ENGAGEMENT BUFFET

A RANGE OF REFLECTIVE
RESOURCES WHEN PLANNING
AND PREPARING FOR
ENGAGEMENT WORK WITH
PEOPLE LIVING IN CARE HOMES

Welcome to the Engagement Buffet!

Purpose
The Engagement Buffet has been developed primarily as a reflective tool, which can be used when you planning and preparing to carry out engagement work to gather the perspectives of people living in care homes.
It can also be used more generally to think about what is important to you in terms of engagement work with people living in care homes.

Origins
This document has been informed by a discussion which took place on Oct 4th 2022, as part of the Rights Made Real project.
Participants included. Amanda Tough (Care Inspectorate), Dr Frankie Greenwood (ECRED, University of Edinburgh) , Alyson McKechnie-Vale (Abbotsford Care), Geraldine Campbell, (Dementia Policy Scottish Government), Linda Stewart (Carrondale Care Home), Heather Molloy (NHSGGC Care Home Collaborative).

The focus of this discussion was 'Hearing and Including the Voice of Care Home Residents in Health & Social Care'.
Using a variety of creative methods, underpinned by the Appreciative Inquiry methodology, participants spoke of their joys, challenges and curiosities in relation to hearing and including the voice of care home residents.

Suggestions for Using this Document
There are 5 Dishes or Activities outlined in this document.

Each Dish can be engaged as a standalone activity, or you might want to try a pick-and-mix, or sample the whole buffet.

The dishes can be engaged with as a personal or group reflective activity.
As mentioned above, the focus is on reflection, and so the invitation is to approach each dish with a curiosity as to what the questions and prompts evoke in you, rather than feeling you need to arrive at a neat or final answer on the topics presented.

Dish 1: At Its Best- what would our engagement look like

When we think about our desire for the experience of participating in engagement work we might take it as a given that we desire for it to be inclusive and participatory. There may be other elements you would like for the engagement work depending on a range of factors including topic of exploration, participant group, setting for engagement, support available and skills of facilitators.

The boxes below propose some other elements of what we might desire for the 'engagement'- have a read through and see if there are one or more that stand out for you as being important for the 'engagement you are planning. There is also a blank space for you to add other words.

Experimental	Simple	Flexible	Replicable
Logical	Daring	Surprising	Focused
Inviting	Grounded	Jazzy	Natural
Lively	Affirming	Original	Spacious
Lavish	Reflective	(Positively) Disruptive	

You are now invited to reflect on what it might look like if the element/s you selected were brought to life in your engagement.
The example below is given for illustrative purposes.

| Element	1 way in which this element could be brought to life
Experimental	Have a selection of 4 or 5 different creative methods to draw on, and experiment in-the-moment with which method might work best

Dish 2: Points to Ponder

The following points raise some of the possible tensions that might emerge when facilitating engagement work. After reading through these points there is an invitation to do some further reflection on what comes up for you in relation to some of these points.

Ponder Point A.

Balancing 'finding out about what you would like to know' with 'incorporating room to follow what people want to talk about'

Ponder Point B.
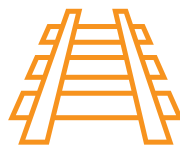
The importance to you (and/ or the team) of staying on track...... and feelings it evokes if things go off-piste

Ponder Point C.

Valuing the expertise and relationships that care home staff have with people living in care homes...... and not wishing to add further to their workload

Ponder Point D.

Not wanting to bring your own perspective to the engagement conversations in case this might steer the conversation in a certain direction ...... and sharing our own perspective tentatively as a way of building connection and exploring alternative perspectives

Are there further Ponder Points that are upfront for you in your engagement work.

Further Ponder Points to Add: _____

Delving Deeper

After reading through the Ponder Points is there one you would like to explore more deeply yourself, and/or with others.

Your Chosen Point to Ponder: _____
What is your sense of your perspective on this Point to Ponder?
If confusion is present, is it possible to say specifically what the confusion is in relation to?

What voices (your head, heart, colleagues, policy, literature) contribute to your perspective?

Are there other voices that you would like to bring into the mix or seek their perspective on this topic?

On a scale from 'certainty' (where you have landed on a solid perspective) to 'uncertainty' (where your perspective might shift and move depending on the context) where would you like to sit in relation to this point of ponder?

Uncertainty   Certainty

What might the impact be for you and others, of where you might sit in relation to this Point to Ponder?

Dish 3: Space and Time Continuum

A desire in engagement work might be to defy the laws of physics to expand the space and time available to do the work you would like to do! The questions below invite a consideration of hopes and possibilities in terms of the space and time available to gather perspectives of people living in care homes.

Space
What are your hopes for the physical space in which the engagement work will take place?
Much of this may not be within your control, what might be within your control in terms of creating a space that meets your hopes?

Beyond physical space, are there other hopes you carry in terms of 'space' and 'spaciousness' within the work?

Time

What are your hopes in relation to the pace of the work and the time over which the engagement work takes place?

Again there may be constraints in this area that are outwith your control- what do you know and what would you like to explore in terms of the most creative use of time available?
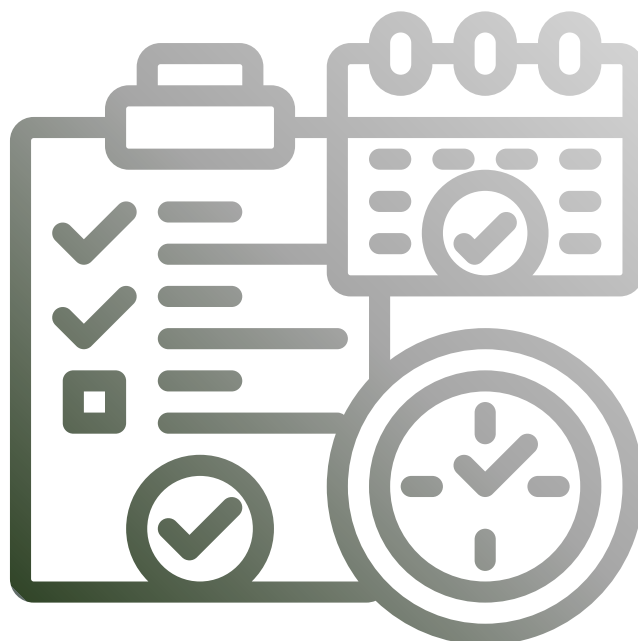
Dish 4: Magic 8 Rectangle

Our very own take on the Magic 8 ball- here we have the Magic 8 Rectangle! Below are some questions, curiosities and conundrums in relation to engagement work in care homes.

You are invited to read down through the list on the left.

- Select one question/curiosity/conundrum to focus on.
- Then look to the list on the right.
- Reading through the possible answers
- see what your instinctual answer is to the question/curiosity
- /conundrum that you selected to focus on
- You might wish to then reflect on this answer, on your own or with
- others.
- There are blanks spaces for you to add further questions/curiosities
- /conundrums and answers.

Other Options could include:

Going through each of the questions/curiosities/conundrums one by one and drawing a line between the prompts in the left hand side and your answer to this from the right hand side.

Placing each of the questions/curiosities/conundrums on an individual piece of paper, selecting one at random and using this (if relevant) as the basis for a group discussion on your engagement work.

Question/Curiosity/Conundrum	Answer
A lot of our work may be focused on exploring with an eye to the 'future', what if the focus was 'now'?	What's clear to me is …
How DO we find out what people who live in care homes would like us to be asking them?	Too soon to say, I need to ….
To what extent do we add our own interpretations to the data we gather?	This I'm sure about.
What would we like to find out from others who are doing engagement work?	My inkling is….
If our preparation for engagement work, was exactly as we would like it to be, what would this look like?	Someone who has part of the answer to this is ….
Care homes can have a transient participant group in terms of residents and staff, how might we account for this in our planning?	I'll need to ask the audience.
Would we like to celebrate more the agency shown by people living in care homes who choose not to participate when we invite them to engage?	Still hazy after all these years.
What would we like to say about what is possible in terms of involving people with later stage dementia in engagement work?	This question brings up another question about ….

Dish 5: Branding on a Budget!

This dish is slightly different to the other four, in that rather than this being a reflective exercise, Dish 5 presents some ideas in relation to spreading the word about your engagement work, and how this can be done in a way which captures people's attention.

Wordplay, metaphor, acronyms, idioms are all tools in developing branding slogans which can capture hearts and minds.
Is the branding, in this context meaning the key message people may pick up from how the engagement work is described, an important consideration for your engagement work?
If so, on the next page are some ideas, many of which might be familiar, some might be new, of how we might go about developing our branding. The ideas could be used as part of a collaborative brain-storming session on creating your 'brand'.

Building on Available Ideas

-Were there words, images, ideas that came up for you while doing the activity above that you would like to incorporate into your 'branding'?
-Does a quick Google search of top 100 songs and movies of the 1990's reap any rewards?
-Are there existing brands, for example names of perfume, clothing, design agencies that speak to you, and might connect with the people you will be engaging with?
-Flicking through a supermarket shelf magazine (i.e.no professional journals required) are there words, phrases, images that jump out as being potentially useful?

What's Next- Giving it a Go

From reading through the various Dishes

(I) is there 1 that you feel drawn to?

(ii) how would it feel to start by giving one Dish a go yourself, and using it as a personal reflective exercise?

(iii) Is there anything you imagine would be helpful when giving it a go with others?