CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

1. The strategy outlines a care pathway (page 10).

(a) If you are a service user and/or carer, please tell us what difference you believe the implementation of the pathway will make to the services you experience.

(b) How can we best ensure that services and support meet your needs?

(c) If you are a care provider, what changes will you need to make to implement the pathway?

(d) How will you make these changes?

2. The strategy identifies key factors that need to be in place to ensure the pathway is successful (Page 11 para 6.7).

(a) Which of the key factors are most important for a successful pathway?

All are equally important

(b) Which are the most challenging to put in place?

Compiling and maintaining an up-to-date register of people with a sensory impairment.

(c) Do you think that any key factors have been missed?

3. The strategy identifies areas for action that should be addressed going forward (Page 13-16)

(a) Which of the areas for action will be the most challenging to implement?

(b) Which of the areas for action will make the biggest difference and why?

(c) Are there any other areas for action that you would like to see included within the strategy?

Inclusion of a vision/hearing passport in care plans within schools, care homes, residential settings and hospitals.

4. Please comment on the current provision of sensory impairment services as either a service provider or service user. If you have any experience of sensory impairment services, please let us know what you think of them: this should include any experience of one-stop shops.

The current provision of SI services is inconsistent and does not allow for fair and equal access to services and equipment. There are too many variations among different areas which in some cases can lead to a postcode lottery.
Commenting as a service provider I believe the one-stop shop model offers many benefits to service users and carers, e.g. improved communication and multi-agency working amongst service providers, a more streamlined service, and improved access to information and services. One-stop shops allow for service users to have access to all the services they may require for their sight and hearing loss under one roof which is beneficial as the incidences of dual sensory loss are rising due to the changing demographic.
However I also believe that smaller satellite services are also essential for service users and carers who are unable to travel to a one-stop shop due to health, geographical or transport issues.

5. What difference will the implementation of the strategy make to your life?

It will increase awareness of sensory impairment issues to the general public.

6. Does this strategy properly reflect the current climate and developments in policy and practice for children and young people particularly in relation to the Getting it Right for Every Child approach and the Doran Review?

7. Do you have anything you wish to add to the Sensory Impairment Strategy or any other general comments that have not been covered by the questions?

There needs to be a commitment to more funding and resources. There is often a lengthy waiting list for service users to receive rehabilitation and mobility training following a diagnosis of visual impairment. This can lead to loss of confidence and independence and increase in isolation. As the numbers of people with sensory impairment are rising it is essential that funding and staffing levels are increased proportionately. I would like to see more occupational therapists being employed in the field of sensory impairment and a recognition of the importance of their role within this area. Occupational therapists will work in partnership with service users to improve levels of independence in all areas of self-care, work and leisure. They have the skills and knowledge in modifying tasks, teaching strategies and using equipment and adaptations to overcome environmental barriers and thereby improve daily living skills. For many service users with a sensory impairment, equipment and new technology is the key to enhancing quality of life and occupational therapists have the background and training in this area. Access to occupational therapy services should be included in care referral pathways for service users.