



SpeakOut!

Giving small and marginalised groups a chance to have a big say.

*“We’re the experienced ones, it would be daft not to listen to us.”
SpeakOut Network Member*

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and social care in England. It aims to make sure that better care is provided for everyone, whether that’s in hospital, in care homes, in people’s own homes, or elsewhere. It regulates health and adult social care services, whether provided by the NHS, local authorities, private companies or voluntary organisations. It also protects the rights of people detained under the Mental Health Act.

Central to effective regulation is community and public engagement. The SpeakOut network is run as a partnership between the CQC and the International School for Communities Rights and Inclusion at the University of Central Lancashire. It has been in existence since 2006 and is made up of a diverse range of small community organisations. SpeakOut supports small and often unheard or marginalised communities to have a voice in the regulatory process.

SpeakOut members contribute directly to the regulatory process by taking part in special studies and reviews and completing feedback forms. SpeakOut provides a bridge between the regulator and seldom heard communities. SpeakOut has been highly successful and its unique voice has been highly praised.

Current membership includes representatives of a diverse range of Black and minority ethnic communities (including refugees and asylum seekers, and Gypsy Romany Traveller groups); different faith groups (including Christian, Orthodox Jewish and Muslim); people with disabilities; people living with HIV; homeless people and people with mental health problems.

We are seeking to expand the Network and are inviting new groups to join. We are particularly interested in hearing from smaller groups and organisations who can represent the voices of people who might otherwise not be heard. We want groups from

all over England, including rural and urban areas. We are keen to engage with a broad range of seldom heard groups including user led groups and carers.

SpeakOut members are supported by the University of Central Lancashire who have a long and successful record of community engagement. A full programme of training is provided and a small amount of money is available to cover the costs of taking part in network activities.

This is an opportunity to have your voice heard; to take part in the regulatory process and to raise the profile of your group or organisation at both a regional and national level.

If you are interested in finding out more about SpeakOut and applying to become a member please contact Khalil Patel at the International School for Communities, Rights and Inclusion, Harrington Building, University of Central Lancashire, Preston, PR1 2HE. Tel: 01772 892780 (email kapatel@uclan.ac.uk). Closing date is 29th September 2009.