

Working in partnership with you: Our Service User and Carer Involvement Strategy

The Adults Health and Wellbeing Directorate (adult social services) at Tower Hamlets council are writing a “Service User and Carer Involvement Strategy”. This is a 3 year plan which says how we will listen and act on peoples’ views about their social care and support services. We wrote the Strategy after listening to the views of users, carers, staff and other organisations. We would now like to hear what you think about what we have written so far.

Who is the Strategy for?

The Strategy is mainly for people who use social care and support services that the council either run or pay for. It is also for the friends or family who care for them. This includes services for older people, services for people with a physical or learning disability, and support services to help people to live independently in their own homes.

Why do we need to have a Strategy?

It is important we listen to and act on the views of people who use our services and their carers. It will help us to improve what we do so that we are meeting people’s needs. It is also important because we want users and carers to have as much choice and control as possible. This means users and carers knowing that their opinion counts.

The vision for Tower Hamlets is “to create an environment where the impact of involvement on our services, local communities, and the individual user and carer is positive, visible and lasting”

What is in the Strategy?

Below is a list of 6 goals that we will work towards, and how we will meet them:

- We want all our staff to listen and act on the views of service users and carers in the best possible way.**
 - By giving staff the support and information that they need to do this
 - By staff working towards their own goals to involve users
 - By staff being able to show what users and carers have said, and what they have done as a result.
- We want to have a lot of different ways for people to get involved. We want everyone to have the chance to do this.**
 - By being clear about how people’s views can affect what we do
 - By developing the ways users and carers can get involved now. This includes being a member of a group and filling in questionnaires
 - By finding new ways to find out what users and carers think.
- We want to include the views of users and carers when we are planning things, deciding things, doing things and checking things.**
 - By involving users and carers when we are starting new projects, policies and plans
 - By involving users and carers when we are making decisions on who to employ, what services to buy and what changes to make
 - By involving users and carers in the work we do. This includes training staff, carrying out research and making information
 - By helping users and carers who run services for other users and carers
 - By working with users and carers to check how well we are running.
- We want to have ways of involving people that are good quality, supportive and fair to everyone.**
 - By checking and making sure staff work in the same way when they ask for and act on views and opinions
 - By checking and making sure we are listening to a wide range of service user and carer views

- By supporting users and carers to have their say through things like training
 - By making sure there is no cost to people to get involved.
5. **We want to make sure that the views of users and carers are acted on, and that people are told about this.**
- By having a way of seeing what effect user and carer views have had on our services, the user and carer, and local communities
 - By telling people about getting involved and what we have done with user and carer views and opinions in different ways
 - By supporting users and carers who want to move from involvement into employment or training.
6. **We want to work well with other organisations to listen to and act on views and opinions.**
- By working and communicating well with different parts of the council, the NHS in Tower Hamlets, user and carer groups, THINK and other organisations
 - By working together with others where it makes sense for us to do this.

What will it mean for me?

We are aiming for the following by 2013:

If you are a service user or carer, by 2013 we want...

- You to tell us that social care and support services have got better
- You to tell us that all our staff listen to your views and act on them where they can
- You to feel confident about giving your views or making a complaint
- You to feel fully supported to have your say and supported to do go into employment or training if that is what you want.
- It to be easy for you to find and understand information on how to give your views, and what we have done with them.

If you work at the council, by 2013 we want...

- You to be fully supported to carry out the Strategy as part of your role
- You to be able to show how you and your team have listened to and acted on the views of service users and carers
- The team you work in to have met goals you have set on service user and carer involvement. The goals will be the same as the goals in the Strategy.
- You to know about how service users and carers are getting involved across the Directorate and know what difference it is making.

If you work with the council, by 2013 we want...

- You to tell us that we communicate and work well with you to involve users and carers
- You to report that support is available to help you to involve users and carers in the work that you do

What will it mean for social care and support services?

By 2013, we want to be able to show:

- That we have listened to a wide range of views in a lot of different ways
- That we have acted on these views to plan social care and support services, make decisions about services, run these services and check how well they are running
- That listening to and acting on these views has improved what we do

What do you think?

We want to hear what you think about the Strategy. Do you think anything should be changed? Do you think anything else should be included?

Please contact Joanne Starkie (User and Carer Involvement Manager) with any feedback by 18th March on joanne.starkie@towerhamlets.gov.uk or 020 7364 0534. You can also contact Joanne to see a full copy of the Strategy.