



Registered Charity no. 1085491

Local offices:
01992 586969 – Hertford
01442 253344 – Hemel Hempstead
01462 456660 – Hitchin

contact@carersinherts.org.uk
www.carersinherts.org.uk

Factsheet PC5 Parent Carer Participation and Involvement

Carers in Hertfordshire believes that the development of services for children with disabilities should take into account what parent carers have to say. Our participation work therefore aims to enable parents of those children to give their views directly to the people who plan and decide about the provision of services.

In order to achieve successful participation and involvement it helps to better understand what the terms used mean. These definitions are based on those agreed by Hertfordshire Children's Trust Partnership :

Consultation is used to explain decision-making processes in which parent carers are asked for their views about an existing agenda

Participation refers to when parent carers can have an influence on how decisions are made, as well as what decisions are made.

Involvement is an overarching term used to explain any process of consultation or participation, which ascertains and includes the views, wishes and feelings of parent carers in decision making.

Information/Communication is where parent carers are advised about what is being done, but are not asked specifically to give their views on the subject.

contact a family is a good source of information on participation and involvement nationally for families with disabled children
www.cafamily.org.uk/influence or 020 7608 8784

How does *Carers in Hertfordshire* involve parent carers locally?

- Through setting up the Hertfordshire Parent carer Involvement Board. This is a group of volunteer parent carers who live in different parts of the county and who represent a wide range of views and experiences across different disabilities and ages. The Board meets on a regular basis and aims to work in partnership with decision makers in health, education and social care to influence service development and therefore improve services for disabled children and their families in Hertfordshire.
- Keeping in touch by post and email with interested parent carers; providing regular update information and inviting them to give their views.
- Encouraging parent carers to be involved in Parent Carer Forums organised by Herts County Council Children, Schools and Families (CSF) across the 10 District/Borough Councils. Contact us for details of dates in your area.

- Being part of the Parent and Voluntary Advisory Group which acts as a consultative group within Children, Schools and Families and includes Parent Carers representing Support Groups.
- Supporting the parent carer representative on the Hertfordshire Children's Trust Partnership Board.

If you would like to find out more about how you can get involved, please contact the Parent Carer Involvement Worker for your area:

Name	Area	Contact Details
Maria Kiely	Dacorum, St Albans, Watford, Three Rivers	maria.kiely@carersinherts.org.uk Tel 01442 253344
Sara Kent	East Herts, Broxbourne	sara.kent@carersinherts.org.uk Tel 01992 586969
Kay Lowney	North Herts, Stevenage, Hertsmere, Welwyn and Hatfield	kay.lowney@carersinherts.org.uk Tel 01992 586969

To find out more ...

Here is a summary of some websites that are a good place to start to learn more about participation and involvement for parents of disabled children locally and nationally. If you do not have access to the internet, or if you would prefer us to print off the information for you, please contact *Carers in Hertfordshire*, and we will be very pleased to help.

www.carersinherts.org.uk (click on Parent carers)

Parent Carer Involvement Project at *Carers in Hertfordshire*

www.cafamily.org.uk/influence

Contact a Family information on participation nationally

www.edcm.org.uk

the national Every Disabled Child Matters Campaign

www.hertsdirect.org/childrenstrust

Hertfordshire Children's Trust Partnership Board

www.hertsdirect.org and search under PAVAG

news about the Parent and Voluntary Advisory Group in Hertfordshire