

BASW Service User and Carer Involvement Framework

To create a robust and transparent framework for BASW Service User & Carer participation, an existing model designed by the National Service User Network has been adapted. The 4PI framework for involvement is a simple, yet comprehensive framework around which to base standards for good practice, and to measure, monitor and evaluate Service User and Carer involvement. The 4PI framework focuses on **principles, purpose, presence, process and impact:**

1 Principles

Meaningful and inclusive involvement starts with a commitment to shared principles and values.

- To bear in mind at all times that BASW's goal is to improve services for social workers and to improve social work for service users and their families and carers.
- The need to embrace inclusivity, equality of opportunity and fairness;
- A commitment to listen to service users and carers with respect and openness;
- A commitment to developing the organisation and our work in response to the views of service users and carers;
- Clarity and transparency from the start in all communications;
- Acknowledgement of the power differentials that exist between professionals and service users, and a commitment to minimise them where possible;
- A commitment to support race equality and to challenge discriminatory organisational practices;
- An open-minded approach towards cultural differences and diversity in ways of working;
- Sensitivity about language and actions: to acknowledge that there are different ways of expressing and doing things

- These principles applied will ensure BASW has a commitment to developing social work that meets the expectations of those using social work services.
- They should be considered by all active groups within BASW including council, committees, PPEGS etc in all their work
- All future BASW policies and guidance should have these principles embedded within and link to service user and carers in some way, for example, the BASW Code of Ethics
- Principles should be shared and owned by all those involved and differences dealt with
- Dialogue with service users and carers will help determine meaningful and inclusive involvement in many areas of BASW business and must be considered throughout the organisation

2 Purpose

The purpose of involvement needs to be both clear and shared with all of the people who are engaged in the involvement activity. The core purpose of any involvement activity should be to improve services for social workers and the experience of services for service users and carers.

- The purpose of involvement needs to be clearly stated and agreed at the start, so that everyone connected with the involvement activity or organisation knows why service users and carers are being involved;
- Clarity about the purpose of involvement should be extended to individual roles and potential activities for service users and carers;
- Clarity and transparency needs to be shared about the potential for involvement and influencing, as well as the limits of influence;
- The intended outcomes for involvement should be agreed and recorded at the start in order that they can be monitored and evaluated

- Identifying the purpose of the involvement of service users and carers will be the responsibility of all the people involved in the BASW task and must be transparent and accessible.
- The aim of involvement will be agreed and recorded
- The process of engagement and involvement must be agreed by all concerned with the task.

3 Presence

Service Users & Carers should be involved at all levels and in BASW activities across the organisation.

- A diversity of service users and carers should be involved at all levels and stages of an activity, organisation or project.
- Service users and carers should be involved at all levels within the organisation, project or activity including at decision-making levels;
- Service users and carers involved in an activity should include people from diverse backgrounds and communities.
- At an early stage, an analysis of the population under consideration should be undertaken in order to ensure that the involvement activity reflects that population – and to ensure that people particularly affected by the service or issues under consideration are actively approached for inclusion.
- There are monitoring procedures in place to monitor the presence of service users and carers, and the diversity of those involved, throughout these levels.
- Potential roles for service users and carers within organisations have been identified in Service User & Carer engagement (this is not an exhaustive list; other roles are also possible):
 - Ambassador (i.e. committed to the ethos of the work stream or programme, promoting it, spreading the word, engaging others)
 - 'Critical friend' (i.e. both programme and involved users/ carers able and prepared to engage in meaningful debate to reach a satisfactory negotiation of work programme/policy/delivery)
 - Co-worker (i.e. working directly with programme members to deliver the work of the programme)
 - Consultant
 - Expert by experience

- Care should be taken to ensure that service users and carers can be involved separately or give their views in separate ways as their views and priorities may be different.
- There should be a minimum of two and ideally three service users/carers in any meeting, with a reserve person at high level meetings; one service user or carer should never be expected to attend a meeting and represent the views of service users or carers.

- All parties need to identify the right people to be involved with a given task
- Clarification of their representation is needed – are they the right people in the right place?
- BASW must be clear about the recruitment and retention of service user and carers and this needs to be evaluated after completion of the task

4 Process

The involvement process needs to be carefully planned and thought through, in order to ensure that service users and carers can make the best possible contribution. The issues are grouped together and covered by Process under the following headings: engagement, communication, support and training, and practical issues.

Engagement:

- Information should be made widely available through a number of channels to ensure that service users and carers are informed of the opportunities for involvement;
- A range of different ways of being involved should be made available, in order to attract a wide range of service users and carers; this may mean adopting nontraditional approaches such as outreach or working with mediators from diverse communities;
- There should be a fair and transparent recruitment process;
- Task, role or job descriptions (proportionate to what is to be done) should be drawn up for involvement positions, whether they are paid or unpaid, employed or voluntary;
- Flexibility should be built in, to enable people to take advantage of different opportunities and to move in and out of involvement when they wish to or need to;
- Meetings should take account of those involved and should consider reasonable adjustments, such as not starting too early in the day in response to the difficulties experienced by some people who may be taking medication or not clashing with school pick up times.

Communication:

- Clear and regular communications should be adopted throughout an involvement activity;
- Jargon should be avoided – or clear and repeated explanations of terms and acronyms used should be given;
- Any written documents need to be sent out well in advance of meetings for people to have time to prepare and consideration must be made for the best format for such documents
- Feedback about the results or outcomes of an involvement activity should be given;
- Decision-making processes need to be open and accessible.

Support and training:

- Support for those involved needs to consider: Administrative support, supervision, and emotional support
- Opportunities for peer support or peer mentoring should be encouraged;
- Training should be given to enable equitable involvement and skills development;
- Training should be given to professionals/members of staff to raise awareness about involvement. Where possible, training should be shared by and with service users, carers and professionals taking part in an involvement process, as this can help to build a sense of team work.

Practical issues

- The policy, process and budget for the payment of fees and expenses needs to be clarified in advance of involvement;
- Information about payment of fees and 'out of pocket' expenses should be clear from the start; actual payment should be clear and timely;
- Childcare, carer and personal assistant costs should be taken into account when considering payment for people to become involved;
- Travel to be booked in advance where possible to avoid people being out of pocket.

- The process of engagement must be transparent and equitable for all tasks.
- The service user and carer will need to recognise how their contribution will be of benefit.
- All service user and carer engagement must be recorded to allow BASW to report on the success of this activity

5 Impact

The purpose of involvement should always remain at the centre of any attempt to assess impact.

In order to assess the impact of involvement, the following questions need to be asked:

1. What were the intended outcomes of the involvement activity? (refers back to the purpose of involvement)
2. What actual difference(s) have service users and carers made to the project, activity or organisation? (This can be monitored by continuous recording throughout a project as well as assessment at the end)
3. How did everyone feel about the process of involvement? (e.g. using 'end of involvement' questionnaires)
4. Did the involvement of service users and carers make a difference to the end result of the activity/project?
5. Did the involvement of service users and carers make a difference beyond the activity itself – to the delivery of services or wellbeing of individuals?

Impact needs to be explored in specific areas such as:

- Ethos/culture
- Policy and Planning
- Delivery
- Outcomes and outputs

- Diversity and equality of opportunity
- The service user and carer experience of the service

The use of a cyclical approach to assessing impact: involvement should be regarded as a continuous process and follow a cycle of improvement or development for example: Act – Evaluate – Reflect – Learn – Act cycle.

- BASW will implement an easy and useable evaluation tool to illustrate how service user and carer involvement has made a difference.
- Successes of service user and carer involvement must be shared across BASW to reinforce importance of this inclusion