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Institute of Health and Social Care Studies

GUIDELINES FOR THE INVOLVEMENT OF SERVICE USERS IN THE INSTITUTE'S TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Terms used in this document

In this document, the following terms are used:

- Carers:** People (often relatives or close friends) who care for service users.
- Involvement:** The participation of service users in a wide range of The Institute's activities, for example the running of the Institute, the planning and management of teaching and learning, and working 'face-to-face' with students.
- Service Users:** People who are or have been patients or clients using the HSSD's services. Where this term is used in the document, it can usually be taken to include carers too.
- The HSSD:** States of Guernsey Health and Social Services Department.
- The Institute:** The Institute of Health and Social Care Studies.

Introduction

The Institute has a responsibility to educate health and social care professionals to the stage of qualification, and beyond to degree level. In doing so, it seeks to consult and involve service users and carers in its teaching and learning activities. This is considered to be good practice. In the UK, the Health and Social Care Act (2001) stresses the importance of services working in partnership with the public, and the Institute's partner university – the University of East Anglia – is also committed to this principle. The Institute seeks the involvement of a range of service users of different ages and backgrounds who have experience of a broad selection of the HSSD's services. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the HSSD (2007) Service User Involvement Policy (G303), which notes in section 6(e) that involvement in teaching and training is a recognised form of service user involvement.

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Purpose of these guidelines

The purpose of these guidelines is to:

- Set out the principles of service user involvement in the Institute
- Make clear the Institute's commitment to service user involvement in its activities
- Establish the forms that service user Involvement may take in the Institute's activities
- Outline support systems for involved service users and Institute staff
- Develop and expand service user involvement in the Institute's activities

Principles of service user involvement

- The views and concerns of service users should inform all teaching and learning activities
- Contributions of service users should be valued
- Respectful relationships should be established
- Plans, arrangements and information should be discussed in a timely manner so that service users have time to prepare and make meaningful contributions
- Clear agreements should be reached between Institute staff and service users for activities and the degree to which the service users' views will guide them
- The Institute will be open to service users' ideas, even when they challenge accepted professional values and roles
- Service users will have any expenses they have incurred as a result of their involvement paid back to them
- Consideration should be given to developing funding to enable involved service users to be paid for their time

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Aims for service user involvement

Service users should be consistently involved in the Institute's activities at three different levels. These are module level, course level and Institute level:

Module level

Longer courses are divided into modules. All module teams should consult with relevant service users when planning, developing and evaluating modules. The module team and the service users should work together to ensure that the relevant experiences and interests of the service users are included in the module content. Service user involvement in modules may take a number of forms, including involvement in:

- Curriculum planning
- Teaching
- Producing teaching and learning resources

Module teams may also involve service users' perspectives from web-based resources such as www.dipex.org, and from materials produced by service user organisations.

Course level

Course development teams should consult with relevant service users when planning, developing and evaluating courses. The involvement of service users at an early stage in the planning of courses is desirable in order that they may be involved in decision-making throughout the process. This involvement may take the form of membership of the course team.

Institute level

In addition to involvement in activities related to specific courses, service users should be involved in activities which are central to the teaching and learning function of the Institute as a whole. This may include involvement in such activities as the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee or student selection and assessment.

These guidelines recognise that the needs of individual courses and modules for service user involvement vary. Similarly, individual service users and carers will have differing interests and levels of involvement in different

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modules and courses. The guidelines aim to support the *principle* that service users will be involved in the Institute's activities at each of these three levels in ways which are effective, meaningful and significant.

Support for involved service users

It is recognised that ongoing support is required in order to maintain service user involvement at a level that is valuable to service users and the organisation (Tew *et al* 2004). A range of support, advice and resources is required. One way in which this may be achieved is by working in collaboration with existing service user organisations. Support for involved service users may be considered in three main areas: personal support, training and payment.

Personal support

Service users may need individual support. The form that this takes may depend on the type of activity that they are involved in, but may include briefing and debriefing for attending meetings or teaching. Service users may also appreciate peer group support with other service users who are also involved in health and social care education.

Training

Service users who wish to become involved in the Institute's activities may benefit from training. Training can help people to appreciate the expertise that they already have and to clarify the contributions that they can make as well as to enable them to develop new skills. It also – importantly – helps service users to understand the setting in which they are involved. Such preparation is likely to help people to engage with more confidence and clearer expectations.

Payment

Payment can be seen in terms of two types: payment for involvement and reimbursement of expenses.

- Payment for involvement – Tew *et al* (2004) recommend that service users are paid for their involvement in education, and this is considered to be good practice (DOH 2006). It should be noted that there is a range of possible methods for payment of service users other than a 'one-off' sum in cases where this might – for example – jeopardise the person's benefits. However, payment of service users for involvement has not at this time been established as a practice in the HSSD (including the Institute) and is not supported by the HSSD policy, although it is the subject of discussion within the Institute at the time of writing these guidelines.

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- Reimbursement of expenses – service users will receive reimbursement for all out of pocket expenses that they incur as a result of their involvement. A clear explanation of what expenses may be claimed should be developed and made available to involved service users. This is still to be done within the HSSD. A clear and consistent system should be developed for the reimbursement of such expenses, and expenses should be reimbursed promptly. Again, this system is still to be developed within HSSD.

Putting support into practice

The staff of the Institute should work in partnership with other organisations to ensure that service users are effectively prepared for and supported in their involvement. Also, working with organisations can help to avoid individuals feeling obliged to become or remain involved past the point where they would freely choose to. The Institute will have to ensure that any training and induction required for the specific roles offered is provided.

Recruitment of Service Users

Recruiting people to become involved in teaching and learning activities should take into account diversity issues. Involvement of people who tend to be less frequently consulted, such as children and young people, older people, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and people living in areas of deprivation should be actively pursued. Relations with groups and organisations which represent such people should be established.

Support for staff

Support for Institute staff can be seen in terms of three main areas: training, information and contacts.

Training

Staff without much previous experience of service user involvement may benefit from opportunities to explore concerns and to learn from examples of effective service user involvement. Staff may need guidance in conducting meetings with service users, some of whom may themselves not be used to taking part in meetings.

Information

Staff not already active in involving service users may need information about the background to the strategy.

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Contacts

Some staff may already have good working relationships with service users and/or service user groups and organisations, while others may not yet have developed these. The Institute should develop – perhaps via an appointed staff member or core group - initial relationships with service user groups and organisations, and should encourage and support staff in making appropriate contacts.

Forward planning

An action plan for developing service user involvement should be drawn up. Service users should be involved in this process.

Development of these draft guidelines

These draft guidelines have been developed by a working group within the Institute. They have been adapted from the University of East Anglia Faculty of Health's (2007) revised draft strategy for involving people who have experienced health services in the teaching and learning activities of the faculty. It will be developed in consultation with Institute staff and HSSD service users.

References

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