



Authenticity to Action Conference

Relational co-production

7 July 2026

**Hosted by Comensus, University of Lancashire, Preston,
Lancashire, UK.**

Book of Abstracts

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Message from the Conference committee

We are delighted that you can join us for the 8th International Online Authenticity to Action conference, celebrating and reflecting on service user, carer and patient involvement in health and social care education and research. The conference is co-produced by a committee of Comensus* volunteer members, the Comensus staff team and academic colleagues who together attend regular planning meetings to organise the event and screen abstracts. We hope you will find the content stimulating and highly pertinent for your learning and development over the next academic year and beyond. As always, we look forward to meeting you in person, to develop new working relationships and friendships for future collaborations.

With warm regards from the Conference committee: Janet Garner, Chris Essen, Jean Daly-Lynn, Lesley Scott, Rhonda Riachi, Aneela Zaheer-ali, Angela Melling, Sue McClenaghan, Alison Elliott, Kizzy Felstead and Julia Johnson.

Background and aims of the Authenticity to Action Conference

The Authenticity to Action conference was established in 2007, three years after the inception of the Comensus group. Its aim is to showcase excellence and service user, carer and patient involvement in health and social care education. This year we focus on the following themes:

- **Relational co-production** – how we nurture and maintain good relationships for co-creation and partnership working
- **Showcasing new innovations** in education for service user and carer involvement (e.g. simulation, technology and artificial intelligence)
- **Celebrating the wins and addressing the challenges** to ensure service user and carer involvement is practically integrated
- **Diverse ‘ways of knowing’/epistemic diversity**, bringing together different perspectives to enhance learning.
- **Support for service users and carers and facilitators**, including training, development, practical or peer support
- **Creative arts-based approaches** to create space for transformational learning and knowledge creation through lived experience

Thank you to our committee of reviewers who spent many hours reading and commenting on a diverse selection of submissions. We hope you will enjoy the content of the day and engage in collaborative discussions on what is working well and how we can improve where appropriate.

**Comensus is the name of our patient and public involvement group which has been part of the University of Lancashire for over 20 years.*

There follows a list of all presentation and workshop abstracts for the conference starting with our Keynote speakers’ abstracts.

Keynote speakers and their biographies

Time	Summary of presentation
8.30-9.00	Online registration and orientation Main session link for Introduction and keynotes – https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/33927324758243?p=DToDPFnadkZrfGtSIw Main Teams site link- General Authenticity to Action Conference 2026
Tuesday 7 July 09.00-09.20	Welcome to the conference – Pro Vice Chancellor Janice Allan Professor Janice Allan joined the University as Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic Leadership) in April 2024. In her current role, Professor Allan provides strategic leadership to the schools and oversees the institutional portfolio, establishing a strong academic voice and culture of empowered accountability. She is also the institutional lead for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and is co-leading the implementation of the newly approved Belonging Strategy. Dr Janet Garner, Comensus Co-ordinator- Introduction to Comensus & the Authenticity to Action conference. Janet Garner is the lead and Co-ordinator of the renowned Comensus group and has worked with the group since 2009. With experience of facilitating involvement in Nursing and Allied Health education as well as Social Work, Pharmacy & Medical education, Janet completed a doctorate with a participatory research team of public involvement members, who are now working together to further develop capacity for community-led research at the University of Lancashire.
Tuesday 7 July 09.20-10.05	Keynote: Dr Jenni Brooks, Associate Professor of Social Policy, Sheffield Hallam University UK. Dr Jenni Brooks is Associate Professor of Social Policy at Sheffield Hallam University. Her research centres on how the personalisation of social care affects older people, and the implications of the social care system relying on informal carers, both for carers themselves, and for people without them. Her current main focus is on the experience of ageing without children, particularly in relation to people with dementia who live alone and who have no informal support. Jenni's research is always collaborative, involving people with lived experience and relevant professionals in all kinds of different ways.

	Keynote title: When bureaucracy gets in the way: public involvement in universities. We all know that when people with lived experience are genuinely involved in education and research in meaningful ways, both get better. We also know that university bureaucracy can sometimes actively hinder public involvement. Finance processes are confusing; payment forms are inaccessible. Even finding the right person to speak to can feel impossible. These things are boring, and they're not what public involvement should be about. But they take time, erode relationships between university staff and public collaborators, and they get in the way of the real work. Projects suffer when everyone is frustrated. There is hope though! This presentation will draw on recent research about institutional barriers to public involvement in universities – what they are, how they happen, and what good practice is out there – to invite us all to think about the way forward.
Thursday 7 July 13.15-14.00	Keynote speakers: <i>Helen Casey, Associate Head of School for Social Work at The Open University (OU), Cecilia Heule is a researcher and a teacher at Lund University, Sweden, Peter Beresford OBE is one of the founding partners of PowerUs the international network of educators, service users and carers</i>  Title: From Gaps to Change: Evaluating the Impact of cocreated and partnership led social work education The Gap-mending approach was first introduced at the Authenticity to Action conference in 2014. (Beresford and Heule). This innovative approach enables students, practitioners, teachers, people with lived experiences of services and researchers, to reflect on what, in social work practice, increases, maintains or mends gaps between professionals and those in receipt of support. Mend the Gap programmes are co-produced and challenge existing structures for involvement, focussing on outcomes – what difference does involvement make? Over a decade on we reflect on the strength, reach and impact of this approach that challenges traditional hierarchies and has changed how universities internationally engage people with lived experience in the education of future social workers.

	Examples will be shared from the UK and Sweden that demonstrate how the gap-mending approach is: • Rooted in social work values • Based on co-production principles • Inclusive of marginalised individuals and communities • Transforms relationships from hierarchical to relational • Is outcome focussed Presenters are active co-ordinators of PowerUs, an established network since 2012 working with Higher Education Institutions and community partner organisations in over 20 countries , who engage in gap Mending practices. PowerUs PowerUs
Tuesday 7 July 15.30-16.30	Co-producing new standards for involvement in education Chaired by Chris Essen, Rhonda Riachi, Janet Garner, Jean Daly-Lynn, Lesley Scott, Aneela Zaheerali, Liz Lefroy (Developers of Users and Carers in Education network) This symposium will draw together three or four members of the DUCIE network to reflect with each other, and with conference participants, on some of the rewards and challenges of making coproduction work. There are currently no universally accepted standards for public involvement in professional education. Frequent reference is instead made to models such as the Ladder of Involvement (Tew et al., 2004), usually divorced from its original context, to describe an ideal of patient, service user and carer involvement that is based largely on their presence (or not) within certain course processes. A recent synthesis of previous involvement literature has used the term “pedagogical liminality” (uncertain or ambiguous educational status) when describing the “lack of genuine institutionalization” of involvement in professional education, resulting from institutions having no “reasoned structure” for its implementation (Gross & Ruelle, 2025). For instance, a systematic review found that teaching and learning involving the public is seldom underpinned by a pedagogical theory (framework of teaching methods, principles, and practices) that accounts for its impact on student learning (Bennett-Weston et al., 2023). Alongside these structural gaps, involvement facilitators endeavour to accommodate the diverse needs and perspectives of patients, service users and carers, in ways that may seem incompatible with a highly structured approach to education. Indeed, a recent synthesis of qualitative research suggests that “sustainable and inclusive patient partnerships require relational and structural support” (Barradell et al., 2025). The Developers of Users and Carer in Education (DUCIE) network would like to invite delegates to share a discussion about some important relational and structural considerations when developing universal standards for public

	involvement in professional education. That is, standards that institutionally embed inclusive and sustainable partnerships for involvement practice.
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Full programme 7 July 2026

Date & Time	Session	Venue
Tuesday 7th July 2026 (via Teams)		
08.30-09.00	Online registration and orientation General Authenticity to Action conference 2026	Main room
09.00-09.20	Welcome to the University of Lancashire Janice Allan, Pro Vice Chancellor of Academic Leadership, University of Lancashire UK. Welcome to the Authenticity to Action conference & Housekeeping. Janet Garner, Service User and Carer Involvement Co-ordinator of Comensus group, University of Lancashire UK.	Main room
09.20-10.05	Keynote speaker Jenni Brooks, Associate Professor of Social policy, Sheffield Hallam University UK, Pete Atkins Carers UK and Bournemouth University PIER Officer and Eleni Chambers. Title: <i>When bureaucracy gets in the way: public involvement in universities</i> We all know that when people with lived experience are genuinely involved in education and research in meaningful ways, both get better. We also know that university bureaucracy can sometimes actively hinder public involvement. Finance processes are confusing; payment forms are inaccessible. Even finding the right person to speak to can feel impossible. These things are boring, and they're not what public involvement should be about. But they take time, erode relationships between university staff and public collaborators, and they get in the way of the real work.	Main room

	Projects suffer when everyone is frustrated. There is hope though! This presentation will draw on recent research about institutional barriers to public involvement in universities – what they are, how they happen, and what good practice is out there – to invite us all to think about the way forward.	
10.05-10.15	Screen break	
10.15-11.15	Parallel sessions 1	
1.a	A. Support for service users & carers in education Showcases. <i>Talk educate listen – Bewley, T.</i> 1. <i>Supporting Relational Co-production Through the Professional Learning and Development of Service Users and Carers at the University of Hull – Lilie, Zaheer-ali, Bridgeman.</i> 2. <i>Creating Inclusive Involvement: How Co-Production Turned Feedback into Action - Griffiths et al.</i>	Break out room A
1.b	Simulation/Role play/Lived experience in education. Showcases 1. <i>Embracing lived experience -meaningful learning through co-delivered simulation- Lowe et al.</i> 2. <i>Integrating service user involvement into the assessment of readiness for practice for Social Work students - Heanue & Herbert, University of Huddersfield.</i> 3. <i>Winning friends and influencing people -Wilkinson & Forrester VIP forum Lancashire UK.</i>	Break out room B
11.15-11.30	Screen break	
11.30-12.30	Parallel sessions 2	
2.a	A. Creative arts-based approaches for education & research - Showcases 1. <i>Creative engagement for personalised care – Bond Butterworth & Whittaker (LSCFT)</i> 2. <i>Moving Together: Insights from public involvement in research with adolescents- Ying-Chih Chen, Edge Hill University Uk.</i>	Break out room A

2.b	Relational co-production in practice 1. <i>Co-producing Transitional Care: A Collaborative, Trauma-informed approach to supporting a young person moving from CAMHS to Adult Services</i> – Turner & Hoyle (Leeds and York NHS Trust) 2. <i>Relational Co-production in Practice: Exploring the Lived Experience of Illicit Prescribed Medication Use in Prison</i> – Bi-Mohammed, York St John University UK.	Break out room B
12.30-13.15	Lunch	
13.15-14.00	Keynote speaker 2 <i>From Gaps to Change: Evaluating the Impact of cocreated and partnership led social work education</i> Casey Heule & Beresford The Gap-mending approach was first introduced at the Authenticity to Action conference in 2014. (Beresford and Heule). This innovative approach enables students, practitioners, teachers, people with lived experiences of services and researchers, to reflect on what, in social work practice, increases, maintains or mends gaps between professionals and those in receipt of support. Mend the Gap programmes are co-produced and challenge existing structures for involvement, focussing on outcomes – what difference does involvement make? Over a decade on we reflect on the strength, reach and impact of this approach that challenges traditional hierarchies and has changed how universities internationally engage people with lived experience in the education of future social workers.	
14.00-14.15	Screen break	
14.15	Parallel sessions 3	
3.a	A. Support for service users & carers in education 1. <i>Practical Guides to Patient Involvement in Health and Social Care Education</i>- Towle Kline & Young (UBC Canada) 2. <i>You'll talk to the person that you think understands you': Perspectives of 10–13-year-olds on health and care services</i>	Break out room A

	<i>in Bristol</i> – a showcase led by Anne Johnson, University of West of England	
3.b	B. Creative arts-based approaches for education and research Workshop <i>ACTIVE co-creation of an educational dramatic resource</i> – Carruthers & Mckeown (Uni of Lancashire)	Break out room B
15.15-15.30	Screen break	
15.30-16.30	Co-production workshop session Plenary session-Co-production of standards for involvement in education – DUCIE facilitator network Daly-Lynn, Essen, Garner, Lefroy, Riachi Scott, Zaheer-ali. There are currently no universally accepted standards for public involvement in professional education. Frequent reference is instead made to models such as the Ladder of Involvement (Tew et al., 2004), usually divorced from its original context, to describe an ideal of patient, service user and carer involvement that is based largely on their presence (or not) within certain course processes. The Developers of Users and Carer in Education (DUCIE) network would like to invite delegates to share a discussion about some important relational and structural considerations when developing universal standards for public involvement in professional education. That is, standards that institutionally embed inclusive and sustainable partnerships for involvement practice.	Main room
16.45-17.00	Close, thank yous & feedback. J Garner & Conference Committee	

Full list of abstracts with biographies in session order

**1A. Theme-Supporting
service users and carers**

Oral presentations

1A. 1Talk educate listen -Bewley, T.

The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the urgent need for innovative and inclusive communication strategies, particularly in health and social care education. While students often had access to resources like personal tutors and wellbeing services during lockdowns, service users and carers frequently found themselves isolated and unsupported. This disparity highlighted a critical gap in engagement and support within the sector. In response The "Talk Educate Listen" (TEL) initiative addresses the critical need for inclusive communication in health and social care education.

Initially launched as online drop-in sessions for service users and carers, TEL has evolved to include student health and social care professionals in themed discussions every four to six weeks. These sessions provide a safe space for sharing lived experiences, fostering empathy, and bridging the gap between theoretical learning and real-world practice. By engaging with authentic narratives on topics like informal caregiving and diverse health experiences, students gain invaluable insights that enhance their communication skills, empathy, and professional competence. Research by Jobling and Sayuri li (2024) and Bewley (2025) underscores the transformative impact of integrating service users' perspectives into professional education, noting improved learning outcomes and even organizational change. Despite challenges such as technological barriers and inconsistent participation, TEL's adaptability ensures its continued relevance.

As financial pressures grow in higher education, this cost-effective model offers a sustainable approach to embedding lived experiences into training, ultimately preparing compassionate and skilled professionals for the complexities of modern health and social care environments.

References

- Bewley, T. (2025) Involving patients & caregivers in student nurses' education in India – a qualitative study, *Teaching and Learning in Nursing*, Volume 20, Issue 3, 2025, Pages e597-e602, ISSN 1557-3087, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.teln.2024.12.003>.
(<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S155730872400266X>)
- Jobling, H., & Sayuri li, S. (2024). The Impact of Service User Involvement in Health and Social Care Education: A Scoping Review. *Practice*, 36(3), 193–211. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09503153.2023.224841>

Talk educate listen

<https://teams.live.com/l/community/FDAF1UaRJWKulwQys>

<https://linktr.ee/talkeducatelisten>

Antoinette Bewley (Toni)

Antoinette, widely known as Toni, is a dedicated nurse with over 40 years of experience spanning acute, complex, and community children's services, along with roles in adult care. For the past 25 years, she has focused on higher education, passionately advocating for the inclusion of service users' and carers' voices in health and social care education.

Her career has included teaching opportunities in India and China, inspiring her doctoral research on involving service users and carers in nursing education in India. Following financial challenges in UK universities and her acceptance of voluntary redundancy, Toni has embraced new ventures, including voluntary work with the child death helpline.

She holds an honorary lecturer contract with Liverpool University, connecting student nurses there with counterparts in India via webinars. Additionally, she serves as an associate professor at a nursing college in India.

Her commitment to amplifying the voices of service users and carers led to the creation of the Talk Educate Listen group, a platform for mutual sharing and learning. Toni's work continues to bridge global communities, ensuring the authentic perspectives of service users remain central to health and social care education.

1A.2.

Title: Supporting Relational Co-production Through the Professional Learning and Development of Service Users and Carers at the University of Hull

The involvement of service users and carers (SUCs) in Health and Social Work education is increasingly understood as a relational and co-productive process that enhances learning, teaching, and curriculum design within UK higher education. Relational co-production emphasises trust, reciprocity, shared power, and sustained partnerships between people with lived experience and academic staff.

The SUC group within the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Hull includes individuals with lived experiences of trauma, migration, long-term health conditions, and the impacts of social and economic deprivation. SUCs contribute across the student lifecycle, including student selection, teaching, learning and assessment, curriculum development, and programme management. This presentation explores how relational co-production has been intentionally supported through

	professional learning and development, enabling SUCs to participate as confident and valued partners. Feedback from SUCs identified their need to develop confidence, pedagogical understanding, and self-efficacy, alongside addressing barriers arising from variable digital literacy. Rather than adopting deficit-based training models, a relational, flexible approach was developed that prioritised mutual learning, responsiveness, and inclusion. Co-produced professional development opportunities, including teaching development workshops and tailored digital skills support, were implemented to strengthen relationships, promote belonging, and support equitable participation. Drawing on SUC feedback and reflective practice, this presentation will share practical insights into nurturing relational co-production, addressing power dynamics, and sustaining meaningful partnerships. The learning shared will be relevant to educators and institutions seeking to embed inclusive, relational approaches to involvement across Health and Social Work education. Authors Dr Catherine Lilie Dr Aneela Zaheer Ali Kate Bridgeman Biographies Outstanding
1A. Relational co-production Beth Griffiths, G Dudley, K Phelps, J Burgess, N Davies, A Hodges	<u>1A.3 Creating Inclusive Involvement: How Co-Production Turned Feedback into Action</u> Health volunteers from Swansea University’s Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) service bring valuable lived experience and knowledge to health and social care education. However, their involvement can only happen when university systems and environments are accessible and responsive. This oral presentation describes a co-produced initiative that addressed accessibility barriers faced by health volunteers. In 2025, a volunteer raised concerns about accessibility with university staff. In response, the PPI team established a Volunteer Accessibility Working Group, bringing together volunteers and staff from across the university.

	The group aimed to improve communication and transparency around accessibility, create clear ways for volunteers and visitors to report concerns, and influence wider university strategy. • Regular meetings helped the group identify barriers quickly and agree practical solutions. • Actions included detailed accessibility audits carried out by AccessAble, new feedback routes using QR codes and online forms, and improved links between the PPI coordinator and estates teams to resolve issues such as lift failures promptly. The PPI team also strengthened opportunities for volunteers to contribute to development and decision-making. Volunteer representatives have a pathway to contribute to Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) board discussions, ensuring concerns can be raised and addressed. This presentation highlights how collaborative working can move beyond consultation towards shared problem-solving, helping to create fairer, more inclusive involvement for everyone. We would welcome the opportunity to share this work with a wider audience and show how strong collaboration can lead to positive change, even during times of financial constraint. <u>Biographies:</u> <u>Beth Griffiths</u> is a registered nurse with 45 years of experience and currently a Senior Lecturer in Advanced Practice at Swansea University. She is passionate about high-quality patient care and strongly believes that embedding the patient voice across higher education teaching enriches healthcare students' learning and supports person-centred practice. <u>Gareth Dudley</u> has served as the Administrator for Swansea University's Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) service since 2022. In this role, he has been instrumental in expanding the service to include more than 140 health volunteers, who contribute to the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Science and support a broad range of healthcare programmes. He takes great pride in the service's development and achievements in recent years, particularly its expansion across the Faculty, and in shaping a clear strategic direction that will continue to deliver value to Swansea University in the years ahead. <u>Kerensa Phelps</u> is a former healthcare worker turned disability advocate. Through her roles with charities such as Swansea Disability Forum and The Wheelchair Collective, she helps to amplify the voices of other disabled people, both in her community and across the UK. She uses this feedback, and my own lived experience, to inform policy and improve accessibility for everyone.
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	<u>Jill Burgess</u> is an award-winning businesswoman and former international travel expert, now retired and active as an adviser across key organisations in the Swansea Bay region. She is a Lay Member of the Court of Swansea University, contributing to its governance. She previously served for 12 years as a Lay Member of the Standards Committee for City and County of Swansea, and is a Super Lay Member of the Wales Research Medical Ethics Committee. <u>Alan Hodges</u> is a former HMRC employee with a distinguished 45-year career, during which he held a variety of roles, including Tax Inspector and, for over 15 years, Data Analyst. He has a strong interest in technology and its potential to improve healthcare outcomes for both younger and older generations. Recently, Alan delivered a lecture to students on how technology can be used to support and enhance personal health. In addition to his professional background, he is actively engaged in medical research, having contributed to several studies in recent years. He is currently a member of Swansea University's PEER Group. <u>Noel Davies</u> is a retired Welsh Congregational minister, who spent many years in national and academic roles as well as in local ministry. After retirement, he completed an MSc by Research in the Swansea School of Medicine. He brings a concern for the relationship between churches and their communities, and between medical science and theology, nationally and internationally. He brings recent experience, as a patient, of a range of NHS medical specialisms. He hopes that these perspectives (and his fluency in Welsh and English) can inform students' training in medicine, health care and life sciences.
1b Simulation/Role play/Lived experience in education	1b.1 Embracing lived experience - meaningful learning through co-delivered simulation. Laura Lowe, Gerald Maiello & May Contain Nuts Theatre Company May Contain Nuts is a theatre company made up of people with lived experience of using mental health services. In 2019 the University of Hertfordshire collaborated with May Contain Nuts to develop a Therapeutic Communication module for mental health student nurses that included a series of authentic simulation sessions to enable students to practice their communication skills. The simulation scenarios were co-developed between academics and the theatre company, basing some on their lived experiences.

These sessions help students to practice their communication skills in a safe, but authentic environment and receive meaningful feedback from people with lived experience. Students find these sessions powerful and report that they have helped them to focus more on the individual rather than their diagnosis. In response to student feedback, these sessions now run weekly and have extended to other modules to incorporate more simulation and teaching by people with lived experience.

In the presentation, we will share further information about the organisation of these sessions and share critical reflection and feedback on the impact of these sessions, which we have themed below:

Student themes included:

- Authentic learning
- Learning from others
- Growth from challenge
- Increased confidence
- Changes they would make to the sessions

EbE themes included:

- Making a difference
- Personal impact
- The process of the sessions

Biographies:

Laura Lowe is a mental health nurse who has specialised in working therapeutically with young people and families. She now works as Head of Undergraduate Curriculum at the University of Hertfordshire and is passionate about collaborating with people with lived experience to provide a more effective learning environment for students. Laura has recently started a PhD studying the impact on students of simulation that is co-delivered by people with lived experience, having anecdotally seen students' responses to this approach in her modules.

Through her own lived experience of accessing mental health services, Laura is also interested in exploring the identity and experience of people who have both used and work in mental health services and the influence this may have on their practice.

Gerald Maiello has been working as a drama therapist for the past 32 years. In that time he has worked on secure and acute wards, in learning disabilities, community services, drug and alcohol rehab and schools. Prior to his work with *May Contain Nuts* Gerald was part of another user led theatre company called *I Can't Believe We're Not Better...* which worked closely with schools and community rehab services

	in challenging the stigma of mental health. Gerald currently works in Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Trust for the adult community services May Contain Nuts is a multi-award winning, innovative, service user led project that challenges the stigma of mental illness through public performances and workshops. Each year the company undertakes a series of workshops, designed in conjunction with UH, in order to present scene that are both challenging and realistic to what students will encounter once qualified. Alongside this the company devises, from personal narrative, performance pieces that challenge the stigma of mental health. It is the only theatre company within the NHS.
	1b.2 Title: Integrating service user involvement into the assessment of readiness to practice for social work students Presenters: Dr Kim Heanue and Ms Gill Herbert University of Huddersfield Session type: Oral presentation (15 mins) This presentation will explore the design and delivery of an assessment task for year one social work students, involving a live role-play activity supported by people with lived experience of health and social care. Social work students must complete 200 days of learning in practice settings. Before they can undertake any practice placements, Social Work England require they undergo assessed preparation for direct practice, to ensure they are safe to carry out practical learning in a service delivery setting. At the University of Huddersfield, this summative assessment includes first year students undertaking an interview with a member of our Public Partnership Group (PPG); a group of patients, service users, carers and other members of the public who contribute to teaching, learning and research across the school. This role-play activity provides an important opportunity for students to show they can appropriately structure and conduct a conversation with a service user. The assessment brief necessitates students actively demonstrate respectfulness, genuineness, empathy and professionalism. PPG members contribute to the assessment by offering detailed feedback to the students concerning these qualities, to inform a reflective written analysis of their practice. This presentation. will explore the perspectives of people with lived experience in relation to taking part in the role-play activity and giving meaningful feedback to students that can support their professional development. We will consider the challenges we have faced in conducting this live assessment task and the actions that we have taken to overcome them, and we will consider the impact on student learning.

	Presenter biographies Gill is a mid-seventies woman who has developed chronic conditions as she has got into later years. Having been a very active health and social care professional in the past she has a sound knowledge of good practice and of evidence-based approaches. She is generally very disappointed with the advice and support she has been given relating to her own health challenges and is a strong promoter of self-management wherever possible. Gill loves working with those in education to improve approaches to personalising health and social care advice to put the patient and user at the forefront of their thinking. She gets involved in a wide range of activities to enhance learning and get people interested in promoting self-care. Kim is an academic at the University of Huddersfield, having qualified as a social worker in 2000. In practice Kim worked with people with substance use issues. She has been working in social work education for eighteen years. Kim teaches across an undergraduate and postgraduate social work degree program. She has responsibility for teaching social work skills and specifically works with year 1 students on their assessment of readiness to practice. Kim has worked closely with people with lived experience to create and develop approaches to assessing students' readiness to practice.
	1b.3 Winning Friends and Influencing People: our personal reflections on relational co-production. Theme: Relational co-production Denise – After many years in the service industry, I began losing my sight in my forties. Adjusting to such a major change was extremely difficult, but with support from the V.I. Forum and Galloways I gradually adapted. Once I became mentally stronger, I wanted to use my experience to improve essential services and signpost local support that makes a meaningful difference. Pete –The Visual Impairment Forum is a group of blind and visually impaired people supported by the Sensory Team at Lancashire County Council. We created Overcoming Barriers: Access for All to turn our lived experience into practical learning, influence policy, and work with partners to remove barriers and misconceptions affecting our community. Our lived experience of navigating clinical health settings as well as everyday life provides a unique insight to practitioners and students in education. This work led us to Comensus, where we share lived experience in student sessions to strengthen essential interpersonal skills and highlight the

	experiences of people with a visual impairment. Direct engagement with people living with health conditions and disabilities provides insight often absent from conventional teaching and is vital for professional development. As learners vary widely, we continually adapt our presentations/workshops to meet individual needs, offering perspectives on visual impairment that enhance understanding of accessibility and inclusion. Relational co-production for us means engaging public members from the outset and building constructive, sustained relationships to achieve better outcomes. Our reward lies in contributing to improvements in public services and healthcare, as well as supporting students as they develop into future health and social care professionals with strong academic foundations and patient-centred values. Biographies Denise Wilkinson. After many years in the service industry, I started to lose my sight in my late forties .It was very difficult coming to terms with such a major life change but thanks to members of the VI Forum and Galloways I started to adapt after months of not knowing where to turn ,I knew then once I was mentally stronger I'd share my experience to help shape services that impact all our daily lives and to signpost to support services in our area that make life changing differences everyday . As a member of the VI Forum and a Comensus volunteer, I contribute lived-experience insight to strengthen services and support inclusive practice, engaging with the students also helps build their build their people skills that can only come from engaging with real life patients which is a vital ingredient to their future professions Dr Pete Forrester When I'm not working full time in Research and Development (R&D), I spend my spare time volunteering for various charities/organizations, such as the Lancashire Visually Impaired (V.I.) Forum, and the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB). Through the RNIB, I work extensively with my local and regional NHS Hospital Trusts, together with a number of town, city and county Councils, including Manchester and Liverpool City Councils and the regional Transport Executive, Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM). Through the Lancashire Visually Impaired (V.I.) Forum, I've began working with the local and regional NHS Hospital Trusts, across Lancashire and Cumbria, together with a number of local town, city and county Councils in and around Lancashire, and even more recently, I've become a Comensus Volunteer at the University of Here is a shorter, less personal, more
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	professional version of your story. It keeps your role and purpose clear without focusing on personal details. Guided Links are included naturally.
Parallel sessions 2– Title, Author(s) & Session details 11.30-12.30	
11.30-12.30pm 2a. Creative arts-based approaches	Presenters: Lesley Whittaker, Amy Bond, Annabel Butterworth. Experience and Engagement Team, Lancashire and South Cumbria Foundation Trust 2A.1 Title - Creative engagement for personalised care – Bond Butterworth & Whittaker (Lancashire and South Cumbria Foundation Trust). 15 minutes Oral presentation with slides showing art and creative pieces. Background Capturing and acting upon patient and carer experience is fundamental to delivering personalised care and improving services. Traditional feedback mechanisms, while valuable, do not always enable individuals to communicate the complexity of their experiences. Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust (LSCFT) has therefore developed a range of creative engagement approaches designed to broaden participation and provide alternative opportunities for people to share their stories. This presentation will: • Demonstrate how creative engagement methods can support personalised care and meaningful involvement. • Showcase examples of co-produced initiatives including digital storytelling, creative writing, poetry, a Living Library, letter-writing approaches, and a travelling art exhibition. • Critically reflect on the benefits, challenges, and lessons learned from implementing creative approaches across a large NHS Trust. • Explore the impact of these initiatives on participants, staff learning, organisational culture, and service improvement. • Future plans - infographic slide Biographies Lesley Whittaker is a mental health nurse (RMN) of over 35 years' experience with the last 6 years with Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust (LSCFT) as the Experience and Engagement Senior Nurse/ Matron. Lesley has a strong passion for lived experience involvement, person-centred care, and compassionate leadership within mental health services. Her work focuses on supporting the Experience and Engagement

	Team amplifying patient and carer voices, promoting meaningful engagement, and supporting collaborative approaches that improve wellbeing and service experience across communities. Lesley has a particular interest in creating psychologically safe spaces where people feel heard, valued, and empowered. She originally set up the My story collection My experience :: Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust and has contributed to workshops, Learning Lessons session and participation projects that encourage reflection, connection, and co-production in healthcare settings. Attending the Authenticity to Action Conference at University of Central Lancashire (UCLan), Lesley is keen to further explore how authentic leadership and lived experience can drive positive cultural change and strengthen compassionate practice across health and social care services. Lesley's previous roles included Patient Safety Manager, Early Intervention in Psychosis Team leader, Complaints Manager and Neighbourhood Integration Project Manager Amy Bond is a Patient Experience Manager at Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust, where she leads work to capture and use feedback to improve services. She specialises in patient engagement, the Friends and Family Test, and translating insight into meaningful improvements in care. Amy is passionate about ensuring that patient voice is at the heart of service design and delivery. Annabel is a Registered Mental Health Nurse with a passion for embedding lived experience at the heart of LSCFT. She has led the development of a lived experience art exhibition, using creative approaches to amplify diverse voices, challenge stigma and encourage meaningful conversations about health conditions, the triangle of care as well as experiences of staff. Alongside her clinical background, Annabel works as Experience Manager for Personalised Care, championing co-production, person-centred practice and authentic partnerships that drive service improvement. Her work reflects a commitment to transforming lived experience into meaningful action, creating inclusive opportunities for people to influence education, practice and the future of personalised care.
11.30-12.30pm 2a: Theme-celebrating the wins and addressing the challenges.	2A.2 Title: Moving together: Insights from Public Involvement into a Creative Arts Therapy Research Project with Taiwanese Adolescents This oral presentation aims to outline the process and impact of Public Involvement (PI) conducted prior to data collection for my PhD research. The wider project explores adolescents' embodied experiences of creative arts therapy in a residential centre in Taiwan using a qualitative design that includes participant observation, art-based body mapping, and interviews (with adolescents and an art psychotherapist).

	PI is not yet widely implemented in Taiwan, but I used it when designing the study to ensure it was responsive to, and aligned with, the perspectives, concerns, and needs of potential participants. PI activities were conducted remotely through discussions with the residential centre and the employed art psychotherapist. Additionally, I engaged with four Taiwanese creative arts therapists and seven Taiwanese adolescents. The adolescents were invited by their teachers to participate and were supported in completing a questionnaire designed specifically for this stage of the research, particularly explored their views on the proposed body-mapping research method. Insights gained through PI were discussed with my supervisory team and led to meaningful changes in the study design, including refinements to the research title, interview questions, and the planned body-mapping activity. This presentation highlights how PI contributed to strengthening the methodological, ethical, and participatory dimensions of the study, and reflects on the value of involving adolescents and practitioners in shaping qualitative research in creative arts therapy contexts. Due to logistical challenges, it was not possible to undertake ongoing PI, especially with adolescents, within my study. However, I have found that insights from PI has had an empowering role during my PhD journey. Biography I am a fourth-year PhD student at Edge Hill University. I am trained in dance movement psychotherapy, a discipline within the Creative Arts Therapies. My doctoral research is informed by my professional experience in Taiwan, where I worked with adolescents who had been exposed to Adverse Childhood Experiences and struggled to articulate their traumatic experiences. My research explores embodiment as a therapeutic factor in Creative Arts Therapies, with a particular focus on adolescents' perspectives, in order to better support this population.
14.15-15.15pm 3A: Supporting service users and carers in education.	<u>Oral presentations</u> 3A.1: Practical Guides to Patient Involvement in Health and Social Care Education Authors: Angela Towle, Cathy Kline, Mandy Young, Patient & Community Partnership for Education, Office of UBC Health, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada Abstract We showcase a set of practical guides intended to support and expand involvement of patients (carers, service users, people with lived and living experience, etc.) as active participants in the education of health and social care professionals across the world. We developed the guides with

	the assistance of more than 40 local and international experts in the topics covered. Wider input was obtained at the third international conference ‘Where’s the Patient’s Voice in Health Professional Education – 20 Years On?’ held in Vancouver in November 2025. Contributors include patient partners, academics, students, administrators and health professionals, many having more than one identity. There are five guides in the series. 1. Getting buy-in and institutional support; 2. Recruitment and preparation of patient educators and developing a patient partner community. 3. Patient involvement and equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility; 4. Patient involvement in curriculum development and assessment; 5. Evaluation and research. The guides are intended for use by anyone in the field, those working and learning within institutions of higher education, as well as patients and community members engaged in supporting health professional education. The guides are intended for people at different stages on the journey to involve patients in health professional education, from beginners to those who have worked in the field for a long time and are looking for new directions and inspiration. They are intended for people working across the continuum of education – from undergraduate, postgraduate and continuing professional development - and across all health and social care professions. Author biographies Angela Towle is Co-Director, Patient and Community Partnership for Education, Associate Professor Emeritus Department of Medicine & Scholar, Centre for Health Education Scholarship. Angela leads research and development initiatives that promote patient and public involvement in health professional education. Cathy Kline is Assistant Director, Patient and Community Engagement, Office of UBC Health. Cathy works closely with the directors of Patient and Community Partnership for Education to provide leadership for operationalizing strategic plan objectives related to patient and community engagement. Mandy Young is Community Engagement Coordinator with UBC Health, Mandy builds meaningful relationships with patient and community partners and develops processes to support their recruitment, orientation and involvement across all UBC Health pillars of education, research and systems change.
14.15-15.15pm 3A: Supporting service users and carers.	3A.2: Title: <i>You’ll talk to the person that you think understands you: Perspectives of 10–13-year-olds on health and care services in Bristol.</i> Public involvement in learning and teaching is widely accepted as impacting positively on student’s experiences. Most involvement, is however, from adults, that is, people aged 18 or over. In this innovative work, based on the learning outcomes of many of the programmes across the College of Health, Science and Society at the University of the West

(UWE) of England Bristol, knowledge exchange was adopted through working with a local charity to capture experiences of 10 – 18 year olds, to provide their opinions of health and care services. Working across a community group and higher education, questions were generated by UWE which academics felt needed to be addressed in children's and school nursing programmes and social work.

The ethics of working with children were addressed collectively and two, question and answer sessions were conducted online and co facilitated between the charity and the UWE Public Involvement in Learning and Teaching Team, namely Associate Professor Dr Anne Johnson and PI specialist adviser and administrator Ms Fiona Lewis.

Transcripts were produced by the charity and Hannah Duke Digital Learning Designer from UWE's Digital Learning Service, and the team are working together to produce an anonymised animation representing the children's experiences, through personalised avatars. Recordings will be added to the Public Involvement digital library at UWE called 'Shelf Life'. This unique resource will support learning and teaching of students and academics and highlight the importance of children's experiences being represented in contemporary health and care services both now and in the future.

Biographies:

Associate Professor Dr Anne Johnson:

With a passion for ensuring accessible and understandable health and social care for all, Anne is the lead academic/Associate Professor at UWE for Public involvement in Learning and Teaching and Knowledge Exchange in the College of Health, Science and Society and has been developing digital resources over the last few years to support this agenda. She is also a Consultant Occupational Therapist and Joint Clinical and Operational Lead of the Bath Centre for Fatigue Services, a Macmillan Professional specialising in long term conditions management with a particular interest in complex fatigue. She is also a qualified executive coach and mentor and provides coaching and mentoring in health, for academic health practitioners and others.

Ms Fiona Lewis:

Fiona works with Anne as the Public Involvement Administrator and Adviser for the Team. She supports in the recruitment of new Public Involvement Partners and additionally, co-ordinates processes linked to involvement and contributes to the production of resources for student learning which have a PI focus.

	Ms Hannah Duke: With a background in psychology and mental health, Hannah is a Digital Learning Designer at UWE. She has been working with the PI Team to translate the experiences of under 18-year-olds into a creative digital resource for student learning purposes. Dr Anthony Hill Dean for Learning and Teaching: As the Dean of Learning & Teaching at the University of the West of England, Dr Hill strategically leads the College of Health, Science & Society with respect to all aspects of teaching and learning, with responsibility for successfully developing and nurturing a culture of ambition and continuous improvement. He is passionate about supporting and enhancing staff engagement and development, and all aspects of the student experience and values the importance of incorporating lived experiences into students' experiences.
3B. 14.15-15.15 Theme: Creative arts-based approaches	Title: ACTIVE co-creation of a dramatic educational resource for capacity building about creative methodologies: a democratic, relational, participatory case study. Aims: Showcase the creative output of a participatory co-production process and stimulate a discussion about key issues related to creative innovation and co-production. This session grows out from a co-production project funded by university research seed-corn monies, involving the ACTIVE PPIE group and facilitated by Pete Carruthers (writer/director/producer/ researcher). The ACTIVE Group comprise individuals with lived experience of use of alcohol care services. Pete and ACTIVE have worked together over a period of five months to create a script for a piece of drama to be used in the education of PGRs. The ambition is to eventually turn this into a short film. In this session we will share a recording of a read through of the latest draft of the script and seek conference delegates' views. We hope to have a meaningful discussion on a number of key themes: • Quality of relationships and co-production • The value of creative innovation • The importance of peer to peer and peer to professional relationships • Democratic ownership of knowledge production • A grass roots appreciation for a care-full relational democracy • Moral quality vs material quality

	Biographies Pete Carruthers is a writer, director, producer and researcher. His film and theatre work has been used internationally to train health professionals around themes including trauma, neurodiversity and military mental health. His play, 'The Possibility of Colour' was created over 15 years with input at every stage of development from health professionals and people with lived experience of the themes explored, including voice-hearing, neurodiversity, forced treatment and more. Pete is also a PhD student at the University of Lancashire and is currently expanding the reach of a new theatre-and-film-based simulated practice learning package for student nurses, which was co-developed over three years with senior nursing lecturers from several universities. Titled 'Empathy Machines: Rehearsal for Practice', this sim package has been delivered to over 300 student nurses across four universities in group sizes of 5 to 50 since May 2025. It is now delivered annually at three universities, with pilots at two further universities planned for this year. The package is also being adapted for student doctors, social workers, occupational therapists and paramedics. Mick Mckeown is Professor of Democratic Mental health at the University of Lancashire. He is Pete's PHD supervisor and also one of the facilitators of the ACTIVE patient and public involvement group working with Cheshire and Merseyside Public Health collaborative to create positive changes in alcohol care services. ACTIVE PPIE members - Elizabeth and Kerry are part of the groups as well as professional actors in their own right. They have been proud to be part of the development of this resource and will be part of the workshop on the day.
15.30-16.30pm	Plenary session 15.30-16.30 Plenary Session- Coproduction of standards for involvement in education- DUCIE facilitator network Daly Lynn, Essen, Garner, Lefroy, Riachi, Scott, Zaheer-ali There are currently no universally accepted standards for public involvement in professional education. Frequent reference is instead made to models such as the Ladder of Involvement (Tew et al., 2004), usually divorced from its original context, to describe an ideal of patient, service user and carer involvement that is based largely on their presence (or not) within certain course processes. A recent synthesis of previous involvement literature has used the term "pedagogical liminality" (uncertain or ambiguous educational status) when describing the "lack of genuine institutionalization" of involvement in professional education, resulting from institutions having no "reasoned structure" for its implementation (Gross & Ruelle, 2025). For instance, a systematic review found that teaching and learning involving the public is seldom underpinned by a pedagogical theory (framework of teaching methods,

	principles, and practices) that accounts for its impact on student learning (Bennett-Weston et al., 2023). Alongside these structural gaps, involvement facilitators endeavour to accommodate the diverse needs and perspectives of patients, service users and carers, in ways that may seem incompatible with a highly structured approach to education. Indeed, a recent synthesis of qualitative research suggests that “sustainable and inclusive patient partnerships require relational and structural support” (Barradell et al., 2025). The Developers of Users and Carer in Education (DUCIE) network would like to invite delegates to share a discussion about some important relational and structural considerations when developing universal standards for public involvement in professional education. That is, standards that institutionally embed inclusive and sustainable partnerships for involvement practice. Biographies Chris Essen and colleagues are part of the DUCIE network set up to support facilitators and community engagers working with the public in higher education institutions.
16.45 -17.00	Close, thank yous and feedback