



SERVICE USER INVOLVEMENT POLICY

“Service users clearly have unique experiences, skills and abilities that enable them to provide ‘expert advice’ in this field.”

Service User Involvement Framework. Welsh Government 2014.

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE:

This policy sets out how Barod will listen to the experience of its service users and carers and describes how we will use this information to improve our services. By ensuring that service user opinions are taken into account, Barod can make sure that service users are involved, listened and responded to and that significant measurable improvements in the service user experience continue to take place.

This policy is relevant to all children, young people and adults who engage with the services provided by Barod. The policy sets out the process and various initiatives that are incorporated at every stage of the agency’s involvement with a service user; from initially informing about the way Barod operates, gleaning comments/suggestions/level of satisfaction with services provided, engaging service users to participate in training opportunities etc. and enabling involvement in the planning and development of services/resources.

This policy is supported by local service delivery plans which will outline actions, responsibilities and timeframes for implementation and review of service user involvement activities.

Services should nominate a representative to lead on service user involvement across the area who will take an active role in attending relevant meetings and communicating back to Barod via management and team meetings.



This Policy sets out Barod's commitment to service user involvement and provides a framework for taking this forward, which includes:

- Enabling service users to play an active and valuable role in the planning, reviewing and development of services
- Developing partnerships between staff and service users (for example, staff and service users working together on specific issues or projects)
- Ensuring managers and staff make a commitment to service user involvement, valuing their skills, knowledge and input
- Ensuring service users' views are taken into account and acted upon, where appropriate
- Enabling an understanding, and educating both staff and service users in the benefits of working together

Barod shares the belief that service users must be meaningfully involved in the development of substance misuse policy and practice at every level. Barod are also committed to the principles of co-production as an approach to support quality service user participation. Barod recognise that the active participation of people who, because they currently use or have used services, can bring their knowledge and experience to contribute to the planning, delivery and appraisal of services at a very local, regional and national level.

Each service may have specific opportunities for service users, depending on what has been commissioned. You can find the example of Barod's preferred model in appendix 2, but this is dependant on the service offered in each area.

WHY INVOLVE SERVICE USERS?

There are benefits to both individuals and services when a good model of service user involvement is apparent within a service:

- It promotes strong person-centred values i.e. equality, dignity, respect, choice
- Individuals are offered an opportunity to share knowledge and expertise
- Individuals can develop new skills, gain confidence and self-esteem
- Discrimination and stigma can be challenged
- It can inform campaigning issues
- It helps services to focus on continuous improvement
- It helps deliver positive outcomes for people who use services
- It helps to meet requirements set out by Welsh Government and Area Planning Boards

Most importantly, every individual has the right to have the support they need to be involved and to have their say.

Barod will always be mindful of:

- The potential exploitation of service users
- The importance of supporting and nurturing service users' personal and professional development
- The importance of confidentiality
- Diversity and the need to maintain equality of opportunity
- The welfare of the service user
- The treatment framework
- Clear and safe boundaries for service users and workers

2. DEFINITIONS:

Service user involvement means different things to different people. Terms such as 'participation', 'consultation' and 'empowerment' are frequently used, but there is little agreement as to what these terms actually mean. This policy



uses the term 'involvement' in a broad context to encapsulate the differing terms and offer a flexible perspective

Service users, in the context of this policy, includes current and past service users, concerned others and all potential users of Barod services.

Barod will work to promote a positive image of drug users to engender respect within all our services and their communities; and to ensure fair treatment by the law, service providers, and other professionals; and to provide a platform to advocate for people who still use drugs and their needs where possible.

Service User involvement includes:

- Service users being involved in their own treatment and care plan.
- Service user involvement in planning and developing services
- Service user involvement in service provision
- Service user consultation in strategic decision making

Barod strives to deliver a service to people who accurately reflect the make-up of the local area in terms of ethnicity, gender, sexuality and substance of choice, with no discriminatory barriers in place. Service user involvement will be encouraged by all representatives of the community and anti-discriminatory procedures will be followed at all times.

3. INDIVIDUAL INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR TREATMENT

Barod's philosophy is one of being person-centred and 'making services fit people', therefore giving people choices about the service they receive is of paramount importance.

Whilst Barod strives to deliver services that are led by needs of the people receiving them, there are sometimes barriers, e.g. stakeholders may make

restrictions on the types of activities that can be supported or the length of stay in residential tier 4 services.

Staff are often required to take an innovative approach to service delivery, often balancing service user requirement with meaningful and measurable outcomes.

Existing good practice within services includes:

3.1 REFERRAL:

When a referral is received and allocated, the service user is contacted to arrange an initial appointment. The service user should be contacted at the earliest opportunity, by telephone if possible, and a mutually agreeable time and venue arranged.

NB: This process needs to be explained as part of induction of new staff: team meetings should serve as a reminder to existing staff

3.2 FIRST APPOINTMENT:

At the first appointment the service user will receive literature &/or a welcome pack relevant to the specific service identified to meet his/her individual needs. This information can be taken away by the service user and read at his /her leisure, or it can be worked through at the first appointment if preferred; the latter approach is particularly useful for service users with literacy difficulties.

The information provided should include:

- The service user's rights and responsibilities when attending Barod projects
- Our approach to working with drug and alcohol users, their families, carers and friends
- The range of services, including aftercare, provided by Barod
- Our commitment to equal opportunities for all service users

- Barod's confidentiality policy and information sharing procedures
- Barod's complaints process
- The range of opportunities available, including peer mentoring, volunteering and service user involvement

3.3 ASSESSMENT:

The first appointment will incorporate an initial assessment which is a mutual activity, involving both worker and service user, to identify needs and inform the setting of goals.

Using a harm reduction approach, Barod works with the service user to find out what his/her own opinion is about the extent of alcohol or drug use s/he thinks is right for him/her. This might be complete abstinence, abstinence from one substance only, a reduction of one or more of the substances s/he uses or a change to the ways in which the service user uses her/his substances of choice.

Once the service user has decided what s/he wants to do about his/her substance use, and has set personal goals, Barod works with the individual to devise a Care Plan.

3.4 CARE PLAN PLAN:

The Care Plan outlines the objectives set by the service user, and the ways in which the service user aims to achieve them. This can be one goal, for example stopping drinking, or several goals. When there are several goals, they are can be divided in the Care Plan into short-term and long-term. Together, the worker and the service user look at what methods or techniques might help the service user towards achieving his/her goals, and who might help him/her, and these are detailed in the Care Plan.

3.5 REVIEW:

The Care Plan is reviewed by the service user and her/his worker at least every 12 weeks, or sooner if necessary. The service user may keep a copy of



his/her plan. At the review, interventions that are not working for the service user are removed from the plan and any new goal that has been decided on is included. In this way, the service user's plan is tailored and adapted to meet his/her individual needs.

How many or how few times the service user's Care/Action Plan changes, and how long or short his/her time with Barod is will depend upon the service user and his/her needs and circumstances. The harm reduction approach and content of the Barod Care Plan always respond to and reflect the needs of the service user as an individual.

In certain services the Sessional Rating Scale, (SRS), is used after every appointment in order to review the session, progress made and to form an effective basis for the ongoing treatment plan.

3.6 CLOSURE:

At the point of an agreed closure, an exit form is completed by the service user providing an opportunity to feedback on the service they have received.

4. INVOLVEMENT IN PLANNING AND DEVELOPING SERVICES

4.1 RESOURCES:

Leaflets and other resources including digital communication produced by Barod will be created in partnership with service users to ensure that the language and format are user-friendly and accessible.

4.2 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT:

Service users will be involved in the planning and development of new and existing service provision. Barod can continually learn and improve through involving the people who actually use the service.

A range of methods are used across the organisation to gather service user views, and to listen to concerns and compliments. Service users may also

benefit by being involved as they learn new skills, which can result in improving confidence and raising self-esteem.

4.3 OUTREACH CAMPAIGNS:

Service users will be consulted and invited to advise on relevant topics for campaigns and on various, effective ways of engagement with current, previous and potential service users. They will also be consulted on literature that is developed as part of these campaigns.

4.4 SUGGESTION BOXES AND BULLETIN BOARDS:

Provision:

- Suggestion boxes, paper and pencils are placed in waiting areas and counselling rooms
- Specific service user involvement bulletin boards are placed in waiting areas
- Each office has a named service user representative
- The service manager and service user rep will empty suggestion boxes on a monthly basis and discuss the content

Feedback:

- If service users have identified themselves, feedback is undertaken on an individual basis also; this may be face-to-face or in writing
- A list of suggestions is displayed, if appropriate, on the bulletin board, along with the service response on what will happen as a result of the suggestions
- If no action is planned, an explanation is displayed as to the reasons why the suggestion is not being taken up

NB: Bulletin Boards are an easy means of providing up-to-date information, which may include briefings from APB's, sub-groups, health professionals, service providers and health warnings. Copies of this policy and the Service User Charter (Appendix 1) should also be displayed on the bulletin board and



available to all service users. Bulletin Boards should not be confused with notice boards, e.g. promoting services in the community. Services Managers are responsible for the information displayed on bulletin boards in their respective offices

4.5 SATISFACTION SURVEYS:

Service user satisfaction surveys will be undertaken periodically across Barod and may seek feedback on Barod services as a whole, or on specific projects. Surveys will be administered by volunteers and volunteer peer mentors. These may be in the form of an online survey, but paper copies will be made available.

4.6 ASKING SERVICE USERS THEIR VIEWS:

Staff, including managers, are encouraged to ask service users what they think about services and developments. This can be done informally, (at times in passing), formally through tools such as the Sessional Rating Scale (SRS), and within the assessment and review processes. As a minimum feedback will be sought from Barod's various service user groups.

4.7 RECOGNISED SERVICE USER FORUMS:

Barod will promote established service user forums both from within and outside of the organisation. Barod staff will encourage, support and develop service users who attend such forums through one-to-one meetings and by offering relevant advice.

NB: It is recognised that service users may not be willing to share their views with anyone for a number of reasons, including fear of losing a service or affecting the relationship with their worker. At no time will service users be forced to share their views or have their services affected by not participating in any aspect of service user involvement. Similarly, giving negative feedback will not have a detrimental impact on services received; on the contrary, constructive criticism will be welcomed and used to change and improve service provision.

4.8 NEWSLETTERS

A service user newsletter produced by staff to communicate to service users is not a tool for service user involvement. However, a service user newsletter that involves service users in its production and editorial decisions may well be. This is a common means of involving service users. Done well, planned and resourced properly, service user newsletters can be an empowering means to involve service users and develop communication.

A service user newsletter is a means of communicating on developments and news within your service, and possibly also providing news about external agencies and other opportunities. Most often they go beyond this remit and provide opportunities for issues, personal experiences and opinions to be voiced.

4.9 FILM MAKING

Barod have many promotional films that cover a variety of topic within drugs and alcohol. The co-production of a film is an excellent involvement technique as both Barod and service users can work together to agree the right messages delivered in the right way. Service users can express their own, or others, opinion and experiences. A film can be used to present these opinions and experiences to a wide variety of people.

Films can be in the format of interviews, documentary, video diary or drama. Service users can be involved either in front of the camera or gain skills and experience by taking a role behind the camera. The creative arts are also a good way of involving people, particularly where language or literacy issues may be identified in a group or individual.

They can address sensitive issues that are difficult to talk about and help to engage people who might not normally get involved. Being involved in creative arts can build confidence, increase skills and may lead people to become involved in further learning, involvement or employability activities.



No service users will be filmed without their consent and we will comply with General Data Protection Regulations around the right to be forgotten.

5. INVOLVEMENT IN SERVICE PROVISION

5.1 STAFF RECRUITMENT:

Barod views service users as a rich source of knowledge and skills, and believes that their involvement in the recruitment, induction and training of staff is of great benefit to all parties concerned.

Barod will ensure that, wherever possible, a service user representative is involved in the recruitment of new staff, including participation on interview panels.

Barod will ensure that service users who engage in this activity will receive training and support to carry out their involvement in staff recruitment confidently and effectively.

Good practice within services includes:

- Service users are involved in putting together questions to be asked during interviews
- Service users participate in open evenings held for staff recruitment purposes. This may involve chatting with people informally, assisting in the delivery of exercises or workshops prospective staff are asked to participate in, or by giving presentations about the service they expect from staff
- Service users 'meet and greet' people as they arrive for interview
- Service user involvement in interview panels, holding equal weight on scoring and outcome

5.2 MEETINGS:

Service users will be invited to team meetings, and to other relevant meetings, to discuss various issues with staff and to present personal stories where appropriate.

5.3 PEER EDUCATION/PROMOTION:

Barod will promote the use of peer networks to advertise Barod services and pass on harm reduction information and will aim to do so via service user groups and volunteer peer mentors. Here are some examples of good practice:

- Peers should be involved at every stage of peer research development.
- A comprehensive training package can be provided, and should cover areas such as confidentiality, boundaries, equal opportunities and research development
- Staff should have a facilitative role as opposed to leadership role in the process, allowing all work to take a bottom up approach (including data analysis and write up)
- Research can take the form of one or a combination of many of the tools outlined
- Service users and staff should consider which tool or technique is most appropriate
- Service users should be involved in the dissemination of the research
- Offering people an opportunity to research an issue that particularly interests them, and to use their own personal insight when conducting research
- Keeping a record of the training provided, the research areas conducted and the findings of the research as evidence of service user involvement

5.4 INVOLVING PEOPLE IN AUDIT AND APPRAISAL

A combination of internal self-assessment and audit processes, as well as inspection by external agencies, helps services to focus on continuous improvement in service delivery. Additionally, a staff appraisal system offers the opportunity for staff and managers to consider how staff performance affects the quality of service delivery and to identify possible development opportunities.

It is important that the people who use services are given the opportunity to play a part in assessing the quality of service delivery, and to give constructive feedback to staff on their performance.

Existing good practice within services includes:

- Commissioners speaking to service users and occasionally sitting in on group sessions to allow informal discussion with service users about service provision
- Service users having an opportunity to input into any organisational self-assessment
- A service user involvement log being kept in each service user file to be seen by auditors and inspectors

6. CONSULTATION IN STRATEGIC DECISION MAKING

6.1 THE BAROD MANAGEMENT BOARD:

This is open to service users who have a willingness and interest in the management of the project. It will be limited to two service user places. It would be valuable to have at least one service user on the management board who is a member of a service user forum and able to represent the views of service users and feedback to the appropriate forums.

6.2 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES REVIEW:

As these are developed, service users have constant access to them and are able to meet with staff to give comments about the policies and procedures in place. New and amended policies should be made available to Barod's service user groups for comment. All current policies and procedures are available in written form. Anyone showing an interest who has difficulties with the written word will be able to go through them with a worker, who will provide a clear explanation of their content. Translations into other languages and into Braille will be arranged as and when required

6.3 RESEARCH AND NEEDS ASSESSMENTS:

The future strategic development of drug and alcohol services will be carried out in response to the changing needs and trends of our service users and their communities. Service users are in a unique position to be able to inform Barod, and organisations that provide funding for services, of those needs before critical situations arise.

6.4 INVOLVING PEOPLE IN STAFF TRAINING

We rely on a suitably trained and skilled workforce to deliver services that are appropriate to the needs of service users.

Barod delivers training in line with best practice. To help us do this, service users may contribute to training materials and, in some cases, to the delivery of courses.

Opportunities for service users to become involved in training should be provided for people in all areas and across Barod services.

Service users should be selected for their interest in the topic and their ability to represent the wider views of others.

6.5 REIMBURSEMENT FOR SERVICE USERS:

Barod will ensure that individuals who are engaged in service user involvement activities that are separate from their treatment will not be out of

pocket and will be reimburse for travel expenses at the same rate as volunteers.

6.6 EVIDENCING INVOLVEMENT

Barod has a duty to evidence that service users are appropriately involved in their own care and support. Collecting evidence of service user involvement, such as when service delivery has been changed as a result of feedback, is useful when tendering or re-tendering. We can also use this as our evidence base to inform best practice. When real examples of service user influence can be demonstrated in a tender exercise it shows commissioners the value we place on the people that use Barod services, and our commitment to providing service users with the best possible service for them.

As well as keeping records of each service user involvement activity, below are some additional ways of evidencing service user involvement within a service:

- Have a service user involvement statement on display within the service, provide a copy of it in welcome packs for new service users, and ensure that it explained to new service users when they start to use the service
- Have a written Terms Of Reference for the service user forum showing clearly why it exists, what it hopes to achieve and responsibilities of participants.
- Write an annual report for the service user forum detailing the activities of the forum and the influence it has had on service delivery
- Provide updates for service users showing how things have changed in the service as a result of service user feedback
- Adapt the Barod service user charter (Appendix 1) to suit each individual service user so that it is specific to them and details exactly how they want to be treated by service staff

- Keep written records of any involvement service users have in staff recruitment e.g. ask the service user how they were involved, how they felt, whether they would like to be involved again in the future, anything they would change etc
- Provide information about service reviews, explaining what they are, why they are conducted, when and where they take place and how to get involved in them
- If the service manager holds consultation events with service users, ensure the points raised by service users and the responses given to them are documented
- Keep copies of service user comments that have been made in response to discussion topics instigated by the Barod Board Of Trustees
- Keep records of how, when and how often service users have been involved in staff training

7. Policy Review

The policy lead is Jamie Harris

The policy will be reviewed every two years by staff and service users in partnership

Date of last review:

Date of next review: