



## Revisiting Co-Production

### Executive Summary

- Warrington has some excellent examples of working together with parents and carers
- We would like to see this embedded across all our partners in Health, Education and Social Care
- It has never been more important to include the parent carer voice at the earliest opportunity as services are expected to react quicker during the COVID-19 outbreak
- WarrPAC work with 151 other forums, with over 95,000 members nationally, so we are in a unique position to share good practice about what is working in other areas
- If we work together we can find the solutions we need to help families and their children

**We call for senior managers to actively promote co-production across all services so that we can work together for a “SEND friendly Warrington”**

# Revisiting Co-Production

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## Introduction

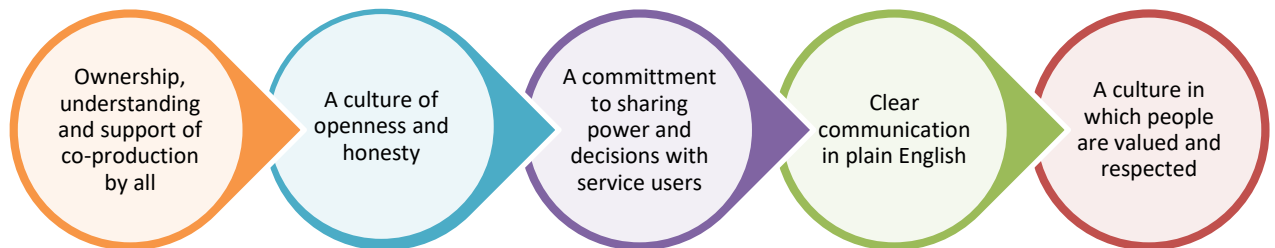
In 2017 Warrington Parents and Carers (WarrPAC) worked with partners across Education, Health and Social Care to create and sign-off the “Coproduction<sup>1</sup> Charter” (see Appendix A). Three years on, we need to review our co-production approach to demonstrate the value in working together more closely so that children and their families have a voice in the development and improvement of services.

## National context

The concept of co-production is embedded in the Children and Families Act (2014) and requires all partners to work together to willingly design, develop and improve services collectively. Co-production acknowledges that people with ‘lived experiences’ are best placed to advise on what support and services will make a difference to their lives. Done well, co-production helps to ground discussion in reality, and to maintain a person-centred approach.

## Values and behaviours

For co-production to become part of the way we work, we must create a culture across where the following values and behaviours are the norm:



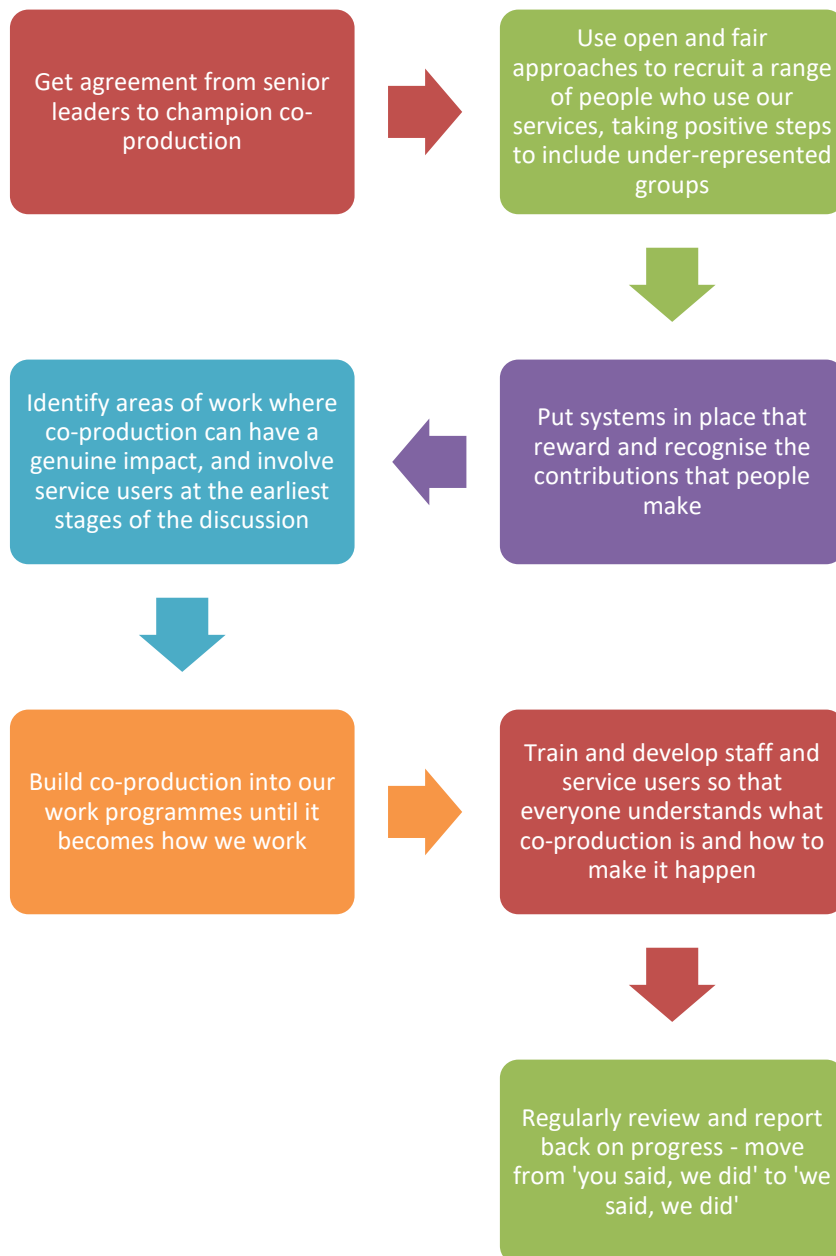
Seven practical steps to make co-production happen in reality:

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<sup>11</sup> A note on spelling – when the “Coproduction Charter” was created, there seemed a move for “coproduction” to be introduced as a neologism. In more recent years, the more traditional spelling of “co-production” is more accepted.

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### Co-production Successes

The SEND inspection of 2018 recognised the value of co-production in Warrington, citing strategic involvement and the “Working Together” conferences as examples of good practice. Warrington’s SEND strategy was developed collectively. WarrPAC are now involved in strategic development across a number of Boards including the SEND Partnership Board and the Neurodevelopment Steering Group. We feel that the voice of our families’ is being increasingly listened to and has been helpful in a number of areas of strategic development.

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WarrPAC are increasingly working with the National Network of Parent Carer forums, which covers the 152 local area forums. This offers us the unique opportunity to share best practice across authority areas and to combine the parent/carer voice to facilitate national change to services and legislation. This has been particularly useful in the current crisis where lessons learned can be shared quickly to enact change.

Through our involvement with the NNPCF, WarrPAC has influenced the national picture to drive SEND improvements. Achievements include:

- Increased funding for SEND released in 2019
- SEND system leadership board has been set up and review of the SEND system has been announced by the government
- Evidence provided to the Education Select Committee and the National Audit Office inquiries
- We have championed co-production with a wider group of partners than ever before. During the year NNPCF representatives worked with organisation such as NASEN, the Local Government Association, the Association of Directors of Children's Services and the Royal College Of Speech And Language Therapists to promote co-production with families and parent carer forums.

During the current crisis, where rapid reactive input has been so vital, the NNPCF has been able to quickly feedback issues and solutions from across its membership. Areas include:

- Proportionate use of “reasonable endeavours” during coronavirus easement
- SEND related amendments to government guidance e.g. short breaks; exercise regimes for LD requiring extra PA support; Face covering for those with SEND; Risk assessments for SEND CYP; Annual health checks for LD during the crisis
- Feeding back support requirements of families to help guidance nationally avoid families going into crisis.

### Co-production Challenges

Our planned “Working Together for a SEND Friendly Warrington” was postponed due to the current crisis. The aim was to use this as a starting block for the development of the new SEND strategy, recognising parental input into designing the next phase of our work to develop Warrington as a SEND Friendly Town.

Since the SEND Inspection, there has been a significant redesign of services across education and social care. Whilst this has been absolutely necessary to address previous difficulties, and whilst WarrPAC have been kept abreast of the changes, there has been little opportunity for co-productive input.

Lack of input into the Local Offer and Short Breaks provision has led to some gaps in our statutory duties in these areas.

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Attendance from professionals at the Participation Steering Group (now known as the Co-production Steering Group) has been variable, reducing the areas for parent carer participation and co-productive practice.

There appears to be a misunderstanding that co-production may slow down service development, particularly where decisions are needed to be made in haste. Whilst we agree that taking service changes through a formal consultation process can be laborious, including the parent carer voice at the earliest opportunity can actually save time and reduce the need to re-work plans for change.

### Reinvigorating Co-Production

Warrington has made significant in-roads so that parents and carers are involved in all aspects of their service design and development. This progress has been applauded within our SEND inspection. In order to continue to reap the benefits of co-production, however, we seek strategic management level input to extend the impact of co-production across all services. Whilst we were unable to deliver our “Working Together for a SEND Friendly Warrington” conference, we still need to drive this aspiration for the benefit of all SEND families in Warrington, and for the services that support them.

### Next steps

We ask the Senior Leadership Teams of all partners to:

- Restate their commitment to the Co-production Charter attached as Appendix 1
- Identify genuine opportunities within their Service Plans for co-production to take place
- Ensure that all organisations working across the SEND agenda in Warrington attend the Co-production Steering Group meetings.

### Introduction

Within the SEND Strategy development process, it was identified that there is a need for a “Coproduction Charter” to define the expectations of joint working with parents and carers to ensure that their voice is included, on an equal footing, in development of services for children with disabilities and additional needs. Warrington Parents and Carers (WarrPAC) were tasked to investigate this area. WarrPAC circulated a “Discussion Document” which, after consultation, was accepted as this version.

On investigating this area, however, it became apparent that there are actually two sides to coproduction which both need to be addressed:

- Coproduction within strategic planning – ensuring that parents and carers have input into the development of new services; assessing the efficacy of current services and moulding services to achieve better outcomes for children and young people (CYP) in Warrington.
- Coproduction within service delivery – ensuring that parents and carers are fully involved with treatment planned and implemented for their CYP.

This document is only looking at the strategic planning area of coproduction.

Another important area of coproduction, is to not only look at the involvement of parents and carers, but also to ensure that the views of affected children and young people are also included.

### What Do We Mean By Coproduction?

It is essential at the outset to fully define “coproduction” so that all parties are aware of the expectations of this approach. The following “ladder of participation” illustrates this well:



This diagram illustrates the increased involvement of parents and carers as participation increases. Coproduction - as the final stage of this participation – means a true partnership with service shapers as they work together to develop services.

The “Ladder of Participation” occurs in a variety of forms throughout parent participation forums and associated reports. This diagram was taken from South

## Appendix A - Coproduction Charter – Working Together Effectively

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Glos Parent Carer Forum. <http://www.sglospc.org.uk/what-is-parent-participation>

### Methodology

In investigating this area, WarrPAC initially went back to the participation agreement that was drawn up at the end of the “Aiming High for Disabled Children” process. We also did some research into other regions’ participation / coproduction strategies. Of particular interest was Rotherham’s “Genuine Partnership” model, which could warrant further investigation:

<https://rotherhamcharter.co.uk/>

### Aim of Strategic Coproduction

Our aim, as WarrPAC, is to ensure that parents and carers are involved in **any** strategic decision that could affect our children and young people.

We recognise, however, that limitations on resources and timescales mean that this aim would not be immediately achievable. A coproduction charter, however, would encourage all our partners to work together to become increasingly coproductive.

### Coproduction Charter

The rest of this document defines the coproduction charter as accepted by the SEND Strategy Group. It is essential that this charter is tested against work undertaken with parents and carers to ensure that its values are relevant, meaningful and most of all applied to future strategic work. It is not enough to just talk about coproducing strategies; it is in the application of fully involving parents and carers in strategic development that coproduction becomes truly effective.

### THE COPRODUCTION CHARTER

#### Aims and Objectives

This charter sets out to define the expectations on partners to act coproductively when designing, developing and reviewing strategic services for children and young people with a disability and/or additional need.

To continue to improve services and support to disabled children and their families through the effective involvement and participation of parents and carers in:

- the development of existing and new services
- key decisions regarding the way in which services are provided
- proposed changes to services and support
- providing feedback on services to improve quality or responsiveness
- understanding needs and identifying gaps in provision.

To do this by involving parents and carers in decision making at all levels and taking account of the views of families in determining need and to reflect these in the design and delivery of services within the resources available.

#### Commitment from the organisation:

- To commit to involving parents and carers in the areas detailed above, both representative parents through the Forum, and those parents and carers receiving services directly from the organisation.
- To commit to involving children and young people in these decisions, offering facilitation where appropriate.
- To provide a named point of contact for Warrington Parent and Carers Forum to provide a clear communication channel.
- To agree to support parents and carers to be involved through basic ground rules regarding their involvement in consultations and meetings:
  - Sufficient advance notice of meetings and purpose of meetings/consultations explained and appropriate briefings
  - Consideration to be given to school times when planning the timing of meetings and consultations
  - Meetings to be held in accessible locations where possible
  - Parents to be treated with respect when attending meetings/consultations and avoiding the use of jargon
  - To ensure that feedback from meetings or consultation exercises is always provided and within a reasonable timescale.



### THE COPRODUCTION CHARTER

- To involve parents at an early stage in consultations to be able to influence the outcomes within the parameters set.
- To engage in respectful relationships and manage expectations both in terms of commitment and acknowledgement of knowledge and skills.
- To promote the work of WarrPAC to parents and carers to ensure as many get involved as possible to strengthen the voice.
- To support the work of the WarrPAC through providing key speakers or attendees at Forum meetings when required and sufficient notice is given.

#### **Commitment from Warrington Parents and Carers (WarrPAC):**

- To support the organisation in the development and delivery of services and work in partnership to ensure the best possible outcomes for disabled children and young people.
- To be as representative as possible and seek to represent the views of as many parents and carers as possible.
- To invite input from the wider parent and carer cohort, and feedback progress / activity, respecting confidentiality at all times.
- To arrange, in conjunction with partner organisations, events and consultation meetings in order to discuss current work streams.
- To operate within WarrPAC's Code of Conduct and Policy Guidelines.

In adopting this agreement as a working basis for ongoing coproduction all parties are recognising the need to include parents and carers and value their role as crucial in the process of change. Parents and carers are part of the solution in providing joint accountability and in the provision of needs led services.

**THE COPRODUCTION CHARTER**

Commitment from the organisation:

Signed:

Role:

Organisation:

Date:

Commitment from Warrington Parents and Carers Forum:

Signed:

Role:

Date: