

Introduction:

Supporting people to share their feedback on Care Opinion Ireland, Staff & Volunteer Resource Pack

This resource pack has been designed to help train and guide members of staff or volunteers through the process of supporting people sharing their feedback on Care Opinion. It provides both general information about Care Opinion and a step by step guide to supporting someone to share their feedback. It then has instructions to upload the feedback as a 'story' on the Care Opinion website on the story teller's behalf.

Volunteer coordinators or staff managers may wish to use this pack to train groups or individuals to take feedback from patients, service users or carers in a range of health and social care settings.

The pages in the resource pack are as follows:

1. Step one: Care Opinion FAQ's,
2. Step two: How can people share their story. Explains the two different ways that people can share their feedback,
3. Step three: How to take Stories: Information and Advice. Provides a step by step guide to taking someone's feedback, from beginning to end,
4. Step four: Taking a Story Form. This is the form to print out and use when taking a person's feedback to then share the story on the Care Opinion Website.
5. Step five: Submitting Stories to Care Opinion. A step by step guide to submitting a story on Care Opinion on an author's behalf.



Step 1. Care Opinion Ireland FAQ's

Before supporting somebody to share their story, you may find it helpful to read these frequently asked questions (FAQ's) about Care Opinion. These questions & answers should give you a good basic understanding of Care Opinion and help you to answer any questions that patients or service users may ask.

What is Care Opinion?

Care Opinion is a website which allows the public to share a story about their Health and/or social care experience in a safe and simple way. The website provides a platform which automatically sends stories to the right service/s. This allows them to respond to and learn from the feedback. There is more about Care Opinion's Vision, mission and values here.

<https://www.careopinion.org.uk/info/mission>

Who can share their story?

Anyone can share their story, and all stories shared are anonymous. Care Opinion asks authors to choose their own user name and doesn't share personal details. People feed back their thoughts about their own health/social care experience or the experience of someone they care for, a friend or a relative. Staff, volunteers and advocates are also able to share a story on behalf of a patient/service user.

What do you mean by "story"?

We ask people to share their experiences, positive, negative, or mixed in just the way that suits them. This feedback is different from a formal complaint or survey. We want to give people a voice and share this on our public website so that everyone can see it. Feedback can be about more than one service so that all the different people that read your story can see your whole experience.

Why are stories moderated?

Care Opinion reads all stories before they are published. If the moderation team are worried for any reason about a story going onto our website, we might get in contact with the story author before we publish their story. Care Opinion publishes nearly all stories but is also very careful to keep both authors and staff safe. More information about how this is done can be found here <https://www.careopinion.org.uk/info/moderation>

Who responds to stories?

Staff who provide the service/s will be invited to respond to a story as well as other organisations who are involved in delivering, commissioning or monitoring these services. The author of the story is then able to comment further. Members of the public are not able to respond to or comment on stories.

Is Care Opinion part of the HSE?

No, Care Opinion is an independent, not for profit social enterprise. It is independent from the HSE and other healthcare providers but works alongside all these services to support



them to learn from public feedback.

Who can see stories?

Once a story has been moderated and published, it becomes visible on the website for anyone to see. It will remain visible to the public on the Care Opinion website unless the author decides to withdraw their story. In some exceptional circumstances, Care Opinion will also withdraw the story.



Step 2. How can people share their story?

So that sharing feedback is easy and accessible to everyone, there are a few different ways that people can share their story on Care Opinion.

The 2 different options are:

1. Submitting story directly to the Care Opinion Ireland website:

This is the most common way that people share their story. We recommend that this is the best way to share stories for anyone who is able to. People simply need to go to careopinion.ie then click “[Tell your story](#)” and follow the simple steps to do so. Staff members/volunteers are able to support someone through this process, and the following sheets in this resource pack will explain and give instructions for this process.

2. Filling in a free-post Care Opinion Ireland feedback leaflet:

Most services that have a Care Opinion Subscription have access to a number of feedback leaflets. These leaflets are ideal for giving to patients/service users who do not have internet access or do not feel confident sharing their story using the website. The feedback leaflet allows people to write (or draw) their story on the form, answer a few simple questions e.g. name of service and postcode, and then simply seal the leaflet and pop it in the post. The leaflets are posted to the Care Opinion offices in the UK where the Care Opinion team will add the story to the website on the story teller's behalf, simple!

Supporting someone to share their story as a member of staff/volunteer

In addition, staff/volunteers can support people to share their story. The following steps in this resource pack will detail advice and instructions to support people to share their story.

Step 3. How to take Stories: Information and Advice

What is this step for?

This step will take you through the process of supporting someone to share their feedback. Please read through these pages carefully to prepare for taking feedback from patients/service users or carers.

How do I support someone to share their story on Care Opinion?

There are two ways to support someone to share their story on Care Opinion:

1. By sitting with the person at a computer or with an iPad & supporting them through the process to submit their story directly to the Care Opinion website.



2. If you do not have internet access, you can take notes using the “Taking a Story Form” (step 4) whilst you are sat with the story teller, before then submitting the story to Care Opinion on their behalf. (When you do have internet access.)

Before you begin:

It's important to consider and prepare for the following three aspects before starting to collect feedback...

Environment: You may be in a hospital, an office or a waiting room. It's important that the story teller and you feel comfortable, both with the conversation and the environment. So, it's helpful to find a quiet, safe space, where the story teller can talk openly and in confidence. You'll be taking feedback using the “taking a story form” (step 4) or with an iPad/computer, so you may want to find somewhere comfortable to sit too.

Introduction: Always introduce yourself and explain your role. Explain that you are collecting feedback about the health or social care organisation that you are working with. Explain that the feedback is important to the service, the staff that work there and health and social care commissioners, inspectors and regulators. These groups of people will be able to read this anonymous feedback on the Care Opinion website in order to monitor and improve care.

Explanation: Explain what Care Opinion is. For this, you may find it helpful to have the FAQ page with you (step 1). You should explain that Care Opinion is an independent, public website, that makes it safe and simple for people to share honest, anonymous feedback about their care. Care Opinion supports the HSE and other healthcare services to learn from feedback and give patients and service users a voice. Care Opinion sends the feedback to the service and invites the service to respond to people's stories publicly, to learn from feedback and improve services for everyone.

Step by step conversation guide:

1. **Introduce who you are**, and start to explain why you are collecting feedback (as explained above). At this point, it's helpful to try and get an idea about how much time the person is comfortable about giving. See example below:

“Hi there, my name is... I'm talking to patients today on behalf of... who really want to hear about your experience of care and treatment at... Would you like to tell me about your experience here, whether it's been positive or negative? This will be your anonymous feedback and will go on Care Opinion which is a public website independent from the NHS.”

2. **There are no specific questions that need to be asked**, but if the person needs some help, then clear, open ended questions can be asked to find out what's important to them about their care, and what had an impact, whether that was positive or negative. Remember the



purpose of sharing feedback is to share information that is of value to the service because it will help them know what they are doing really well and/or where they need to improve. See example below:

“During your treatment, what really stood out to you that was helpful?
Were there any parts that could be improved? Do you have any suggestions?”

3. **Simple, open ended questions** are really helpful, don't be afraid to ask “why?”. The most helpful stories are the ones that go into detail. See example below:

“You said you felt safe and well cared for, what was it that made you feel that way?”

4. **There may be key themes** that people wish to discuss, or the service you are collecting feedback for may have asked you to collect feedback about a certain theme on a particular day, such as waiting times or group therapy. Remember that each person will be motivated to share their story for different reasons, whether it's because they have personally been affected by an experience of care, or because they wish to comment on service changes locally or nationally. *All this feedback is helpful and important.*

If the story teller can't think of much to say, ideas for themes to comment on can be suggested, such as:

Communication	Staff	Cleanliness
Appointment Wait	Empathy	Explanations
Waiting room	Environment	Treatment

5. **The Story Teller's Details** You will need to ask for a few details from the story teller, these details are important and it is very helpful if you explain to them that none of these details will be passed on to the service and stories shared are completely anonymous. The details required are written on the “taking a story form” for you to fill in. If you have an iPad/computer, the story telling process will prompt you to fill these details in as you go through. Here's a little more info about the details we require so that you can answer any questions the story teller may have:



Why do we ask for a...

- **Username:** All stories are anonymous and so we require a username, this can be almost anything as long as it isn't their real name, or offensive. e.g. "rugbyfan33".
 - **Town/County:** This is kept confidential. This information helps us identify the nearest possible services that may have been accessed.
 - **Name of service/s:** So that the feedback is sent to the right service & staff, Care Opinion need to know the exact names of the service/s that the story is about. Remember, a story can be about multiple services throughout someone's care journey.
 - **Email Address:** We require an email address so we that we can tell the story teller when their story is published, or has a response as well as to signpost them if needed. Again, this information is kept confidential. If they do not have an email address, simply write their username and then [@example.com](#) e.g. [rugbyfan33@example.com](#)
 - **Consent:** The story teller must have consented to their story being published on Care Opinion as it is a public website. Once their story is published it will be visible to anyone on the website. (They can however withdraw their story at any time should they wish).
6. **Thankyou.** Finally, remember to thank the story teller and explain what will happen next. See example below:

"Thank you so much for taking your time to share your feedback today. We'll be adding your story to the Care Opinion site soon and you'll receive an email once your story has been published & again if the service responds to your story. Do come back to the website to respond further to your story, or add a new story in future"

When you have read through all the information on these pages, you can begin to take feedback from people. Remember to use the "Taking a story form" to collect feedback. After that you can use the filled in form and the instructions in step 5 to submit the story to the Care Opinion website.



Taking a Story in Person

What is Care Opinion Ireland?

A free, confidential website run by an independent not for profit organisation called Care Opinion Ireland. The website encourages the public to share their views and experiences about the health and care they have recently received.

This feedback can then be viewed by the public to see what people think their local services and also by the service providers, allowing them to comment on the experience and make changes to improve the service that they provide.

Who took the story		Date of story	
Service		Month of treatment	

Is the author: Patient? Relative? Carer? Friend? Service user? Other, please specify
Town/County

What year were they born in?		Male <input type="checkbox"/>
User name (Not your real name)		Female <input type="checkbox"/>
Email address:		

Explain that their email address is used to notify them when their opinion is published and if they get a reply. We do not share emails with anyone else unless there are safeguarding reasons

Ideas for questions...

- What were the best things about how you were treated?
- What could have been better?
- Are there any staff you would like to thank?

Must be read to the author to gain consent

“You consent to your story being published on Care Opinion and shared online to help learning and change. You understand that your email address will not be shared. For more information You can go to careopinion.org.uk/info/consent.”

Author consent given:- _____ Consent received by:- _____

Remember to Thank the story tell and inform them what will happen next

“Thank you so much for taking your time to share your feedback today. We’ll be adding your story to the Care Opinion site soon and you’ll receive an email once your story has been published & again if the service responds to your story. Do come back to the website to respond further to your story, or add a new story in future”



Step 5.

Submitting stories to Care Opinion Ireland

What is this step for?

This step is for staff/volunteers whose role it is to submit stories that have been taken using the “Taking a story form” (step 4). You may have taken these stories yourself or you may have been given some of these forms to submit as stories. Either way, this page will take you through the process, step by step, of submitting a story to the Care Opinion, website on behalf of the Story teller.

1. Firstly, go to careopinion.ie (we recommend using Google Chrome as your internet browser)
2. Ensure that there is no one currently logged in to the site (if no one is logged in, it will say “Log in” in the top right-hand corner of the screen). If someone is logged in, simply click “log out” next to the person’s name, before moving on to the next step. If you are adding multiple stories, ensure you always log out before adding the next story.
3. Click the [“Tell your story”](#) tab/button, under the Care Opinion logo on the [home page](#). This will take you to the Story submission page.
4. Then, go through the steps as prompted. It may be helpful to put yourself in the story teller’s shoes when writing up their story. Firstly, add a title that simply explains what the feedback is about. E.g. “My first pregnancy scan experience” or “Problems accessing support”.
5. Then, use the notes on taking a story form to add the feedback. If you are apprehensive about doing so, you may find it helpful to read through some of the stories already on Care Opinion first e.g. the featured stories on the home page. If the story is quite long, you may prefer to write it up in a word document first, then you can copy and pasting it into the box.
6. Once you have written the story, you then need to select who the story teller is from the drop-down list. As you are submitting the story on the story teller’s behalf, you should select the option that best describes the story teller themselves e.g. patient/service user/relative.
7. Then, enter the person’s postcode. If they don’t have a postcode you can enter the postcode of the service, the feedback is about.
8. Next, enter which conditions, tests or treatments the story is about, these should be one or two words each, and you can add as many or as few as you like e.g. asthma, blood test.
9. Then, use the drop-down menu to select the appropriate time frame for when the story happened e.g. last month, ongoing.
10. Next, you need to select the service or services the story is about. Some services may be suggested, tick the appropriate service/s if it is there, if not, type the services/s name/s in box yourself. E.g. the specific name of the hospital, G.P surgery or community service etc.

If you aren’t entirely sure what the name of the service is, write in what you think it is called, its location, or any other helpful info you have and Care Opinion moderators will find the correct service.

11. Next, you’ll be asked to add some tags, these are one or two words descriptions of what was good, what could be improved and how the story teller felt. Again, you can add as many or as few of these as you like e.g. communication, waiting time, nervous.
12. In the next step, you need to enter the story teller’s email address (this is so that when the service responds to their feedback, we can send them an email to let them know, so that they can read it and comment). If they don’t have an email address, simply write their username and then [@example.com](#) e.g. [sunny53@example.com](#)



13. Then add the story teller's username. All feedback is anonymous, so it's important that this isn't a real name. If they did not give a username or a nickname, you can make one up using neutral words and numbers e.g. 'football72' or 'peach58'
14. Finally, select the appropriate age of the story teller and click "Accept terms and sign your story"
15. The next screen will show a green tick box that says "Thanks *username*! Your story has been submitted successfully"
16. The story has now been submitted, there are two questions you can answer below, however this is not required, so all you need to do now is click "**Log out**" in the top right-hand corner of the screen and then you have finished and are ready to add the next story!

If you have any concerns or questions at all, we are always at the other end of the phone and more than happy to help! Just give us a call on 01 254 9390 and we'll be able to answer any question you have.

End of Staff and volunteer Resource Pack

