

The 'influencing change' checklist

Sometimes carers will come across situations where they believe change needs to happen. Below are some hints on how you can be more effective in influencing positive change.

1. Network

- Find potential allies. Who else may be interested in this issue?
- Work co-operatively with allies (find common ground and don't double-up on work).
- Keep all communication open, honest and constructive.
- Nurture working relationships – you may work under stress and will need supportive relationships.
- Use informal links.

2. Know how much time you have and use it well

- Set timeframes.
- Negotiate for extensions if necessary.
- Develop your own deadlines (to give yourself some room for changes).

3. Know your issue

- Be very clear on what you are wanting to achieve.
- Clarify the issues from your perspective.
- Get all the information you can from other perspectives.

4. Know and understand arguments that might be used against your view

- Other people will see things differently. It can be helpful to try to understand why people have different views or practices.
- Put together and practice clear and constructive responses for when others share different views.

Checklist

What do we want to achieve?

Have we identified clearly what we want to change?

Can we see this change as being possible?

Have we identified the core issues?

Have we identified who we need to influence?

Who is likely to support and/or oppose?

Have we learned why they are thinking the way they do?

Have we found out what influences them?

Are we clear on the systems/processes we want to use (e.g local authorities, central government)?

How to educate the public and those who make decisions

Using radio, newspapers, TV

Using community networks, public meetings

Face-to-face meetings

Newsletters, posters

Developing a proposal or submission

Keep it clear and simple

Is it constructive (what you do want – not what you don't like)?

Does it provide brief background information (context)?

Have we clearly identified the advantages to our suggestions?

Lobbying

Is it possible to meet face-to-face?

Is the size of the delegation appropriate?

Is our message in a language that others can understand and use to promote our perspective?

How can we “package” our message to reflect things decision-makers believe are important?

Are we working with supporters?

Conflict

Are we sticking to the issues – not personalities?

Are we able to use negotiation skills?

Are we getting support from our allies?

Follow-up

Hold a “debrief” to find out what went well and what can be changed/improved

How will we monitor our effectiveness?

What are our next steps – celebration, new campaign

Have we acknowledged everyone who supported?

Source: This material has been adapted from *Seizing the Moment II. Turning Community Ideas Into Action* courtesy of the Nelson Community Work Advisory Committee