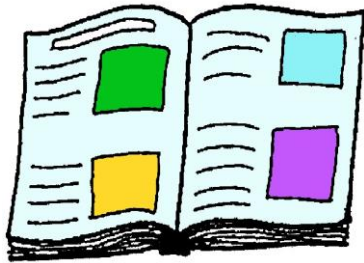


Co-production in social care: What it is and how to do it

Easy read summary



This is an easy read of the short version of the Social Care Institute for Excellence's (SCIE) guide to co-production.

SCIE has done the summary with the Think Local Act Personal partnership.

The Think Local Act Personal partnership was set up to make social care for adults better with support that is about them and their community.



Co-production means services working together with people who use services and carers. A lot of this summary is about what co-production means.

Co-production is important for all services and can help them with all the big problems they have at the moment.



It can:



Care Act 2014

CHAPTER 23

- help services do what the Care Act says they have to do



- help save money



- make services better for people



- help people work together better in their community



- make services think about how they make people's lives better and stop them having more problems



- help services to work together more.

There have been problems with some care services in the last few years.



There was a report about problems at Staffordshire Hospital by a judge called Robert Francis. And another report about how people with learning difficulties were hurt and not looked after properly at a home called Winterbourne View.

There are other reports like this. They all say that part of the reason for problems like this is that there is not enough co-production.



Care Act 2014

CHAPTER 23

The Care Act is one of the first laws to have co-production in the rules that tell services what they should do.

What is co-production?

Co-production basically means working together to do something. It is also about people with different views and ideas coming together to make things better for everyone.





Co-production is about people who use services, carers and people who run services together as equals. Being equals means nobody is more important than anyone else.

Sometimes people use the word co-production in different ways. This can mean co-production is not always as good as it should be. It means you do not always get the changes you should get with co-production.



But it is also important for people to be allowed to do co-production in different ways. This will help people find new ways to do things.

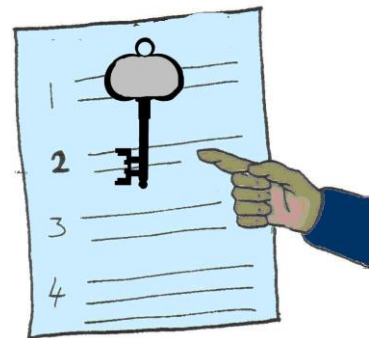
The important thing is that co-production is not just a new word for working with people who use services and carers. When people say they are doing co-production it should mean they are working with people who use services and carers in new ways.





There is a group called the National Co-production Critical Friends Group. The members of the group come from lots of different organisations that work with the government and councils to try and get them to do co-production.

They say co-production is about how the people who run services and councils working with the people they support. It is about everyone sharing power to plan and run services. It means everyone needs to see that everyone can do something to help people and communities to have better lives.



The rules that go with the Care Act say that co-production is people having a say in their services. It also says services should work with community groups to plan and run services.

SCIE says co-production is users and carers working with services as equal partners and wanting to do the same things.





There are some other words that are like co-production but do not mean the same thing. Some of the other words that are like co-production are **co-design** and **co-creation**.

Co-design: this means people who run services working with people who use services and carers to plan services.

Co-creation: this means setting a business or service which makes the customers or users the most important thing.

These are the things that are most important about co-production:



- people who use services, carers and people who run services all work together to do the same things



- people who use services and carers start to have more power and control



- people who use services and carers are part of everything to do with services



- services understand that people who use services and carers are useful because of what they know and what they can do



- people get something for what they do for services – sometimes they are paid money and sometimes they can do things for free or learn new things



- the staff who work with people who use services and carers have more say in how things are done instead of the managers.

There are also important **principles** about co-production.



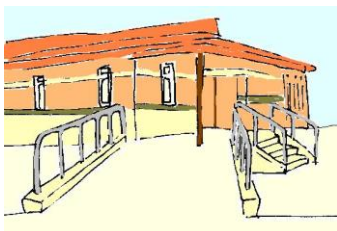
Principles are the ideas about what are the most important things to do and how to do them.



1. Equality – everyone has something to give and nobody is more important than anyone else.



2. Diversity – services should make sure everyone can take part in co-production.



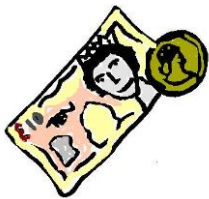
3. Access – there shouldn't be anything that makes it difficult for any group of people to take part in co-production.



4. Reciprocity – this means everyone getting something for what they do in co-production. Sometimes they get money. Sometimes they get something for free. It is also about making friends and feeling good about helping people.

How co-production helps

Co-production can help people get better services that do the things people want them to do.



This can also help save money.

It also helps make communities better because people work together.



The cost of co-production



There are costs for organisations doing co-production. They need to pay for things like training and making sure that everything has easy access.

How to do co-production

When an organisation wants to do co-production it is useful to think about the four areas they need to work on as four pieces of a jigsaw:

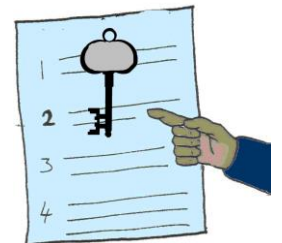


For co-production to work well organisations will need to make changes in each piece of the jigsaw.

Culture

Culture means all the things about a group of people or organisation and the way they do things.

The culture of an organisation comes from the things it believes and the things that the people who are in charge of the organisation think are important.



Organisations that want to do co-production need to make sure:

- co-production is important to everyone who works for the organisation and everything it does



- everyone knows what co-production means, why they are doing it and what will be done better because of co-production



- they are ready to do things differently even if they might go wrong. When you do this they should make plans for what to do if something goes wrong.



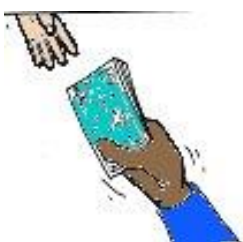
Example of co-production



Islington Council in London has written a set of rules about co-production.



It has done this to make sure everyone can be part of co-production and it will make things better for people.



There are rules about making sure that everyone can be paid for working on co-production. And they make sure that when they pay people it does not cause problems with their benefits.

Structure

Structure means the way things are organised so they work together.



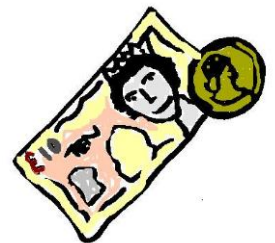
The structure of the organisation is about the way the different parts of it work together and the things they do to make sure everything happens the way they want it to.

To do co-production organisations need to:

- work with people who use services and carers from the very start of a project



- make sure people who use services and carers are paid or given something for what they do



- make sure there is enough money and time for co-production



- make sure they do not change things if they will help co-production.



Example of co-production

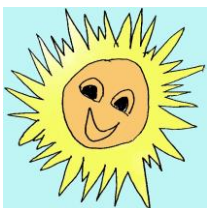
The part of Birmingham City Council that runs social care services for adults has lots of ways of doing things that help it do co-production. The council is part of a project called Making it Real. This is run by Think Local Act Personal which supports person-centred services and co-production in England.



You can find out more about this on the website:

[Making it Real](#)

It uses structures to:



- make sure people who use services are part of projects as soon as they start

- make sure there is enough time and money for co-production



- make sure everyone knows what co-production is and to tell other people about it so they know too.

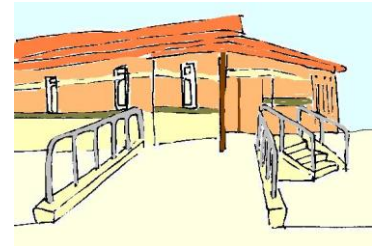
Practice



Practice is about the way the people do their work.

They need to change the way they do things and support co-production by:

- making sure everything is accessible for everyone who is part of co-production



- making sure everyone has all the information they need to be part of co-production and make choices

- giving everyone training in co-production and any other skills they need for the work





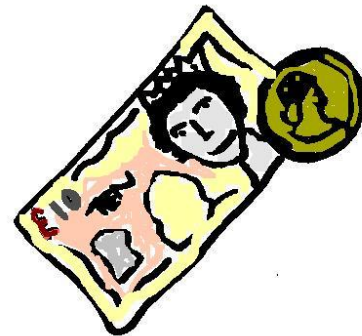
- thinking about people who might be able to help co-production from outside the organisation

- giving all staff everything they need to do co-production including time and money and the freedom to make choices



- giving support to the community to be part of co-production

- using co-production when they pay other organisations or people to run services.



Example of co-production



All Together Now is a project in care homes for old people who have **dementia**.



Dementia means having big problems with your memory. It is normally something that happens to old people.

They use co-production. Because of this some people need to change how they do their work. Cooks in the home now work with the people who live in the home when they make meals.



Review



Review means checking on how you are doing something and finding out what can be done better.

It is important for organisations to check how they are doing with co-production and if it is making a difference to people's lives.

They need to:



- have a set time to do reviews and make sure co-production is working the way it is meant to work



- do the reviews using co-production



- use what they find out with the review to make the way they do co-production better.

Example of co-production



New **Belongings** works all around the country with young people who have been in council care. It helps councils give people better help when they start living on their own.

Belonging means feeling that you are part of something.

Work in the county of Cheshire, in northwest England, shows that when you are doing co-production it is important to:

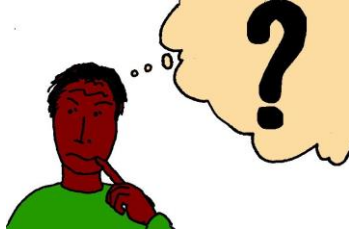


- keep learning about how to do co-production

- work with users to check everything is going right and not worry if something does not work right the first time.



More information about co-production



If you want to know more about co-production, there is a full guide on SCIE's website.

The guide has more examples of co-production.



There are also 12 short videos.

About Think Local Act Personal

Think Local Act Personal is a group of 50 organisations.



It wants to make health and social care better by making it more about people and communities.

Think Local Act Personal works with people with care and support needs, carers and family members through the National Co-production Advisory Group. The group advises Think Local Act Personal about the work it does.



About SCIE

SCIE co-produces its work with people who use services and carers. It has a Co-production Network with over 60 members who take part in all different parts of SCIE's work.



50 of the members took part in 24 projects at SCIE in 2014–2015.