

# A guide to working with hospitals

There are lots of different types of hospitals in the UK - general, district, teaching, community, specialised and more. Many of them have outpatient clinics and public areas with shops and cafes where you could run outreach sessions or give out leaflets.

## Run sessions in your local hospital

If you're looking to set up some new outreach sessions, you could set up a couple of laptops or tablets at your local hospital, and show patients or relatives what they can find on NHS Choices - like eating more healthily or managing their condition. The session could be run in the waiting area at a related clinic, for example a hypertension and diabetes clinic or a smoking cessation clinic. Hospital support staff can help you engage people by advertising your event/sessions, and even signing people up on your behalf.

## Request links on their website

Why not check out your local hospital websites and ask them to put a link on their site to your centre or to the health courses and health resources on Learn My Way?

## Get in their newsletters

Write an article for inclusion in your local hospital's newsletter. It could be about a specific event at the hospital or just to let them know about your centre and the support available. Most will have a hospital newspaper for staff, members, patients, visitors and volunteers.

Most Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) will also have some sort of hospital brief to primary care staff. These usually take the form of a monthly or bi-monthly newsletter for GPs and other primary care staff. Ask if you can have an article in a relevant edition to talk about the work you're doing in the community.

## Put posters up in waiting areas, receptions or foyers

Hospitals may be able to help promote the work you're doing in your centre by putting up posters and having a stack of leaflets on the desk or in an information rack. Some hospitals also have TV screens that they can upload local community information on to, so why not speak to the Communications Team to find out more?

## Create referral relationships

Doctors, nurses and other clinical staff often provide people with advice on their condition and they know there's a wealth of information online. Make sure that they, and their support staff, have supplies of leaflets to give to patients, and that they know where you are and that people can come to you for help improving their digital skills, so they can manage their health online.

## Work with community care - clinics & services

Many hospitals now provide a lot of care out in the community. Liaise with your local hospital to find out what locations might be suitable for you to attend and/or run outreach sessions to support people to improve their skills in the community.

## Work with the Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS)

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) offers confidential advice, support and information on health-related matters. They provide a point of contact for patients, their families and their carers. Why not make contact with your local PALS and ensure that they are aware of your centre and the services you offer?