

PEN AWARDS OCTOBER 2025
Partnership Working to Improve the Experience

Hear Our Voice

**A Co-produced Lived Experience Documentary
produced by people living with Dementia, facilitated
and supported by Dementia NI, Southern and South
Eastern Health and Social Care Trust staff**

**Tracy Kane & Fiona Rooney (SEHSCT)
Service Improvement Leads for Dementia**

**Chris Higgins & Peter Alexander
Dementia NI Members & Production Team Members**





HEALTH AND WELLBEING 2026 DELIVERING TOGETHER



Commits Health and Social Care to:	HEAR OUR VOICE Delivered:
Maximise the lived experience (patient and carer) voice across the system.	Lived experience at the centre - people living with dementia lead the project.
Engage staff particularly staff who are closest to those who use our services in co-design and in the co-delivery of services.	True co-production, including co-design and co-delivery - people living with dementia and staff enhancing service delivery together.
Build and strengthen partnership working with the community and voluntary sector.	Partnership in action – collaboration between HSCTs and Dementia NI.

Dementia: Why Hear Our Voice Matters

The challenge

- Dementia numbers in NI will triple by 2051 (to 60,000)
- 1 in 2 people directly affected

The response

- Need for a skilled, compassionate workforce
- Staff eager for practical dementia training
- Innovative, co-produced approaches required

Hear Our Voice

- Sparked in 2022 through Dementia NI & HSC Trust collaboration
- Began as a simple concept, reimagined by DNI Members
- Led by 8 people living with dementia, creating a powerful resource



Hear Our Voice

Vision and Purpose

- Use lived experience to produce an educational documentary
- Raise awareness of dementia; challenging stigma and stereotypes
- Equip staff with clear, actionable advice for compassionate care

Authentic Co-Production

- Led by 8 people living with dementia
- Collaboration between Dementia NI and 2 HSCT NI
- Guided by the voice of lived experience, supported by staff facilitation.

Our Ambition Delivers

- From a simple idea to an empathy based documentary
- Launched at Stormont (2024), endorsed by the Health Minister
- Adopted into curricula including Universities across the UK
- Over 5,000 views on YouTube and still growing...



From Vision to Reality



Project Timeline



QUB Pre-Screening (July 2023): Feedback and Critique



Secured Public Health Agency NI Endorsement and Support

"Will always remember this training... this co-production is streaks ahead of anything I have ever viewed."

"Deserves an award and global recognition. Amazing what can be achieved when people get together and share experiences."

"Hearing directly from people with dementia was so powerful — their voices need to be heard, implemented and respected."

WHAT THE CRITICS SAID

"Perfection. Just the right duration. Increased my awareness and understanding of dementia."

"The film is beautifully made and the content is excellent... an amazing and emotional resource."

"This video wouldn't be out of place on the BBC. Everyone needs to watch it... in schools, communities, everywhere."

Hear Our Voice - Official Launch Trailer



[Hear Our Voice - Trailer \(YouTube\)](#)

Hear Our Voice – NI Regional Launch – September 2024



NI Health Minister Mike Nesbitt said:

- “This initiative demonstrates our health service’s commitment to enhancing understanding and awareness of dementia.”
- “Self-advocacy is a powerful tool — and who better to educate us on supporting people with dementia than those living with the condition themselves.”
- “I congratulate the Trusts and Dementia NI for producing such a powerful documentary. It will challenge stereotypes and provide an engaging, informative way to help us all better support individuals living with dementia.”



‘Hear Our Voice’ Documentary

Impact and Achievement Since Launch (Sept 2024)

Institutional Endorsements:

- Supported by the Department of Health, Public Health Agency, and Northern Ireland’s Commissioner for Older People

Events and Media Recognition:

- Queen’s University’s Caring for Today, Planning for Tomorrow dementia conference
- The NI Chief Nursing Officer Conference 2024
- All-Ireland dementia forums
- NI Dementia Project Board / Education work-stream
- Public Health Agency care home forums
- British Deaf Association – Health and Wellbeing Festival
- Trust PPI committees / Events
- Featured on BBC NI Newsline television

Broad Viewer Reach:

- Over 5,000 YouTube views to date (many more reached via group training sessions)
- Regional poster launch distributed during Dementia Action Week 2025 (3,000 copies)
- Poster hosted on Public Health Agency NI and Dementia NI Websites

Adoption in Training & Education:

- Integrated into nursing curricula: Queen’s University Belfast, Ulster University
- Postgraduate dementia courses: Stirling University, Bradford University...
- Embedded in Health and Social Care Trust staff training across Northern Ireland



Co-Produced Poster

Hear Our Voice

10 Top Tips for Supporting People Living with Dementia in Health and Social Care Settings



Scan now to watch the "Hear Our Voice" documentary



Health and Social Care

Personal and Public Involvement (PPI)  Involving you, improving care





Treat us with common courtesy
Treat us with respect, as valued, capable adults.



Be aware of our details
Don't make us repeat our story multiple times - repeating information can be exhausting.



Maintain our confidentiality and dignity
Privacy is important to us. Share information sensitively and consider our confidentiality.



Use clear language
Give us time when explaining any interventions or procedures, it helps us to participate.



Give us time
We need more time to process than you. Allow us to respond before moving on.



Notes help us to remember
Provide written information using jargon-free language to help us understand.



Environment may affect us more than you
Provide a calming environment and activities that meet our personal needs.



Don't make assumptions about us
Don't presume what we want, feel or need - speak with us directly.



Don't make assumptions about our capacity
We may not have capacity to make every decision, but there will be some decisions we can still make.



Provide a support person
Having a designated support person can make a huge difference to our healthcare experience.

Co-Produced by people living with Dementia

Hear Our Voice - Credits

Creators & Dementia NI Members:

- David McElhinney
- Alison Bachelor
- Christopher Higgins
- Gerard Doran
- Marion Gibson
- Tom Heatley
- Martin Murtagh
- Peter Alexander

Supported by NI HSCT Service Improvement Leads Dementia:

- Naoimh McGlone - Southern Trust
- Tracy Kane - South Eastern Trust
- Fiona Rooney - South Eastern Trust

Videographer and Film Editor

- Shaun Byrne - Designstics

Facilitated by Dementia NI Empowerment Lead





Enduring Legacy...

“At the point of writing this, three of the eight people living with dementia who created Hear Our Voice would no longer be able to participate in a project like this. Their voices remain, leaving a lasting legacy. Through this documentary, they continue to educate, challenge, and inspire improvements in dementia care long after they can no longer make their voices heard.”

September 2025



Co-Production Project Learnings

- Don't forget to think big – Official launch held at Stormont, the NI Parliament Building
- Authentic co-production needs time, commitment & dedication
- Build time contingency into schedules, genuine co-production cannot be rushed!
- Be flexible, resilient, and realistic with timeframes
- Voice of lived experience at the heart of the project
- Success relies on communication, planning & facilitation
- Dementia NI facilitators were crucial
- A shared vision and strong partners drove success
- Safe spaces enable meaningful engagement
- Diverse experiences enrich decision-making
- Make time to have fun!

The success of Hear Our Voice reminds us of an essential truth:
**“When respect, collaboration, and passion triumph over politics and egos,
extraordinary things happen!”**

Scan to watch Hear Our Voice now

