

Case Study 1

Education Seminars 2013 - 14

Involvement of service users and carers in education and training programmes

Situation

As a result of some poor feedback from an external review a faculty have asked one of their programmes to include service users and carers in the creation of a new curriculum to make sure that the programme is preparing their students for the 'real world' of practice in their profession. The programme team have taken this on board and are making changes in line with these requirements.

To meet this request, the programme team placed advertisements in the local newspaper for suitable experts by experience. The role description asked for experience in an educational setting, as the service users or carers are to be consulted on the content of the programme's level five modules. The programme team feel that this level is the most appropriate part of the programme for this input to be, as this is where the students are encouraged to link their theory to the 'real world' of practice.

Through meetings held each Tuesday and Thursday morning with the relevant module leaders, the service users have given feedback on the proposed module content, structure and teaching materials, and have also been able to contribute to the development of e-learning materials for students. Travel expenses are paid to the service users and they have been offered payment for their work. However, one of the service users has refused payment, as this would have affected her entitlement to benefits.

Questions

1. Does this meet the new standard?
2. What are the benefits with this form of service user and carer involvement?
3. What are the potential barriers or issues with this type of involvement? How could you overcome these?



Case Study 2

Education Seminars 2013 - 14

Involvement of service users and carers in education and training programmes

Situation

As a result of some extensive work in the local community an education provider has developed a long standing relationship with Llanelli Users and Carers Association (LUCA), a service user and carer advocacy group. For a particular programme, LUCA has been asked to send a number of service user and carer representatives to work alongside programme team members on the admissions process. Usually this is in the capacity of talking to potential applicants at the education provider's open day. However this time, the LUCA representatives are being asked to sit on the panels that will be interviewing applicants for places on this programme.

While this is a new venture for this education provider the association have provided representatives to undertake this role for other education providers in the past. In order to support their members in the activities they undertake in representing service users, LUCA sponsors them to go on courses such as assertiveness training and communication skills. The programme team have also offered to provide a briefing as to the representative's role in interviewing students on the days prior to interviewing the applicants. To fully fund the training and support that LUCA provides, which includes some part time staff, the education provider pays the advocacy group for the services provided.

The reason for this change was that the programme team were made aware of informal discussions with the interviewees at other education providers after they had undertaken the admissions process. In these discussions the applicants stated that they felt the experience of being interviewed by service user representatives gave them some 'hands on' experience of interacting with service users. The LUCA representatives also said that the involvement with the selection process made them feel valued and that they felt they were giving the candidates a 'taste of reality'.

Questions

4. Does this meet the new standard?
5. What are the benefits with this form of service user and carer involvement?
6. What are the potential barriers or issues with this type of involvement? How could you overcome these?

Case Study 3

Education Seminars 2013 - 14

Involvement of service users and carers in education and training programmes

Situation

An education provider has started an institution-wide initiative to include as many external experts in their assessment processes and procedures as possible, in an attempt to become a leading institute in the field of professional education. For its health and care programmes the education provider has a pool of professionals who are in practice and also a pool of service users and carers that they have worked with in various capacities for a number of years.

To fit in with this new initiative the one programme team in particular has decided to increase the participation of their experts by experience and include service users and carers in the assessment of students on their programme. As such they have offered training to their pool of service users and carers in order for them to undertake this role and mark students appropriately and in line with professional expectations.

For one module, the service users and carers provide feedback on students' classroom presentations, which accounts for 50 per cent of the module mark. They also assess students' written work for several of the modules across all academic levels. This has been backed up by a policy of ensuring that at least one service user must sit on the Examination Board for the programme to provide an additional external view on the decisions that the Board makes. While the service users and carers are paid an hourly fee for their involvement, they do not have their travel and other expenses covered. This is an agreement that was drawn up some time ago and has become established practice.

Questions

7. Does this meet the new standard?
8. What are the benefits with this form of service user and carer involvement?
9. What are the potential barriers or issues with this type of involvement? How could you overcome these?

Case Study 4

Education Seminars 2013 - 14

Involvement of service users and carers in education and training programmes

Situation

As a result of a professional body encouraging greater service user and carer participation in pre-registration education and training programmes, an education provider allocated resource to its programme teams to facilitate this involvement. This has led to a number of innovations on the programmes, varying from inclusion in teaching and learning, to the completion of surveys to determine how this particular profession is viewed by users of their services.

Last year, on their three year programme Imran, a service user, was interviewed by a module leader in front of the group, as a one-off. Imran was asked about his experience and was able to provide a number of stories from the service user perspective. The students felt this was a highly valuable addition to the programme, so the programme team responded to the feedback by contacting a variety of different service user and carer organisations, requesting people willing to come and talk to the students about their experiences, on a voluntary basis. This year they ran a short series of talks which were delivered by service users and carers on their lived experience of the service from the profession. The speakers were briefed beforehand by the programme team, on the kind of topics that may be relevant and appropriate to the programme.

However, as this was outside of regular teaching, the sessions were not mandatory and this resulted in poor attendance. Some of the service users and carers are therefore unwilling to engage with the programme further.

Questions

10. Does this meet the new standard?
11. What are the benefits with this form of service user and carer involvement?
12. What are the potential barriers or issues with this type of involvement? How could you overcome these?