



# Introduction

We want to ensure that everyone who can and wishes to participate in decisions relating to our service has an opportunity to do so. Our stakeholders are those for whom we provide support, their representatives and our staff.

“Service user involvement is a two way process that involves both service users and their service provider in the sharing of ideas, where service users are able to influence decisions and take part in what is happening”


The following strategy will outline how involvement will be implemented and taken forward within our company. It is intended that the strategy will outline what is meant by "Involvement", why we should develop this and how it can be achieved.

## 1. What is Involvement?

The term involvement may encompass several actions and processes. It could be a one off event but is more likely to be an on-going process.

**The process can include the following elements:**

- **Providing information** - Although this is not a form of involvement it is essential if it is going to be successful. People need to know all of the relevant information in order to provide feedback and an opinion. It is also important to keep people informed following the consultation, not only is this good practice but it also will facilitate any on-going involvement.
- **Listening** – We want to listen to our stakeholders. This may be done on an on-going basis, as part of everyday working practices but also could be one off events. This involves us taking on board the information we gain and acting upon it
- **Consultation** - Stakeholders can be asked about specific ideas or initiatives as part of the planning process. This information can then be used to inform future or current provision.
- **Participation** - This term is closely related to consultation. However participation may be more intensive and involve more interaction. This may include participation in working groups, or involve stakeholders in planning specific actions or influencing decisions. This may involve more ownership of the process.



Influence decisions  
and take part in the  
development of the  
service.

## 2. Promoting Involvement

- **Information Sharing**

This may include letters, email, posters, newsletters, blogs, Twitter, Facebook, website, Google community, text message or people planner portal. We also strive to share information through inspection reports, annual reviews and plans. We will speak with you and your family face to face at service reviews.

We are a member of the National Inclusion Network, and are kept informed about their activities through regular email bulletins. These email bulletins contain the latest news relating to disability and human rights. Our membership with Inclusion Scotland allows us to advocate for you at government level.

- **Listening**

We aim to listen to your views and opinions consistently, including topics such as staff induction, training, the annual plan, staff reviews and service user reviews. We may do this through one to one interviews, telephone calls, group interviews, meetings, focus groups, feedback forms, email, website or the feedback feature on people planner.

Comments and complaints are one way for us to consistently improve our service and for staff and service users to participate in the process. If you would like to make a comment or complaint, please contact the office where they will record your comments and pass these to a senior manager.

- **Consultation**

This includes one to one or group interviews, focus groups, questionnaires or one off focused events. During consultations, we must consider whether a person has capacity to make decisions and if not to ensure there named person is involved. Our staff regularly consults with Edinburgh council and government agencies, district nurses, hospital discharge teams and family members.

Recently one of our staff members was nominated to speak at parliament regarding her role organising and delivering care. Other recent consultations include SSC codes of conduct, The National Care Standards and SCSWIS new inspection process and complaints review.

- **Participation**

We encourage everyone to participate in all aspects of the company through promoting the twelve points of the charter involvement, striving to have service users at the heart of all decisions.

We may do this through Focus Areas, participation in trials and your own personal health plan. We will share this through our shared management meeting Google Community, newsletter and one to one contact with you e.g. at visits, supervision or reviews.



### 3. Why Are We Undertaking Stakeholder Involvement?

There are clear benefits to involving stakeholders in our service delivery. These include:

- That it furthers the goals of independence, through facilitating inclusion, encouraging the development of life skills, and enhancing self-esteem.
- Stakeholder involvement represents good practice. Involvement helps to achieve quality services which best meet the needs of those using the service. The process can be very useful when planning future provision
- Service Users have a right to be involved in decisions that affect them.
- In the long term stakeholder involvement is vital in planning new services and future provision

#### National Involvement Network

Social Care Alba is a member of the National Involvement Network (NIN). NIN have written and published “The Charter for Involvement”. This is a series of twelve statements that shows how people who use care services wish to be involved in the services they get and the organisations that provide them.



The twelve statements were written by service users and are as follows;

1. We must be at the heart of any plans about our lives.
2. We have a right to live our lives independently.
3. We must be involved in our communities.
4. We must be able to speak about how our support is working for us and what would be better.
5. We want to be involved in choosing the people who support us.
6. We want to give information and training to staff at all levels.
7. We want to be involved in writing policies that affect us and making them easy to understand.
8. We want to be involved in decisions made by the organisations that plan and run our support.
9. We want to be involved in events run by the organisations that plan and run our support.
10. We want to be involved with ‘Speaking-up’ groups.
11. We want to take part in national and local campaigns.
12. We have the right to make formal complaints if we need to.

By signing up to the Charter, Social Care Alba commits to the improve participation in line with the Charters principles.

## 4. Issues We Considered When Developing Stakeholder Involvement

The very diversity of people requiring support (in terms of needs, capacities, circumstances and relationship with the wider community in which they live) poses a challenge for us in developing effective user involvement

There were several challenges to consider in relation to supporting people and involvement. We will work in partnership with stakeholders to look at these issues and to come up with solutions to ensure that their involvement is effective:

- Our capacity may be impacted when implementing stakeholder involvement.
- Stakeholders are varied and have different support needs, aspirations and experiences, for example older people with support needs or individuals with a learning disability. Involvement methods may need to be different depending upon the service user group which is being consulted.
- Sometimes our support may be short-term. The levels of involvement may differ, as individuals may not wish to get involved if they are only staying at a service for a short time, and it may be difficult to keep individuals engaged in long term services.
- Some people we support have chaotic lives and so may be difficult to engage, for example substance misusers, individuals with mental health problems. This may make involvement more challenging.
- Staff may not wish to commit to further involvement outside of their work.
- There were also some important practical considerations, the majority of these relate to service user or their representatives:
  - Service users may need support to become involved. This may mean practical assistance, for example a personal assistant for someone with physical, mental or communication needs. Service users who have English as a second language may need interpreters. Service users may lack the confidence initially to become involved and may need support in order to gain confidence.
- Time and opportunities for staff outside of their work time is required.
- All events and initiatives planned have to be mindful of the practical requirements of stakeholders:
  - Cultural and religious needs, for example mixed gender groups, planning of events during religious festivals
  - The accessibility of meetings and events, all venues will need to be totally accessible
  - Childcare considerations
  - people's desires, values, family situations, social circumstances and lifestyle

## 5. Implementing the Strategy

We will develop our strategy in consultation with stakeholders. This will involve reviewing all current methods of engagement and involvement. We must consider the barriers identified above and work with service users and stakeholders to look for solutions to overcome these barriers. This may be achieved by altering the method of communication or alternatively arranging carer support to facilitate participation.

While encouraging active participation by our service users we must also be mindful to demonstrate person centred communication. This is achieved by seeing the person as an individual, considering their communication needs and working together to develop appropriate solutions. This also requires staff to be compassionate, think from the person's point of view, be respectful and patient when encouraging participation. The methods by which stakeholders may engage and participate in the service include but are not limited to:

### Written

- Questionnaires at week 1, week 6, and 6 monthly thereafter
- Comments and complaints
- Letters
- Newsletters
- Publications
- Government reviews
- Inclusion Scotland media

### Electronic

- Email
- Skype messenger
- Skype calls
- Text message
- Telephone calls
- Anonymous web form
- Website
- Survey Monkeys
- Bog, Twitter, Facebook
- LinkedIn
- Google Community
- Public blog posts
- People Planner service user portal
- Carer visit feedback on people planner
- Freshdesk - staff record your call, highlight it to colleagues and ensure it is followed through.
- Engagement questions – by phone/in person, your answers are recorded and considered.
- Telephone recordings, each call made or received is recorded allowing for contact to be replayed.

## **Meetings**

- Continual service reviews
- Supervision
- Training
- Focus Groups
- Interviews
- Drop in sessions
- Unannounced visits
- One to one meetings
- Locality meetings
- Local Authority meetings
- GP, Nurses, social work and other professionals
- Team Meetings, Healthy Working Lives
- Shared Management Meetings
- Healthy Working Lives
- IIP Interviews
- The Welcoming
- Shared Management Meetings planned monthly

## **Audits and Verbal**

- Continual Audit
- Focus Areas
- IT Audits
- ISO 27001
- Personnel audit
- Continual Service Reviews
- Health and Safety audit
- Investors in people
- Local authority audit
- Home Office
- Job Centre Plus
- Feedback from Health and Social Care partners

## 6. The Way Forward

**Part 1** - We plan to implement this strategy by choosing a main topic to convey every three-months. Our first topic will focus on making service users and staff aware of the projects and areas that are underway within the company, and how they can get involved in these. We aim to promote stakeholder engagement and encourage people to identify areas that they wish to be developed.

We will accomplish this first stage by using some of the methods mentioned above predominantly creating a public blog, newsletter, posting on the google community and speaking to people by telephone.

**Part 2** - The second topic will focus on encouraging stakeholders to participate in Social Care Alba's annual plan, contributing to staff learning and development, and staff annual appraisals.

**Part 3** – Future focus areas will be chosen by stakeholders, encouraging contributions to the decisions and plans made. Examples may include service user involvement in the interview process, contributing to inductions and training.

### Project Already Underway

- **Lively**
- **Taggisar**
- **Robotics**
- **Wearable Technology**
- **Beacons**
- **Care Management**

### In everything we do we aim:

- **To be Inclusive** - This may mean that specific pieces of work have to be carried out with hard to reach groups of service users and staff
- **To be Responsive** - We will be responsive to the opinions and ideas of stakeholders. We will also be responsive to any needs service users may have in order to become involved.
- **To evaluate work undertaken and learn from experience** – We will evaluate all work undertaken. We recognise that not all of the activities and meetings undertaken may be successful during this process, and there may be an element of trial and error.
- **To be patient** – We understand that stakeholder involvement may take time to be effective.
- **Commit resources** – We understand it will be necessary to commit resources in order to make involvement successful, for example travel expenses, venues, staff time
- **Review** - There will be an official review of the strategy on an annual basis.



