

Mind in the Vale of Glamorgan Service Member Involvement Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Mind organisation nationwide was initiated by people who had firsthand knowledge of mental health services. We still seek to ensure that our services are person centred and demand led.
- 1.2 It is therefore the policy of Mind in the Vale of Glamorgan to ensure service members are included in all discussions about how the organisation should develop. They should experience a sense of ownership in respect of the services and feel that their own unique voice and opinion can contribute to shaping service delivery and the future direction of the organisation.
- 1.3 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that they are respected partners in all aspects of their own involvement with Mind in the Vale of Glamorgan. In order that this can be achieved appropriate procedures are in place and must be adhered to by all members of Mind in the Vale of Glamorgan's staff. Failure to comply with the policy may result in disciplinary action.
- 1.4 It is important that service members are involved in all aspects of our service to:
 - Build upon our core values of respect, listening, challenging discrimination and promoting personal development and social inclusion
 - Support our contracts with funders
 - Work in line with the equalities and diversity policy and associated legislation
 - Reflect the guidance and best practice in modern mental health care.
 - Reduce stigma by giving Service Members a voice, empowering them
- 1.5 Equally important are the positive benefits it brings, including:
 - Promoting self esteem of those who take part
 - Raising service members expectations of our service

- Promoting partnerships to improve service quality
- Reducing conflict and exclusion
- Facilitating development of skills and experience which is of value to Service Members

2 Principle

2.1 Mind in the Vale of Glamorgan believes it to be of fundamental importance that the organisation assists people to do things for themselves rather than doing things for/to them and that service members must be fully consulted on all matters and furthermore must be fully involved in the forming of policy, planning and running of services.

2.2 Service members should be empowered to make real decisions about their own lives and to be able to have a say in and make informed choices about the individual support they need and receive.

2.3 At Mind we offer a person centred service where the ideas and views of our Service Members are essential.

2.4 Consultation is an ongoing, two way process and should not be seen as a series of "one off exercises".

2.5 Everyone should have access to clearly understandable information about Mind in the Vale of Glamorgan, the services provided, the organisation's policies and procedures. This information should also be explained verbally to service members to ensure that its contents and implications are understood.

2.6 Jargon free language should be used at all times.

3 Involvement

3.1 The term 'involvement' is defined as activity that enables service members to have an active influence on actions and decisions at all levels within the organisation. Actions that may be influenced include the provision of individual support, the design, delivery,

monitoring and evaluation of services, staff selection and governance.

3.2 Involvement means to participate in a number of ways appropriate to the individuals and the activities concerned. Examples of involvement include:

- Giving information and listening
- Consultation
- Shared decision making
- Working together

3.3 We are committed to creating opportunities and supporting people to take part however, involvement is voluntary and service members should not be pressured to take part. Involvement should be as much or as little as anyone feels able to do.

4 Action

4.1 Responsibility

4.2 It is the responsibility of staff, volunteers, people service members and committee members to ensure that this policy is put into practice. It is therefore everyone's duty to publicise the policy, ensure that everyone has a copy of the policy and that the policy is explained to everyone to ensure that they understand its contents and implications.

4.3 Scope of involvement

4.4 Service members should be involved in all decision making at all levels. This will include:

- Deciding policies
- Setting budgets
- Recruitment of staff
- Adjudicating in the complaints procedure
- Day to day running of projects

4.5 Mind in the Vale of Glamorgan will ensure that service members have a wide variety of ways to express their views about service provision and that we will be open and flexible as to how we involve them. Methods may include:

- Groups or forums either as individuals or representatives of a whole stakeholder group
- By consultation using questionnaires or focus groups either anonymously or named
- By legal or other agreements
- As volunteers for the organisation
- By making a complaint or invoking their rights under one of the organisations existing policies

4.6 Mind in the Vale of Glamorgan will be open and honest with service members about the areas where they can and cannot realistically help to shape and change the day to day service provisions.

4.7 Mind in the Vale of Glamorgan will consult with service members about the future development and direction of the organisation and will ensure that any decisions made take account of their opinion.

4.8 Mind in the Vale of Glamorgan will keep everyone informed about the range of services we provide and any planned changes to service provision.

4.9 Commitment on the part of the organisation

4.10 Mind in the Vale of Glamorgan will endeavour to ensure that resources are allocated to ensure effective involvement. These may include:

- Worker Time
- Expenses and other money
- Training to enable people to participate with knowledge and skill
- Involvement in groups and Forums.

4.11 The management committee

4.12 It is of fundamental importance that service members have a proper (not token) voice on the management committee which is the governing body of the organisation.

- 4.13** A minimum of one quarter of the trustees of Mind in the Vale of Glamorgan should be people who are or who have experience of accessing mental health services.
- 4.14** To help achieve this, service members will be encouraged to join prior to the Annual General Meeting and staff will explain how to stand for election and assist candidates to complete the nomination forms if necessary. A recruitment pack is available to explain the implications of election and the powers and responsibilities of trustees.
- 4.15** Service Members must be actively encouraged and supported in performing this role by the staff and other trustees.
- 4.16** Resources will be made available for training service members to acquire the skills necessary for performing their role on the [Management committee) as effectively as possible. Trustees are expected to make use of the training resources and opportunities available.
- 4.17** **Staff Recruitment Boards**
- 4.18** Service Members will be involved fully in the recruitment of paid staff and volunteers. This will include involvement in the following:
- Decisions regarding job descriptions/person specifications
 - Wording and placement of advertisements
 - Short-listing of applicants
 - Interviewing of applicants.
- 4.19** At least one service member must be a part of any panel involved in interviewing for a new staff member at any level and their views must be given equal weight with other members of the panel. If someone should require support to carry out their role they can be accompanied by an advocate or friend.
- 4.20** Service members must receive any identified training in plenty of time to learn the procedures involved in the running of a

staff interview in line with Mind in the Vale's Recruitment and Selection Policy.

4.21 **Service Member meetings**

4.22 These meetings give everyone a regular opportunity to make their views known on services that they are receiving. Service Members are encouraged to attend and the meetings are given a high degree of importance by staff. Written views may be made anonymously.

4.23 Staff must ensure that these meetings perform the function for which they are intended. If they perceive anyone experiencing some difficulty in participating they should explore the reasons and seek to rectify the situation.

4.24 **Working Groups/ Policy Sub Groups**

4.25 Occasionally policy sub groups are set up to tackle particular issues (e.g. new policies, newsletters or planning for events). Service Members should be included as equal partners with staff, volunteers and trustees on such groups.

4.26 **Mind Groups**

4.27 Mind Cymru and National Mind run groups and conferences which are open to all members of Local Mind Associations. Those interested should be encouraged and helped to attend Network Meetings and the National Conference and workshops.

4.28 **Volunteers**

4.29 Volunteers for Mind in the Vale of Glamorgan will frequently be service members themselves and its recognised that they can bring a unique understanding and empathy to the service delivery.

4.30 Their work and involvement will be covered by a volunteering policy. They will have clearly defined roles which are different from, but of equal value to, paid staff.

5 Making Complaints

5.1 The complaints procedure is an important tool for service Members. If a person or group of people feel that decisions are being made without their consultation, or that they are not being properly involved in the decision making process they have the right to use this as grounds for making a complaint against staff or management committee members.

5.2 Staff should ensure that all new service members are aware of the procedure and know how to complain.

5.3 A copy of the Complaints Procedure should be displayed on notice boards in projects.

5.4 A Guide to our Services has a page to enable people to make a complaint.

6 Training

6.1 Service Members must whenever possible be offered suitable training to enable them to participate effectively with volunteering roles.

6.2 This should be provided either by the organisation's internal staff or by attendance at courses and conferences with financial assistance.

6.3 A programme for delivery of training in Person Centred Involvement should be publicised to all service members and their attendance encouraged.

6.4 We will ensure that all service members receive training in line with the recovery ethos and in the principles and practice of empowering people experiencing mental distress.

6.5 We will seek to include service members who have mental health problems in the delivery of this training.

7 Expenses

7.1 Service members will receive travel and other incidental expenses for attendance at any meeting or group on Mind in the Vale of Glamorgan's business providing this has been agreed in advance with a relevant member of staff.

7.2 Child care or other carer expenses may be deemed relevant in some cases but must be approved in advance.

8 Evaluation and monitoring

8.1 Mind in the Vale of Glamorgan seeks to work with everyone to continually improve the quality of service provided and to use appropriate techniques for the monitoring of the service.

8.2 Mind in the Vale of Glamorgan will review its Service Member Involvement Policy by considering issues such as:

- How service members are informed about its opportunities, i.e. events, publicity.
- How support is provided to those who may become pressured/ stressed through involvement activities, e.g. supervision.
- How support is provided to improve or develop the skills needed for genuine involvement.
- How to identify any boundaries/ restrictions to involvement and why they exist.

8.3 An annual summary of the effectiveness of Service Member Involvement Policy across the organisation will be produced and the findings placed in the annual report.

To be reviewed **annually** to ensure that service member involvement is intrinsic in the every aspect of Mind in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Approved: September 2016

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