaluating participation. Each participation activity or programme must be viewed in its own terms, and an evaluation framework or plan must be designed to fit the purpose, the audience and the type and scale of the activities or programme.

The stages of evaluation (see p13) highlight the practical steps involved, and there are some important principles that should guide an evaluation framework.

The following are core principles that support 'good' or 'effective' evaluation:

Table 2: Core principles to support effective evaluation

Core principals to support effective evaluation
1. Evaluation should be considered and planned early. Evaluation should be an integral part of the planning and implementation of participation activities or programmes. This means that evaluation should be built in at the start of the project, as opposed to evaluation as a separate activity carried out at the end. It should consider what are the criteria, goals, and intended outcomes of the project. To help you think about evaluation early in your planning, see section 4 on Logic Models and Evaluation Planning
2. Evaluation should be objective, robust and evidence based. Evaluation should be a structured and planned process based on clear performance criteria, goals and desired outcomes. It should be carried out systematically using appropriate methods, as opposed to relying on assumptions and/or informal feedback.
3. Evaluation should be collaborative and participatory. Evaluation should include people who have been involved in the process or are affected by the outcomes. Evaluation should, whenever possible, be a participatory activity involving key stakeholders such as professional staff, managers and decision makers, and community participants in collaborative learning processes aimed at improving services. Steps to ensure this could be, for example, establishing a broader evaluation team and engaging co-workers from a wider stakeholder group to inform the evaluation process, such as getting their feedback on survey design and questions.
4. Evaluation should be inclusive. Planning for evaluation should consider methods to support people to be involved. Evaluation tools should be inclusive and engaging to increase accessibility and engagement with your evaluation.
5. Evaluation should be purposeful. When planning for evaluation you need to consider how it will influence or inform plans and decision-making for the future. Evaluation needs to have clear objectives and direction, and a clear pathway towards improvement.
6. Evaluation should be proportionate and contextualised. Evaluation needs to be resourced according to scale and risk to ensure value for money. Evaluation shouldn't be more extensive or complex than what is needed when thinking of the size and scope of the project itself. As a rule of thumb, an evaluation should take no more than around 10-15 % of project resources in terms of time or budget.

Types of Evaluation

Evaluation involves using information to make judgements on the performance of an organisation or project. This information can be collected through a range of evaluation activities, such as monitoring or feedback forms. The findings can be used to inform decision-making, enhance organisational learning and lead to improvement. When thinking about participation, this means assessing whether a public involvement and participation activity went well or not, and what may make it better in future.

Formative and summative evaluation

Evaluation is also defined in terms of when the main evaluation activities take place, and this is known as formative and summative evaluation.

is usually undertaken from the beginning of the project and is used to feed into its development. Formative evaluation allows ongoing learning and adaptation in response to interim findings, rather than having to wait until the end of a project to discover something should have been done differently. Formative evaluation examines the progress of participation against the project objectives and identifies unexpected barriers or outcomes as part of a continuous improvement cycle. The benefits of formative evaluation include improving the participation process as the project progresses, as well as receiving feedback from participants while it is fresh in their minds. It is also easier to collect data, so long as this is planned for. It is essential that formative evaluation is included in planning as early as possible, as it needs to be integrated throughout the project. A potential downside is that sometimes it can be difficult to get a clear picture of what is working well and what is not, as the project is not complete at the time of evaluation and improvements are made along the way.

is usually undertaken at the end of the project and provides an overview of the entire process. Summative evaluation tends to focus on how successful an activity was and whether it met its objectives in terms of both process and outcomes. The advantages of summative evaluation are that it can stop people from repeating initiatives which have not been successful, and it can uncover information which supports people to build on projects or programmes which have been successful. A potential downside to summative evaluation is that too much time may have elapsed between the participation activities and the evaluation. This may make it difficult to contact participants for their views or those that are contacted may not recollect everything you need to know. Summative evaluation also does not support improving processes along the way, which may have an impact on your activities.

Evaluation stages

By evaluating participation, you can look at the process and/or outcomes of the participation and this can be summative and/or formative. The key aspects of these types of evaluation are explained below.

Process evaluation and outcome evaluation

Evaluating participation can look at:

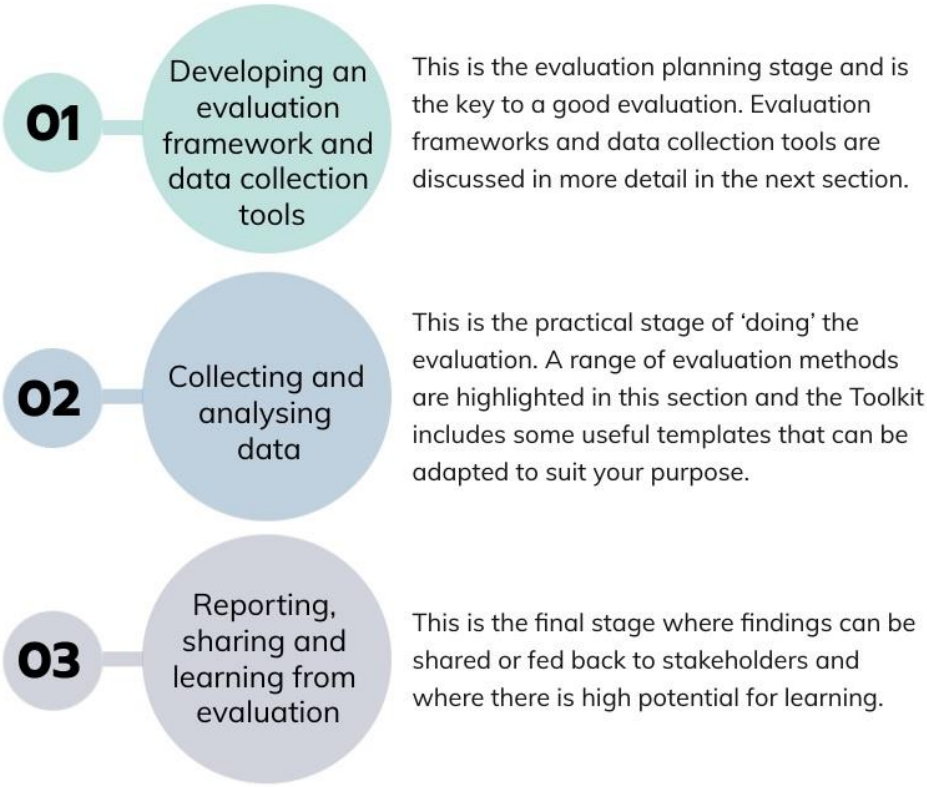
- The participation processes used – process evaluation, and/or
- The results and outcome of the participation – outcome or impact evaluation.

A process evaluation can be conducted during implementation of the project whilst an outcome evaluation will need to be undertaken at a later date once the project has delivered, and impact is being made. The following table shows the main features of these two types of evaluation:

Table 3: Process and impact evaluation in relation to evaluating participation

	Process Evaluation	**Outcome or impact evaluation**
Definition	A systematic assessment of how well a participation activity or programme meets its objectives and target audience.	A systematic assessment of the outcomes, effects, and results, planned and unplanned, of the participation activity or programme.
Purpose	To better understand the objectives of the participation activity or programme.	To determine whether the participation activity or programme achieved the desired objectives.
Key questions	**What?** • What was the planned activity? • What happened? • What were the gaps between plan and reality? • What worked well? • What were the problems? • What was learned? • What are the recommendations for planning future participation activities?	**So what?** • What were the outcomes or results from the participation activity or programme? • How do these results contribute to improved health and care services? • Were there any unintended outcomes and what are they?

There are three key stages to most evaluation projects:



The scale and scope of these evaluation activities will vary according to the scale and scope of the participation under review, and should reflect the purpose, audience, scale and significance of the participation activity. This can range from a simple feedback form with a few questions to a longer evaluation process using a multi-method approach.

Table 4: Evaluation stages - important things to think about

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Stage 1: Developing an Evaluation Framework and Data Collection Tools</th></tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning and Preparation:

• Determine goals and objectives for the evaluation
• Decide about issues of time, scale and budget
• Select evaluator(s) to collect data and consider how best to collect information
• Identify the audience(s) for the evaluation
• Consider what type of data you will be collecting and how this will be stored appropriately
• Think about ethical considerations and how you will mitigate against any risks

 </td>
<td>

Planning is the key to a good evaluation. Planning the goals and objectives for the evaluation should relate to the participation project or action that is the focus of the evaluation. This is also where it is important to set the boundary of the evaluation including overall timings and costs.

It is important to be aware of the type of data that you are likely to generate and to think ahead about how you are going to record and store the data appropriately. Most often evaluations generate large amounts of data, so planning at the start will help ensure that what you collect is relevant and useful, without collecting more information than you need, and that you have set up the right process to manage and store information safely.

This is also the stage where you need to pay attention to ethical considerations.</td>
<td>Key Questions to Consider:

• What are you trying to find out/achieve with this evaluation?
• How big or small should this evaluation be? Consider timescale, workload, costs.
• Who will be doing this evaluation?
• What information do you need to collect for this evaluation?
• What will this look like?
• Who will participate in this evaluation?
• What will the findings of this look like?
• How formal or informal does it need to be?
• What will you tell participants so they give informed consent to participate?
• How will you ensure anonymity?
• How will data be managed and stored securely?
• What will you do to close the loop?

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Evaluation Design: • Determine the focus of the evaluation in light of overall necessary information, ensuring it is consistent with the programme design and operation • Develop appropriate questions and measurable performance indicators based on programme goals and objectives • Determine the appropriate evaluation design strategy • Determine how to collect data based on needs and availability • Determine appropriate analysis processes	*A second level of planning involves designing the tools to collect the data you want to obtain and the approach you will use: qualitative, quantitative, or a mix of both.* *For example, questionnaires are good for collecting quantitative information, whereas focus groups are more likely to generate rich qualitative information.* *Planning the questions you will use to gather this information becomes a priority. In the Toolkit section you will find a question bank and sample survey template.* *Once you have designed your evaluation tools and questions, try them out on a few people to check that the questions are clear and that they collect the information you are looking for.* *Then also consider the information you have collected through this test and whether it will lead to the outcomes you are aiming for to ensure there is no mismatch between what you're collecting and what you're aiming to use it for. For example, if you are aiming to write a report that includes statistics, then only collecting qualitative feedback through focus groups may not be the most appropriate method.*	**Key Questions to Consider:** • What is your evaluation focusing on? • What information do you need to collect for your evaluation? • What questions will you ask to collect this information? • Will this information be words, numbers, both, or something else? • Does this information you are collecting help achieve the evaluation objectives? • Can you test these questions and your evaluation methods to make sure they are appropriate and clear? • Who can you test them with? • What have you learned through testing your questions, and what changes will you make? • How will you analyse the information you collect? • Who will collate the data, and who will analyse it? • Does the information you are collecting help produce the evaluation output you are aiming for?

Stage 2: Collecting and analysing data

Evaluation Implementation and Data Collection • Take steps necessary to collect high-quality data • Conduct data entry or otherwise store the data collected **Data Analysis and Interpretation** • Data analysis can be a tricky stage as different people will 'see' and interpret results in a different way • The results must be analysed in a way that is appropriate for the overall evaluation design and not generalised when the findings don't merit it	*This is the 'doing' stage of the evaluation. Data should be collected systematically using the methods identified during the planning stage.* *This is the exciting stage of an evaluation where you get to make sense of what the information you collected shows.* *It is a good idea to get different views on the data to check that there is a balanced summary.* *For example, you can involve a reference or steering group; ask a range of different people to read through the results for meaning and interpretation, and/or involve a group of participants as co-researchers. This will make your findings more robust.*	**Key Questions to Consider** • Is data collection progressing as expected? • Are any changes needed to achieve the approach and objectives you agreed during planning? **Key Questions to Consider** • Is data analysis progressing as expected? • Are any changes needed to achieve the approach and objectives you agreed during planning? • What can you do to ensure your data analysis and interpretation is robust? • What are your key findings, and what do they mean?

Stage 3: Reporting, Sharing and Responding to Results		
Results • Decide what results need to be communicated • Determine the best methods for communicating the results, depending on who needs to receive them • Prepare results in an appropriate format • Distribute results • Consider what learning you can take forward based on this evaluation and how these improvements can be made	*It is good practice to write up an evaluation project in full so that others can see the robustness behind your results.* *For sharing your results, you should think about the different stakeholders and their needs and interests. Doing a stakeholder analysis could help with considering this. You may need to produce a number of different versions of your results in a range of formats for these different audiences, such as a shorter executive summary or holding community events for stakeholders. It is best practice to communicate your findings to those involved in the evaluation activities.*	**Key Questions to Consider** • Who needs to know about your evaluation findings? What are your audiences? • Which findings are most relevant to each of your audiences? • How best to communicate your findings to these audiences? • What do these findings mean for the future? • What good practice do they highlight and what areas for improvement? • How will you take these forward?

Undertaking evaluation of participation involves asking questions. How you ask these questions will depend on the evaluation method that you decide is most appropriate. For example, there are different ways to ask the question – *"How well did we do?":*

you may use an open question during an interview or focus group and simply let the interviewee or group determine the feedback that they wish to give; or

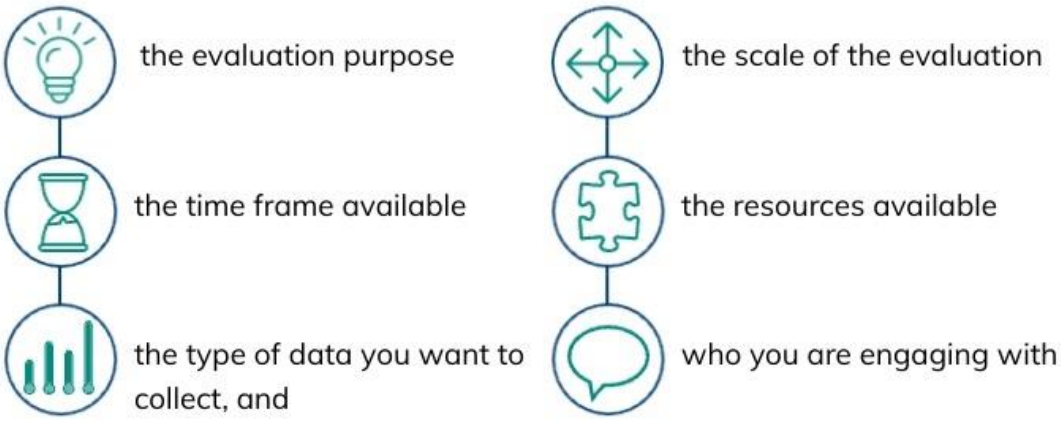
you may use a closed question using a rating scale in a survey or questionnaire asking respondents to score particular aspects of their participation; or

you may use pictures and/or symbols as a tool to facilitate communication and gain insights into particular aspects of participation.

Evaluation methods

Deciding which evaluation method to use is very important and can be somewhat challenging given the range of choices available.

The evaluation method(s) that you choose will depend on several factors:



These are the most frequently used evaluation methods.

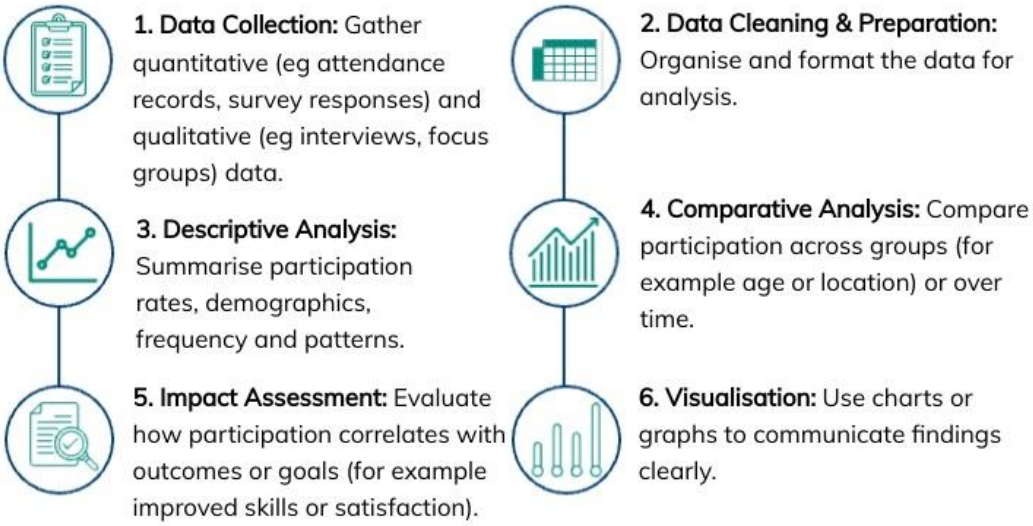
Table 5: Most frequently used evaluation methods

Evaluation Methods
Quantitative methods: are about measurement and judgement. They collect data that is expressed and analysed in the form of numbers. They involve collecting numbers, counting things eg how many said "good," and doing statistical analysis. Examples of quantitative methods are questions included in surveys and questionnaires. Typically, these will consist of closed questions, which can only be answered by selecting from a limited number of answers, or questions directly asking for a numeric statement, such as: "how often, how much, how regularly, how high?". A quantitative approach may also involve pulling together and looking at numerical information that is available and relevant to your work, for example how many people attended a workshop.
Qualitative methods: focus on what is observed and deduced. They collect data that is expressed and analysed in the form of words. It involves gathering data from what people say or write and how they experience or feel about something. Qualitative data is often descriptive and includes interpretation. Examples of qualitative methods are interviews and focus groups. Qualitative methods use open questions such as "what went well?", "what needs improved?" and "tell us about your experience in the engagement activities."
Participative methods: also gather qualitative data but do so in ways that enable participants to express their views more freely and are more inclusive. This is really important for example, if there are potential barriers with language and communication. Examples of participatory methods are included in our Participation Toolkit and can include activities such as Talking Mats, Emotional Touchpoints, and World Café. Generally, evaluation involves a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques or methods. Individual tools can also combine quantitative and qualitative approaches, for example, questionnaires that include free text questions (collect qualitative data) to complement multiple choice questions and/or rating sales (collect quantitative data). You can see an example of a survey in the Toolkit. Participative methods are particularly relevant for evaluating participation and the inclusion of a wide range of participants whilst collecting qualitative data.

Data analysis

Using the above methods would also involve data analysis in the evaluation of participation. This involves systematically examining data to understand how individuals or groups engage in a programme, activity, or process.

Key Steps in the data analysis of evaluation include:



Insights from the data analysis can help identify:

Data analysis is not just about interpreting results—it is a critical step in identifying what works, what doesn't, and why. By linking findings back to the original aims of participation, analysis helps inform decisions about how to adapt and improve future engagement activities. This connection is explored further in Section 3: Using Evaluation Findings to Drive Improvement, and is supported by practical tools in the Toolkit section, such as the Review Template and Evaluation Question Bank.

The NHS Guide to Evaluation describes data analysis for evaluation in more detail

Ethical considerations

Evaluation, as any process that collects information from participants, requires you to think about ethical considerations. Most evaluations do not require ethical approval from an ethics committee, but if you are unsure or if your evaluation involves potential risk or vulnerable groups then it is worth checking this with local NHS Boards. It is always important to remember that when you are conducting work with patients, staff and/or the public then an ethical approach is good evaluation practice, even if you do not require formal ethics approval. Key areas relevant to ethics that you will need to address in any evaluation are listed below.

Further information about ethical considerations can be found in our ethical checklist or on our website https://www.hisengage.scot/engaging-communities/participation-toolkit/ethical-checklist/

Table 6: Key areas relevant to ethics

Key areas relevant to ethics

Informed consent

Participants in evaluation projects should feel that they are contributing freely and that they can change their mind at any time and withdraw from this activity if they wish to. This is generally achieved through 'informed consent.' It is the responsibility of the evaluation project team to provide clear information about what's involved, what will be required of participants and why they should contribute. For example, a project information sheet should explain the amount of time involved, the timetable of the evaluation, and how participant comments will be used, and should provide a contact point for potential questions. In some evaluation projects participants may be asked for written or verbal consent using a consent form. For example, if there is observation or any audio or video recording. An example of a consent form is included in the Toolkit.

Anonymity

The identity of participants should be protected at all times. This includes their names but also any other information that may lead to a participant being identifiable, especially when participants may be from small communities, for example rural communities or LGBT+ communities. Anonymity needs careful consideration, especially in small evaluation projects where the identity of individuals can be much harder to protect. There are several techniques used to achieve anonymity, for example using a pseudonym in a case study or using general terms to reflect collective comments, such as community participants' comments. For example, you could say that a participant was from a small and rural area rather than saying which area they are from, as that may mean they are identifiable. It is also useful to consider what characteristics, if any, need to be discussed when discussing your findings. For example whether it is relevant and necessary to mention a participant's gender when discussing what they said, or whether it would be safer to use gender-neutral language. This aspect also requires careful storage and management of the data you have collected. Identifiable information should be stored separately from the feedback collected, unless otherwise necessary, so for example names and contact details should not be stored alongside participants' comments. All data should only be accessible to those directly involved in the evaluation.

Data Management and Protection

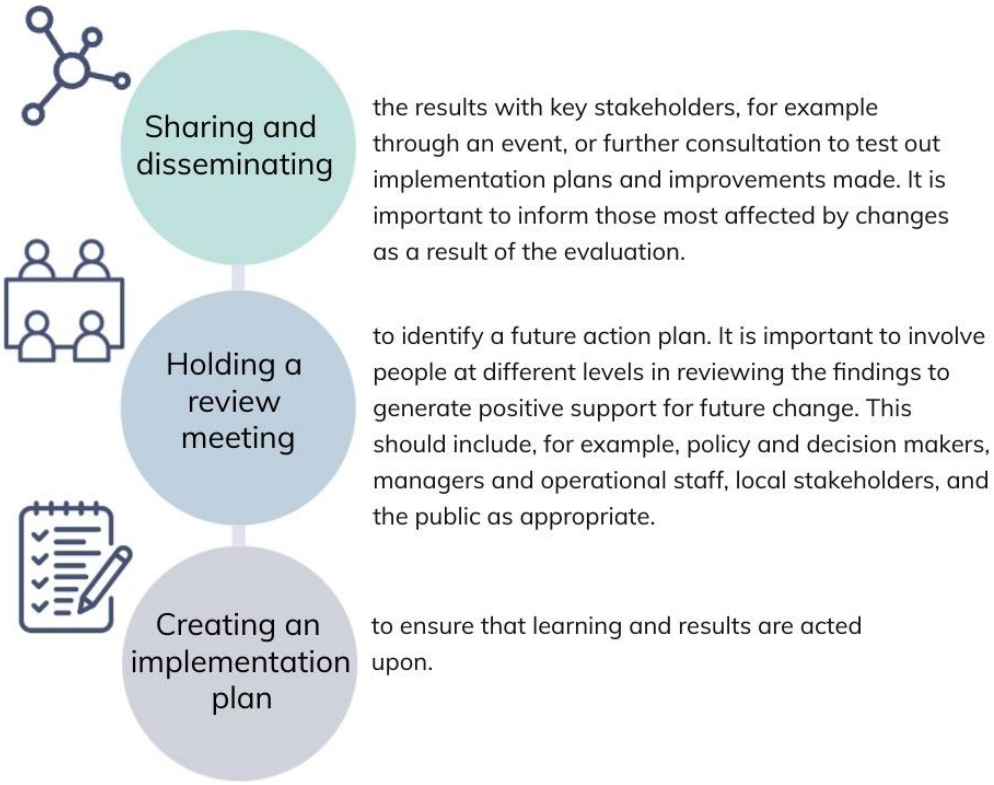
Evaluations are generally concerned with collecting the 'what,' 'how' and 'why' around a programme of work, with less need for knowing who said what.
Nevertheless, it is a legal requirement that any personal data collected is stored securely and evaluation projects need to work within the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and any procedures set locally by individual NHS Boards. A general rule of thumb is to only collect personal information where it is essential to evaluation purposes, and for all information to be deleted once the evaluation project is completed.

Closing the loop

Sharing the evaluation findings and feeding back to participants at the end of the evaluation is generally considered good practice and may encourage them to participate in future evaluations.

Using evaluation findings to drive improvement

A final and important consideration for an evaluation is thinking about how the findings are used to learn and improve practice. Evaluation does not end with writing a report but provides knowledge and understanding that should lead to designing future participation activities. Activities that follow an evaluation for this purpose include:



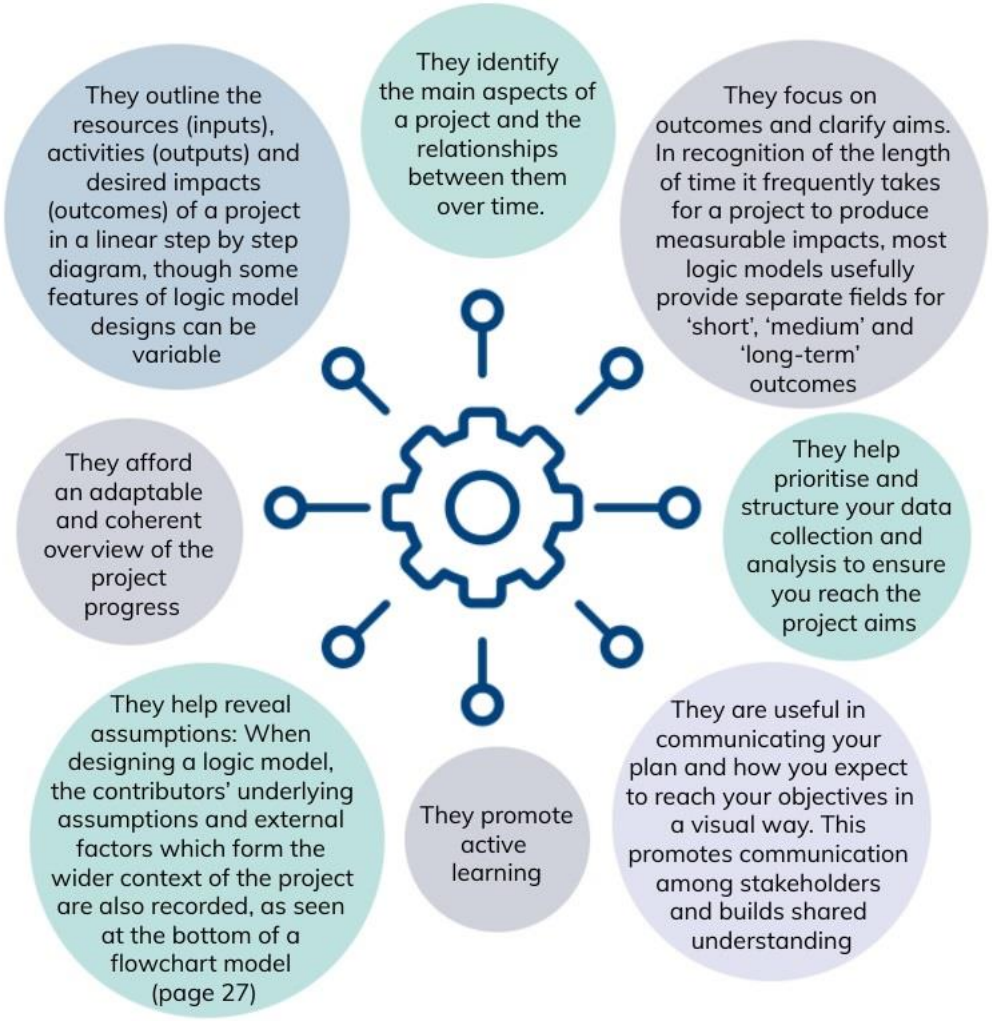
A template to help you to plan the use of evaluation findings is included in the Toolkit.

Section 4 - Approaches to developing an organisational learning and evaluation plan

There are several evaluation approaches or models that you may have come across, which provide a framework for guiding your evaluation projects. They all use consistent evaluation terminology as previously described in this guide, and they tend to relate evaluation to specific contexts.

Logic models

Logic models are a useful way to visualise how an intervention, project or programme should work or is expected to work in theory. Logic models have several **key benefits**:



Designing a logic model lays the foundations for a comprehensive step by step evaluation of a project, since logic models aim to map the cause-and-effect relationships between the

different parts of a project, including the sequence in which these need to occur to achieve the desired outcomes.

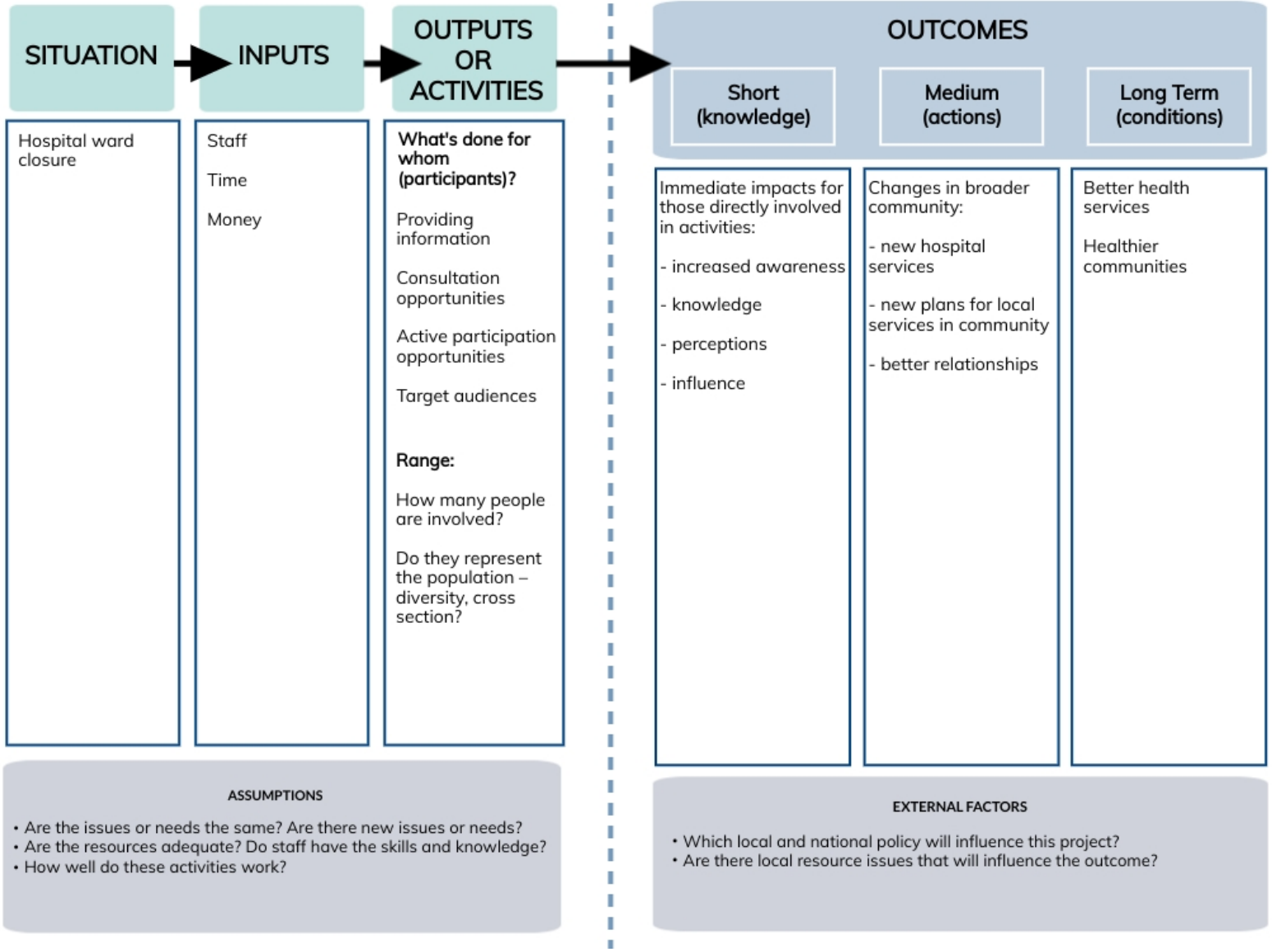
Ideally, logic models should be developed with stakeholders, such as staff, patients, carers or public representatives to ensure that multiple perspectives are recognised and discussed during the planning stage. This helps capture the connections between the different elements of a project, and with identifying those which are critical to the project's success. In addition, this promotes a sense of ownership and shared purpose among those involved. Whilst a logic model often takes the form of a visual shown below, it is possible to work on this in a more participatory and involved way, using whiteboards and sticky notes, for example.

Good logic models accurately lay out the thinking that underpins a project (the theory), whilst remaining flexible working documents throughout the project, continuously being updated and further developed during the implementation phase to reflect progress, challenges and learning. It is helpful to think of a logic model as a work in progress, which reflects the learning and development of ideas that accompany any project.

The graphic below outlines a logic model for a participation project. We can use the logic model to develop an evaluation plan. A logic model creates a causal roadmap or a pathway for a participation activity or programme. An evaluation plan can now be designed in relation to the different elements of the model. Table 7 shows some key questions that can be asked to develop the evaluation plan related to the logic model. Note it draws on some of the evaluation essentials already highlighted in this guide.

Simple Logic Model for a Participation Programme

[2]Based on Engaging Queenslanders – Evaluating Community Engagement (2011)



[3] The Queensland Government Department of Communities, 2011, Engaging Queenslanders – Evaluating community engagement

Table 7: Logic model evaluation questions

Logic model evaluation questions
Situation questions: • Is our analysis of the situation, issue, or need correct? • Has it changed? • What are the external influencing factors?
Inputs question: • Are resources available and being used as planned?
Activities questions: • Are we doing what we said we would do? • What are the gaps between the plan and the reality? • What worked well? • What could be improved? • What was learned about the activities? • What assumptions should be reviewed? • What are the recommendations for planning future participation activities?
Participants questions: • Are we reaching the right people? • What factors are affecting take up?
Outcomes questions: • What difference are we making? • What were the outcomes or results from the participation activity or programme? • How do these results contribute to improved health services? • What external factors have helped or limited this activity?

Once the logic model is developed, you can now make an evaluation plan and decide which evaluation method to use, for example if your evaluation will be summative or formative, and whether you will collect qualitative or quantitative data, and you should also consider who should conduct the evaluation and any ethical issues that need to be considered, as discussed in previous sections. A checklist for evaluating participation has been included in the Toolkit to help take you through the evaluation essentials relating to your participation activity or project.

The LEAP tool - Learning, Evaluation And Planning

The LEAP tool is a participatory planning and evaluation tool designed to help use a partnership approach in planning and evaluating change. It focuses on empowerment, learning, inclusion, self-determination and partnership, which are basic principles of community learning and development.

The LEAP tool can be used in various contexts and is designed to help the development of projects, programmes and policy making as it helps to plan effectively and identify evidence and possible changes needed. It encourages critical questioning whilst focusing on outcomes, with emphasis on learning from experience and self-evaluation towards developing more effective practices. The LEAP tool also supports participation and helps create shared responsibility within a project. It also allows for a clear analysis of needs, planning and review of action.

Further information about LEAP can be found here:
https://www.scdc.org.uk/what/leap-manual

Visioning Outcomes in Community Engagement (VOiCE)

The VOiCE tool is based on the National Standards for Community Engagement, which are good practice principles designed to support and inform the process of community engagement and improve what happens as a result. The VOiCE tool can help with developing evaluation questions, using the format based on the National Standards in the VOiCE tool to look at how the Standards are applied in practice. The National Standards also provide a useful framework for developing participation and community engagement practice so can also be considered when planning evaluation of participation.

Further information on the VOiCE tool can be found here:
https://www.voicescotland.org.uk/news/welcome-to-the-voice

After Action Review

An After Action Review (AAR) is a simple tool to allow a team to openly reflect on a project and their experience of it, celebrating strengths and capturing lessons learned and improvements needed. AARs should take place as soon as possible after the work is completed, but similar reflective discussions can also be held during the progress of a project, if it is considered helpful, for example collecting more 'real-time' feedback from those involved and making necessary changes during the work to improve outcomes.

An AAR is centred around a facilitated, reflective and action-oriented discussion focusing on an event, activity or programme of work. The discussion enables those involved in the work to reflect on:

- **What happened and why**
- **Strengths and weaknesses**
- **Next steps – building on learning and to sustain strengths and improve weaknesses**

AARs improve individual and collective performance by collecting immediate feedback and agreeing next steps and improvements collectively. This tool also ensures that teams build on previous successes and avoid repeating mistakes or dwelling on negative experiences without taking action to improve.

AARs can be formal or informal, depending on the scope of the project and its aims. For example, an AAR can be approached as a formal exercise involving a wider base of stakeholders. In this case, it could also involve collecting initial feedback through an anonymous survey, this feedback analysed by an external facilitator and findings discussed during the discussion, producing a formal report with agreed actions and checkpoints. On the other hand, an AAR can centre around an informal, safe-space discussion facilitated by a member of the team, written up as a brief action note.

Further information on After Action Reviews are on our website here:
https://www.hisengage.scot/equipping-professionals/participation-toolkit/after-action-reviews/

Further Resources

Other evaluating participation guides:

- A Manager's Guide to Evaluating Citizen Participation - Tina Nabatchi, Syracuse University, 2012
- Evaluating Participation: A guide for professionals - Young Minds 2020
- How to evaluate public engagement projects and programmes - National Co-ordinating Centre for Public engagement, 2023
- How do I evaluate a participatory process? – Involve
- NHS Evaluation Toolkit - BNSSG ICB, NIHR ARC West, Health Innovation West of England
- National Quality Improvement Team Self-Evaluation Guide, 2019 – National Quality Improvement Team

Example of an evaluation of a Citizens' Jury:

- Evaluation of the Our Voice Citizens' Jury on Shared Decision Making – Healthcare Improvement Scotland, 2020

Evaluating Participation - Toolkit

A checklist for evaluating participation

The following checklist is based on the information provided in this guide. Use it to plan your own evaluation project and to track progress.

Table 8: Checklist for evaluating participation

Evaluation task	Your evaluation project	
Stage 1: Developing an evaluation framework and data collection tools		
• What are the goals and outcomes of the participation activity? • What are the success indicators for these outcomes? • What is the purpose and objectives for the evaluation? • What are the key questions? • What methods will you use to collect data? • Who is the audience(s) for the evaluation? • Who are the key stakeholders? • How will they be involved in the evaluation? • What is the timetable? • What is the budget? • Who will conduct the evaluation? • How will the evaluation be project managed? • Have you addressed any ethical issues?		
Stage 2: Collecting and analysing data		
• Have you prepared and tested your evaluation methods? • Have you planned for data collecting methods eg, focus group event, survey distribution, participatory session? • How will you record and store your data?		

• How will you analyse your data and interpret results in a way that is appropriate for overall design? • Who will be involved?		
Stage 3: Reporting, sharing, responding to results		
• How will communicate results and to whom? • Have you produced a competent report and summary? • Have you arranged a dissemination event or discussion to explore the findings? • What will you do with the results? How will they influence change?		

Evaluation Question Bank

Select questions from the question bank to help develop your interviews, focus groups, questionnaires, and surveys. These questions are designed to guide your evaluation process rather than be directly asked during these activities.

Questions are grouped under different topics. If using quantitative questions, then you may need to think of an appropriate Likert scale. Standard practice tends to be to use a five-point Likert scale, with two positive, two negative and one neutral option.

Table 9: Evaluation Question Bank

Evaluation Question Bank
Process Questions:
• Was the process fair and properly run? • Did people feel heard and did the process meet individual's expectations? • What was the satisfaction of participants before and after the event? • Was appropriate information provided (timely, accessible, and easy to understand)? • How were the issues framed and what types of issues were discussed? • What was the planned activity and what actually happened (what were the gaps between the plan and reality)? • Were the goals achieved - what was learned (what worked well/what could be improved) and what are recommendations for future participation activities?
Impact Questions:
• What were the participant's motivations for coming to the programme? • Did participants change their attitudes and how much did their attitudes shift before and after the programme? • Did participants understand the goals of the activity? • Were relevant actors missing? • Did participants believe that the activity was worthwhile, did they learn anything? • What was the impact on services, patients involved, patients receiving services, and staff?
Outcome Questions:
• What were outcomes or results from the participation activity or programme that contributed to improved health services? • Were there any unforeseen consequences from the participation (eg, groups being formed, civic action)? • Did the participation process affect a policy decision and how was the information generated used by policymakers? • Did participants attend other, similar participation activities?

Participant Profile:
• What was participants' previous experience in civic engagement (first time participants)? • How many participation processes has the individual attended? • Are we reaching the right people, what was the demographic makeup of participants? • How many participants were there and what factors are affecting take up?

***Satisfaction Questions** (*based on Nabatchi p31)
Satisfaction with the process:
• How satisfied are you with the fairness of the participatory process? • How satisfied are you with your opportunity to participate in the process? • How satisfied are you with the issues addressed in the process? • How satisfied are you with the diversity of people, views and opinions in the process?
Satisfaction with the outcomes:
• How satisfied are you with the fairness of the outcomes? • How satisfied are you with your level of input on the outcomes? • How satisfied are you with your level of influence over the outcomes? • How satisfied are you with the degree to which the outcomes represent broader community interests?
Satisfaction with the facilitators:
• How satisfied are you with the performance of the facilitator? • How satisfied are you with the neutrality (objectivity) and fairness of the facilitator? • How satisfied are you with the way you were treated and how others were treated by the facilitator?
Satisfaction with the information provided:
• How satisfied are you with the information you were provided about the process? • How satisfied are you with the degree to which the information provided helped you understand and prepared you to participate effectively in the process? • How satisfied are you with the degree to which the information provided prepared others to participate effectively in the process?
Satisfaction with the discussions:
• How satisfied are you with the quality and civility of the discussions? • How satisfied are you with the way you were treated during discussions? • How satisfied are you with the degree to which people were respectful of differing viewpoints? • How satisfied are you with the degree to which the discussions were open, honest, and understandable?

Example of a survey used as part of a service change evaluation

Survey about your participation in XXXXXXX

1. Where do you live? (Please provide area eg Dumfries OR first half of your postcode. This is to help us understand the spread of responses from across the catchment area).

2. Which group best describes you? (Please tick one box you feel best represents how you are responding).

	Member of the public*		NHS or Social Care Staff or Service Provider
	Patient or service user*		Elected representative (eg councillor, MSP)
	Carer, friend or family member*		Other (please specify):
	Voluntary or community group		

* If you select 'Member of the public', 'Patient or service user', or 'Carer, friend or family member', we may classify you as a member of the public.

Communications and Engagement

3. How did you hear about the consultation? (Please tick all that apply)

	Received an email/leaflet from xxxx Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP)		Local Newspaper/Newsletter/Radio
	Community Council/local group		Picked up information locally/saw poster
	A member of staff told me about it		Social media (eg Facebook/Twitter)
	Word-of-mouth		xxxxx website
	Elected representative (eg councillor, MSP)		Other (please specify):

4. Have you read the consultation information? (please tick all that apply)

	Yes	No	Unsure
Consultation document			
Webpage			
Background information eg results from option appraisal			

5. If you responded 'Yes' to Q4,

	Yes	No	Unsure
Do you feel you have been given enough information to understand the proposed options for change?			
Do you feel the information is clear and in plain language?			

Please tell us why you feel this way?

6. How did you take part in the consultation? (please tick all that apply)

	I attended an in-person drop-in event		I attended an online public event
	xxxxx HSCP came to our meeting		I completed xxxxx HSCP's consultation survey
	I gave comments to xxxx HSCP via social media, phone call or one-to-one		I sent an email or letter to xxxxx HSCP
	I have NOT taken part in the consultation		Other (please specify):

Explanations and information provided

7. Do you feel xxxxx HSCP has clearly explained:

	Yes	No	Unsure
Why it is reviewing the use of xxxxxx?			
How the options for the future use of xxxxx were developed?			
How the options for the future use of xxxxx scored?			
How a decision will be made on the future use of xxxxx in each locality area?			

If you have answered 'No' or 'Unsure' how could this have been made clearer?

Your Experience

8. Do you feel you've had an opportunity to:

	Yes	No	Unsure
Give your views about the options/proposals?			
Ask questions?			

Please tell us why you feel this way?

9. Do you feel:

	Yes	No	Unsure	Not applicable
Your views were listened to?				
Your questions were answered?				

Please tell us why you feel this way?

10. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about this consultation process?

Using evaluation findings to drive improvement – Review Template

An evaluation review can be carried out by the person responsible for the overall evaluation project but is most effective when it involves a mix of people connected to the evaluation, for example: the evaluation team, managers and staff from related services, and local people. The aim of an evaluation review is to ensure that learning points and actions are identified and implemented or taken forward appropriately.

Use the following template to plan, check and/or audit actions from evaluation findings.

It is a good idea to ask participants at the review to rate their perception of the overall effectiveness of the participation activity – marks out of 10 (10 = highly effective). This provides an overall sense of whether the group are reviewing a successful project (or otherwise) and will reflect the range of different views.

Table 10: Example of a Review Template

Key questions	Summary of responses
What did we do? • What were the objectives? • What methods were used? • How many people did we reach? • How diverse a population were they?	
How well did we do it? (process) • Were the objectives met? • What worked well and not so well? • Were the methods and techniques appropriate? • What could be improved?	

What impact did it have? (outcomes)
• Did it achieve intended outcomes?
• What was the impact on:
  ○ services; patients involved;
  ○ patients receiving services; and staff?	

What actions and/or changes would drive improvements? • In local services? • For future participation activities?		
Implementation Plan		
What actions and/or changes will be taken forward from the participation activities?	Who is responsible for these actions?	By when?

Example of a Consent Form

Participant Consent Form

XXXXXXXXXX

By ticking the options below you are giving your consent to take part in XXXXXXX

If you wish to proceed, please confirm the following, verbally or in writing:

1. I have read and understood the information sheet. [ ]
2. I have been able to ask questions about this work and am happy with the answers I got. [ ]
3. I understand that I can choose whether or not I will take part in this interview and that I can choose not to answer any question or stop taking part at any time, without having to give a reason. [ ]
4. I agree for what I say to be used in reports and publications about this work, but that my name will not be used. I give permission for Healthcare Improvement Scotland to hold relevant personal data about me and I understand that my comments are anonymous. [ ]
5. I agree to take part in this work. [ ]
6. For parent or legal guardian of children under 16 only:
   I confirm that I have parental responsibility for this child.
   I consent to my child taking part and have read and understood the information provided. [ ]

If you are over 18, please also complete the equality monitoring form online at this link: XXXXXXXX

Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Name and signature of parent/legal Guardian

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Need information in a different format? Contact our Equality, Inclusion and Human Rights Team to discuss your needs. Email his.equality@nhs.scot or call 0141 225 6999. We will consider your request and respond within 20 days.

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