# ARF Online Topic Specific Workshops- Output

This output has been created following the Accelerating Reform Fund topic specific online learning workshops that were held in July. These workshops have provided a platform for in-depth discussions and collaborative learning on several key topics, including;

- Accessibility (legislative requirements).
- Carer identification.
- Coproduction.
- Cultural change/change management.
- Head, heart, and hands leadership.
- Maintaining up to date service directories, self-help tools or IAG offers
- Stakeholder mapping, stakeholder engagement and partnership working.
- Digital literacy.
- Supporting Carers.

Each workshop identified key barriers, shared lessons learned, and proposed strategies to overcome these challenges. This document aims to present the comprehensive outputs from these workshops.

## Accessibility (Legislative Requirements)

Participants identified the necessity for clear communication, avoiding assumptions, and co-producing with carers to eliminate participation barriers. Local areas are committed to exceeding legal requirements to foster inclusivity by co-designing information, engaging with diverse communities, and enhancing digital accessibility while providing alternatives. Key areas of focus include improving collaboration across health and social care sectors and addressing digital access issues.

## Carer Identification

Local areas representatives recommended fostering collaboration across the health, social care, and education sectors, alongside community involvement, to create a more unified approach to identifying carers.

Engaging carers through co-production and proactive involvement from GPs and schools were highlighted as crucial steps, particularly for identifying carers within vulnerable and underrepresented communities.

Lessons learned from project teams emphasized the importance of incentivising carer assessments and fostering peer support to address barriers and encourage more carers to come forward.

## Coproduction

Key challenges identified in the projects include cultural and language barriers, mistrust between carers and local authorities, and the underrepresentation of minority, hard-to-reach, and young carers.

To improve engagement, projects plan to utilize diverse communication methods, flexible meeting arrangements, and trust-building efforts, alongside clear co-production frameworks and adequate resources.

Areas of focus and lessons learned emphasize the need for flexibility, ongoing learning, and balancing engagement efforts to avoid overwhelming participants.

## Cultural Change/Change Management

Concerns were expressed regarding the potential loss of personal interaction, resource constraints, the additional workload new technologies might demand, and ethical dilemmas surrounding data privacy.

To address these issues, local areas plan to focus on co-production, continuous engagement, and flexible training programs to build trust and reassurance, ensuring smooth adoption of new technologies.

Key areas of focus include leveraging success stories to highlight the benefits of technology and demonstrate how it can enhance, rather than replace, human roles. Additionally, applying agile frameworks throughout the projects will be crucial for adapting to changes and maintaining momentum.

## Digital Literacy

Key barriers identified include the inability to fully engage with the online world due to a lack of access to digital devices, internet connectivity, or the necessary digital skills, complex GDPR data-sharing concerns, and outdated information.

Attendees emphasized the importance of system synchronization and streamlined user experiences for carers.

To improve digital literacy, local areas plan to implement initiatives such as digital support hubs and community mornings to provide support and promote accessibility and engagement.

Areas of focus include the importance of ongoing feedback for projects with a digital element and integrating the human element into digital systems to address and respond to carers' challenges effectively.

## Head, heart, and hands leadership

Workshop participants emphasised the importance of early identification and data collection to better support unpaid carers, leading to equitable service improvements and improved patient outcomes. It was discussed that project teams should align both rational (head) and emotional (heart) motivators, utilising storytelling to foster engagement and empowerment.

When discussing the execution (hands) aspect of the framework, local areas highlighted the importance of future planning, particularly targeting younger generations, and the role of early adopters or 'champions' in guiding teams through change.

Key lessons included the necessity of effective strategic planning, emotional engagement through storytelling, and updated training programs for effective change management.

## Maintaining up to date service directories, self-help tools or IAG offers

Workshop attendees emphasised the challenges of addressing diverse user needs and managing high expectations related to user-focused design, co-production, and resource constraints. Additionally, obstacles such as digital literacy, technological integrations, and privacy concerns were identified.

To overcome these challenges, project teams are focusing on strong collaboration and coordination, effective resource planning, and maintaining a balance between digital and non-digital offerings.

Key lessons learned include the importance of genuine co-production to leverage partnerships, ensuring sustainability through continuous improvement, and building stakeholder trust for long-term success.

## Stakeholder mapping, stakeholder engagement and partnership working

The importance of breaking down large organizations into specific roles, considering varying levels of influence and interest, was discussed in the workshop. It was noted that stakeholder positions shift across project phases, which must be considered during mapping and planning.

Mapping stakeholders was found to be particularly challenging, especially when engaging unpaid carers and underrepresented groups.

To enhance participation, project teams plan to implement flexible engagement methods and proactive outreach.

Key lessons learned include the need for careful consideration in stakeholder mapping due to its complexity, the early involvement of high-power, low-interest stakeholders to address potential issues before they escalate, and the importance of continuous and tailored engagement strategies to build trust and encourage active participation.

## Supporting Carers

Attendees expressed the importance of expanding respite options and developing carer friendly digital tools and the need for stronger carer identification system in healthcare settings. A future with more flexible support options, better integration across services, and national campaigns to raise the awareness of the crucial role carers play was discussed. The key lessons learned is the power of feedback, this will inform ongoing efforts to improve carer support across sectors.

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Key lessons learned include the power of feedback, which will inform ongoing efforts to improve carer support across sectors. This feedback is essential for continuous improvement and ensuring that the needs of carers are effectively met.