

Provider Engagement arrangements

The Provider Engagement Network (PEN) is open to all independent sector providers of adult health and social care services, delivered in Devon. It includes providers in the private, voluntary and community and social enterprise sectors who contribute to supporting people in Devon to live the lives they want to lead, whatever their capabilities and support needs.

It is open to providers of all sizes, from micro businesses, small and medium sized enterprises, to regional or national services, which are delivered in Devon; regardless of whether or not you have a contract with Devon County Council or with the NHS in Devon.

Devon County Council and the NHS value the significant and crucial contribution that the independent sector plays and are committed to working in partnership with you. The PEN is our main way to engage with you, to share information and to find out more about your businesses and issues that affect your work and the wider health and social care market. It is the means by which we develop our commissioning, procurement and operational approaches to reflect the insight, advice and vision of providers. DCC is, however, also investing in a team of Contracts and Business Relations Officers, which will work alongside the NHS Market Development Managers to build relationships with individual providers.

Our shared vision, with the NHS, is to support self - reliance and independence to enable people to live the lives they choose. We are keen to work collaboratively with you to achieve this and to ensure that we have the right mix of services and sufficient opportunities available, to meet the varied needs of people in Devon.

The PEN offers several different levels of engagement with providers:

- **PEN website**
- **PENPal** - a bi-monthly newsletter
- **Provider Engagement Network meetings** - The PEN Reference Group meets on a monthly basis in Exeter. This is a forum where Devon County Council & Health colleagues come together with provider representatives (<https://www.devon.gov.uk/providerengagementnetwork/get-involved/>), elected by providers to ensure sectoral and geographic coverage, to work collaboratively and discuss key areas of business. The meetings allow the sharing of the strategic direction of Commissioners, the discussion of hot topics, general challenges and constraints. This forum will have a key role to play in developing the MPS with us. More information about the PEN and the PEN Reference Group is available on this link - <https://www.devon.gov.uk/providerengagementnetwork/>
- **Locality meetings** - These meetings discuss issues affecting the market and emerging policy at a local level. The meetings include discussions that involve all providers as well as an opportunity to work in specific sectors to discuss differing issues affecting that sector. Providers raise questions, air their views and opinions, network and share best practice with provider colleagues and Commissioners
- **Conferences** - A Conference is held at least once a year, based on a theme which has come from the priorities and specific issues and/or concerns raised by the provider representatives, through wider provider engagement or from Commissioners. For example, the March 2018 conference was titled "Stepping up to the challenge" and it looked at improved productivity and the last event in May 2019 had a focus on equality and diversity. All providers on our database are invited to these events.
- **Bespoke Engagement Events** – around specific topics such as proposed new contractual arrangements, emerging policy, promoting independence

For more information about how PEN works and opportunities to get involved, contact socialcarebusinessrelations-mailbox@devon.gov.uk

The Business Relations Team is responsible for many of the Provider Engagement arrangements and plays a key role in market shaping which is a requirement under the 2015 Care Act. The team acts as a conduit of information and support between external providers and service commissioners to encourage collaboration and the development of a shared understanding of sufficiency and local social care markets. The teams that are available to support providers are shown on this link - <https://www.devon.gov.uk/providerengagementnetwork/about/>

The Quality Assurance and Improvement team (QAIT) is focused on monitoring the quality of provision against nationally prescribed standards and County Council requirements. This team works with providers to help improve the quality of services. The members of the team are shown on this link - <https://www.devon.gov.uk/providerengagementnetwork/about/qait/>

The South West Councils Portal (www.supplyingthesouthwest.org.uk) enables you to view all opportunities offered by the South West Councils. The Portal is linked to a system called ProContract that is a secure hosted electronic tendering system. ProContract provides a user friendly, intuitive system to advertise all open tender and quotation opportunities. It also includes a tender submission wizard to guide suppliers through the submission process. The Portal/ProContract is free to join.