Contributing to Regional and National Policy
An occupational therapist’s experience of policy development, implementation and review in England
A journey to improving services for older people with mental health problems

Alison J. Laver-Fawcett
PhD, DipCOT, O.T.(C), PCAP
What is policy?

Policy is:

• ‘a set of ideas or a plan of what to do in particular situations that has been agreed officially by a group of people, a business organization, a government or a political party’

(Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary on-line)
Dementia Collaborative - member of a local team, then became the Project manager for a locality

Everybody’s Business Managed Learning Network (MLN) – member of a regional MLN representing my organisation. Then invited to undertake an evaluation of the work of the MLN for the Care Services Improvement Partnership

Commissioned to analyse the consultation data for 3 regions in North of England for the Development of the National Dementia Strategy (NDS). I wrote three reports for the Department of Health to summarise consultation findings for each region.

Two regions, North East and the Yorkshire and Humber the commissioned secondary analyses of their NDS consultation data and in depth reports for their regions

I was invited by the Department of Health to a one day meeting With six colleagues to contribute to the development of a ‘Commissioning for better outcomes in Dementia Services’ workbook.
National Dementia Strategy for England

‘Living well with Dementia: A National Dementia Strategy’ NDS (February 2009)

NDS outcomes are divided into 3 broad themes:

1. Raising awareness and understanding of dementia
2. Early diagnosis and support
3. Living well with dementia
This is an example of one of the three reports I contributed to during the National Dementia Strategy consultation process. I wrote the first half of this document which was a summary of key messages from people in Yorkshire and Humber about improvements needed for services for people with dementia and their carers.
Work for the North East Region

- Secondary analysis of regional NDS consultation data
- Report of findings and recommendations for Key priorities for service improvement
- Developed Power point for their NDS regional lead
• Secondary analysis for the Yorkshire and Humber Region
• Report of findings and recommendations for Key priorities for service improvement
• Presented to regional implementation group
• Presented findings at 2 regional events
Safe guarding Adults:
A Consultation on the Review of the ‘No Secrets’ Guidance

I was commissioned to prepare the Yorkshire and Humber consultation data for submission to the Department of Health and then undertake an analysis of the data and prepare a regional report for YHIP
Raising awareness of dementia: Project with BBC Radio York

I was interviewed by BBC Researcher for a series of radio programmes about the quality of services for people dementia.

This led to being invited to contribute a few minutes to a live Radio show and I briefly talked about the role of occupational therapy and life story work.

I was then invited into the studio at Radio York to appear on a live chat show for 50 minutes, I talked about the role of occupational therapy with people with dementia and about coming to the WFOT Congress in Chile.

I was invited to be on the panel at a public Debate

**BBC Radio York's Dementia: Who Cares?**

on Wednesday 24th March in York

The debate was recorded and was played on BBC Radio York twice.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/york/hi/people_and_places/newsid_8521000/8521967.stm
OTNews issue
How far has England’s strategy come, and who’s taking it further?

- In October 2009 I spoke to the editor of OTNews to request a special issue on Dementia and the implementation of the NDS
- It was published on 1st April 2010
- Rachel McEwen, Stephen Wey and I all contributed from YSJU

Encourage other OTs to contribute
Highlight good examples
Seek opportunities to contribute

Occupational therapists need to step out of their usual spheres of work and use opportunities to increase their profile amongst policy makers and create opportunities to contribute to the development, implementation and review of policy.

- collaborative projects
- special interest groups
- reviews
- networks
- Media: radio, TV, newspapers
- consultations
Take home message

Occupational therapists have a valuable contribution to make to policy.
We have a **responsibility** to raise awareness of the needs of our clients, in particular to **increase understanding** about the **value of occupational engagement** and **lobby** for effective services to enhance clients' occupational performance.
Contact details

Alison J. Laver-Fawcett, PhD, OT(C), DipCOT, PCAP
Senior Lecturer in Occupational Therapy
Deputy Director, Research Centre for Occupation and Mental Health

Faculty of Health and Life Sciences
York St John University
Lord Mayor’s Walk
York
YO31 7EX

01904-876419
a.laverfawcett@yorksj.ac.uk

www.yorksj.ac.uk
Research Centre for Occupation & Mental Health (RCOMH)

Developing world class research in occupation and mental health to influence best practice
References


