



Evaluating the Citizens Council of NICE

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The Research Design

A multidisciplinary team:

- Repeat interviews with citizens
- Observation and interviews in NICE
- A very strong focus on ethnography
 - fully transcribed videotapes of sessions
 - at least 2 observers at each meeting
 - attendance at facilitators' debriefings
 - informal discussions with participants

A process-oriented evaluation



Citizen Deliberation involves:

- dialogue between people from different backgrounds
- exposed to relevant information and debate
- exploring different courses of action and considering jointly what might lead to the public good

A process potentially generative of new solutions



A high profile/high commitment project

- a plank in the Government's NHS Plan
- publicity and successful national recruitment
- enthusiastic citizens with diverse hopes and fears
- allocation of substantial resources of time and money
- an organisation already modelling inclusive procedures - willing to develop further

key importance of demonstrating impact



The first meeting

- minimal measured deliberation
- puzzling over 'clinical need'
- uncertainty on how to question witnesses
- a wariness over dissent
- dilemmas of inclusive facilitation
- difficulties of preparing a report

A clash of discursive worlds



Dilemmas for the citizens

- Continued trouble with the question
- Experiments in marshalling discursive resources
- Fragility of 'common sense'
- Fragments of oppositional discourse
- Difficulties of dealing with difference in the group

Ultimately a positive assessment



Dilemmas for the hosts

- Making sense of the meetings
- Rethinking tools and techniques
- Attending to internal stakeholder perspectives
- Constructing and reconstructing constraints

A process of active reframing and repair



Theorising Citizen Engagement -1

- An ***unfolding*** community of practice
- Engaged in ***mutual*** sensemaking
- Implicating ***identities and emotions*** (individual and organisational)
- Becoming ***settled*** and acquiring a history (how we do things around here)
- Jointly creating an ***expertise space*** expressing relations of power



Theorising Citizen Engagement - 2

- From deficit (and deference) modelsto dynamic models
- From citizen capacity to citizen potential
- From citizen capture...to citizen engagement
- From fixed values...to tentative emergent positions tested in dialogue



**Celia Davies, Margaret
Wetherell, Elizabeth Barnett**

**Citizens at the Centre:
deliberative participation in
healthcare decisions**

Policy Press, 2006



“The key point for those who would create sites of citizen deliberation is not to talk about the ‘capacity’ or ‘incapacity’ of citizens as though this were fixed or to assume that there are procedural solutions that will automatically generate deliberation.....it is to consider ways of addressing citizen potential – creating what we have called an expertise space, an array of circumstances in which the relevance of diverse life experiences can be brought into the arena....”

Davies, Wetherall and Barnett 2006:216