



Self-Care Leaflets

Aim of the project: To transform the self-care leaflets produced by the Medicines Optimisation Team

Area: Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Who was involved: My Life Choices Members and the Medicines Optimisation Team.

Learning area: Co-creation of resources, the impact of coproduction on the people taking part.

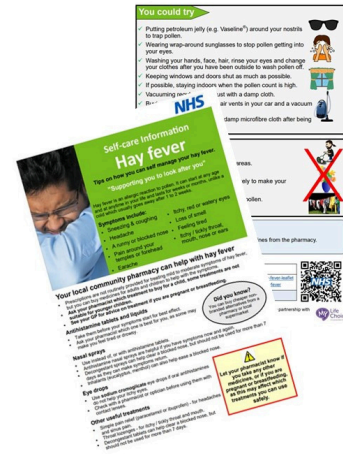


Image of a Self-Care Leaflet

Contents:

- The scope of this work.
- How coproduction feels to those doing it.
- The impact of a coproduction approach.

This will take you **8 mins** to read.

Introduction from the Coproduction Team...

In this series of case studies, we explore the positive emotional impact of coproduction for both staff and lived experience experts.

We want to encourage a coproduction approach by showcasing that it can be fun, rewarding and inspiring. Have a look through this case study and explore the top tips that will support you on your coproduction journey.

The full scope of the work:

- We, the Integrated Care Board's Medicines Optimisation Team, use self-care leaflets to support patients to manage minor illnesses at home, with help from their community pharmacy. They also give advice about when help from a GP would be appropriate.
- The original leaflets were not eye catching and the most important information was not obvious.
- To make them helpful and accessible we knew we needed to involve lived experience experts in their development.

Working with My Life Choices...

We approached My Life Choices and invited them to participate in reviewing and improving existing leaflets, and developing new leaflets.

We learnt so much, including the:

- Importance of simple language, colour, pictures and layout.
- Challenges that many people face reading and understanding information we give them.
- Tools we need to put the patient at the heart of what we do.



Over the next 3 pages, the Medicines Optimisation Team and a My Life Choices Lived Experience Expert talk about what they learnt and explores in more detail their feelings of:

- Apprehension
- Confidence
- Pride
- Excitement
- Humble
- Productivity
- Happiness

How did you feel at the start of your coproduction journey?

Medicines Optimisation Team

“We felt apprehensive, it was a new way of working for us. We were not used to involving people from outside of our team in the planning stages and weren’t sure what to expect.

As scientists, we’re used to putting in lots of detail, so it was hard to think about just putting in simple information that could be understood by everyone.

It was difficult to write for a different audience, we’re used to writing documents for other healthcare professionals to read.

Members of My Life Choices were able to give insight into how others read leaflets and what was important and kept bringing us back to that.

The first leaflets that we did took a long time as we learnt how to use appropriate language and to use formatting and images in a way that made understanding the content easy.

We learnt that the average reading age was much lower than we thought and that some people, for various reasons, would not be able to read the text at all and may not want to admit to that. This is where images and symbols were important to get basic messages across even if the words were not read”.

“I absolutely loved doing this project”

My Life Choices, Lived Experience Expert

My Life Choices, Lived Experience Expert

It was “a little daunting with the sheer volume of leaflets, but the team were welcoming and friendly so I felt confident we could all work together to get the job done.”

How did you feel at the end of your coproduction journey?

Medicines Optimisation Team

“It did take longer than it would have done to just update the leaflets ourselves, but it was worth it.

The end result was 100% better than the original and much more user-friendly.

We got quicker as we learnt what we needed to do, and our patient representative needed to make fewer and fewer suggestions as the project progressed.

We’ve received some really positive feedback. We feel very proud of the new style leaflets and it’s great to see them widely used.

We’re excited about moving on to the next stage to make the leaflets easy to find online so that they get used widely. This will involve working with other teams in the ICB to get the leaflets onto the ICS website and raise awareness of self-care via social media.

We have gained the confidence to teach others in the team about accessibility and give tips on how to create readable patient facing document”.

“Having support from My Life Choices has provided invaluable insight.”

Medicines Optimisation Team Member

My Life Choices, Lived Experience Expert

“I felt proud to have been involved, I felt completely heard and reminded how important it is having a person with lived experience involved in projects like this. Language is so powerful and can make so much difference. The whole team let me know they have learnt so much from me and this process, continuing to utilise this knowledge by guiding others, making changing in their working and private lives.”

Thinking Point...

- How can you increase the accessibility of the information you create?

What new skills, knowledge or personal qualities did you learn or rediscover on your coproduction journey?

Medicines Optimisation Team

“We learnt:

- The importance of making documents accessible and what this means in reality. It’s not just about making the text screen-reader friendly, but also thinking about colour contrast, use of images, formatting, length of sentences and paragraphs.
- Creating QR codes was not as hard as we thought!
- How to find images to use that were not copyrighted.
- To better use the skill mix within our own team to work together to make us more efficient”.

My Life Choices, Lived Experience Expert

“I've honed my proof reading skills. I rediscovered my worth, at a time which was emotionally draining for me it was lovely to pick something up and be in control, I absolutely loved doing this project.”

How did it feel working together?

Medicines Optimisation Team

“The whole process felt productive and incredibly worthwhile.

Relationships came quite naturally with no conflict.

Everyone's opinion was listened to equally, and where there were differences people were willing to take the time to explain their concerns and come to a compromise.

There was a willingness to be flexible”.

My Life Choices, Lived Experience Expert

“EPIC, to speak and to be heard, to then see how your influence has meant that the team are then working in the way you recommended so you are no longer needed felt like I do being a mum - I taught the team how to fly and now they are soaring high. I would be so very happy to work with the team again in any other projects. Kudos to Jill and the team for being amazing!”

Top Tips...

- Have a go!
- Don't assume that you won't learn anything. It is not a tick box exercise.
- Be ready to learn some new skills.
- Be open to suggestions. At first it can feel like “nit picking”, but once you really try to understand another perspective it opens your mind to different approaches.
- Working with patient groups makes you a better healthcare professional.

More information...

To learn more about My Life Choices, visit their [webpage](#).

To access the self-care leaflets, visit the [Area Prescribing Committee's website](#).

To learn more about creating accessible documents, sign up to the ICB's Coproduction Toolkit or have a look at this [Change guide](#) to making information accessible.