

## **“Tips Sheet” No.6 Service User Peer Support**

1. This “tips sheet” was developed in response to demand from alcohol and drugs services in Greater Glasgow and Clyde for some assistance in developing or reviewing systems of peer support. It draws on a number of sources including the experience of the SUIP staff team over the past couple of years, good practice examples from the literature, and local services who have generously shared examples of their own practice.
2. The information here is arranged in three sections; Volunteer Peer Meeting and Greeting, Informal Support or “Buddying” And Volunteer Peer Mentoring.

### **3. Volunteer Peer Meeting and Greeting**

#### **3.1 Who Might Do This?**

- A volunteer current service user who knows and attends the service regularly

#### **3.2 What is the Volunteer’s Role in Meeting and Greeting?**

- Meet and welcome potential or new service users either at the first service visit or initial assessment.
- Show them around the service.
- Explain basic health and safety procedures e.g. fire procedure, signing in sheets, etc.
- Explain basic housekeeping of the service e.g. toilets, kitchen, facilities for the service user’s use
- Explain smoking policy, etc.

### 3.3 Considerations for the Service

- Write up a short role description for Volunteer Peer Meeting and Greeting
- Write up criteria for Volunteer Peer Meet and Greet role e.g. length of time in service required, is there a level of stability required?
- Write up a checklist for volunteer meet & greeter to use, to make sure they have covered everything required and get both parties (volunteer meet & greeter and new service user) to sign at the end of the welcome session.
- Write up a basic agreement between service and volunteer meet & greeter covering ground rules of the role.
- Ensure that an assessment or visit time does not disrupt the volunteer meet & greeter's own programme.

### 3.4 Evidencing Peer Meet and Greet

- Photocopy the checklist and give a copy to the new service user and one for a service file specific to Service User Involvement
- At key work sessions, key worker can ask volunteer involved in Peer Meet and Greet how many welcome sessions they have done, how they feel, etc. This should be recorded in the service users file/care plan.

## **4. Informal Support or "Buddying"**

### 4.1 Who Might Do This?

- A current service user who knows and uses the service regularly, possibly been attending the service for a few weeks or more

### 4.2 What is the role for the Informal Supporter or "Buddy"?

- Role could incorporate meet and greet with further responsibilities, or be a separate role altogether.

- To introduce the new service user to the other service users and staff.
- Agree an arrangement whereby the "buddy" makes regular contact with the new service user e.g. twice a day during the first week, once daily for the next two weeks and then twice a week or until the new service user feels comfortable.
- To answer any initial questions the service user may have regarding programme/service/ procedures
- To act as a link between new service user and staff
- To find out how new service user is settling in and share knowledge and offer re-assurance/encouragement.
- To record relevant information between the "buddy" and service users, staff members can support with this if the "buddy" requires literacy support.

#### **4.3 Considerations for the Service**

- Write up a role description. Include commitment required and any training requirements together with how these will be met.
- Write up specific criteria for the "Buddy" e.g. been attending the service for two months, what level of stability is required from service user.
- Deliver basic training on relevant organisational policies and procedures, e.g. confidentiality, boundaries and health and safety.
- Offer extra support from staff. This could be through a support and supervision session to the service user, to ensure that they are confident in their new role and not experiencing any difficulties and to offer extra training if required.

Write up an agreement on the ground rules of "buddying" and both "buddy" and staff member sign it. This is to ensure the "buddy" is clear about their role.

#### **4.4 Evidencing the "Buddying" System**

- Have a separate file/folder for SUI Peer Support undertaken within the service
- Keeping a log of meetings between service user and volunteer "buddy", in the SUI Peer Support File recording the meetings and any outcomes.
- Evidence of any training undertaken in both the volunteer "Buddy's file and SUI File.
- Record in the SUI Peer Support File how this process is going by meeting with volunteer "buddy" and S/U, e.g. What is going well and if there are any challenges and further actions to be taken.
- Copy the agreement between service and volunteer "buddy" and keep one in the SUI Peer Support file and one for the volunteer "buddy's file.

#### **5. Volunteer Peer Mentoring**

##### **5.1 Who Might Do This?**

- Service User who is in the final stages of the programme, aftercare or who has left and would like to do some volunteering within the service.

##### **5.2 What is The Role of the Volunteer Peer Mentor?**

- Could incorporate both meet and greet and "buddying" with further responsibilities or could be a separate role altogether.
- This role would be a more formal one than the other two.
- To assist the development of other service users through offering support, advice and encouragement so the service user can draw on the experience of the volunteer peer mentor.
- The volunteer peer mentor would have to show and maintain a level of stability, be committed and reliable and to be clear in their role and responsibilities.

### 5.3 Considerations for the Service

- Write up a role specification. Include commitment required and any training requirements together with how these will be met.
- Write up criteria for the Peer Mentor e.g. length of time in programme, level of stability required.
- Informal/formal interview process for potential peer mentors
- Develop training or access suitable training on organisational policies and procedures, these may include: Health & Safety, Personal Safety, Boundaries, Confidentiality, Risk Assessment, Drug and Alcohol Policy
- Is a Disclosure Scotland check required?
- Clear direction on the difference between staff roles and peer mentor roles.
- How will support and supervision and extra support be offered to the volunteer peer mentor?

### 5.4 Evidencing the Volunteer Peer Mentoring System

- A policy or guideline paper written up on peer mentoring
- List of all accredited volunteer peer mentors
- All records of mentoring sessions recorded in SUI file
- Support and Supervision notes recorded and a copy given to volunteer peer mentor and a copy for service records.
- Record of all training completed e.g. copy of certificates, training dates.
- Copy of any references written on behalf of the volunteer mentor from the service.

Produced by the Service User Involvement Partnership Greater Glasgow and Clyde (SUIP)

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