



Client Participation and Involvement Policy

To be read in conjunction with other relevant documents:

Equality and Diversity policy

Safeguarding Adults Policy

Child and Young Person's Safeguarding Policy

Complaints Procedure

Confidentiality Policy

GDPR Data Protection Policy

Harassment and Bullying Policy

Whistleblowing Policy & Procedure

Introduction

Our Vision

We won't give up until everyone experiencing a mental health problem gets both support and respect.

Our Mission

Our mission is to provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. We provide services, raise awareness and promote understanding.

Our operating principles:

- We warmly and equally welcome everyone who wishes to use our services or to work with us;
- We actively recognise and value the wide diversity and lived experience of every individual with whom we engage;
- We are always willing to speak out publicly when we encounter unequal, inappropriate or other poor practices affecting one another and the users of our services;
- We always seek ways of empowering the users of our services and each other;
- We always listen carefully and respectfully to users of our services, and to one another;
- We seek to support the health and wellbeing of one another, our volunteers and service users;
- We always take a person-centered approach to our work;

- We seek to support the resilience and independence of our service users in everything we do;
- We always respond to questions, problems or challenges in solution-focused, genuine and honest ways;
- We actively encourage group working, believing group experiences to be very powerful interventions;
- We encourage continuous personal and professional development of all our staff;
- We are always striving for excellence through regular review and appraisal of all of our workers, structures and services; seeking feedback from service users and co-production.
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Statement of involvement and participation

Mind in Havering Barking & Dagenham (MHBD) believes that for clients and those with lived experience, involvement and participation is important because an organisation that reflects and takes into account this experience is more likely to be effective in promoting better mental health and recovery. Clients themselves are the best persons to determine how their own individual needs should be met when accessing services through collaboration.

This policy aims to promote the following outcomes:

- Increasing the involvement and participation of those who take part in Havering Mind's services including diverse communities
- Ensure those with lived experience are represented within the organisation
- Managing client expectations and aspirations
- Promoting partnerships to improve quality
- Reducing the risk of conflict and exclusion
- Finding new ways of delivering existing services and developing new services

Definition of clients:

We are committed to our clients (current users of our services). This policy outlines how clients can become more involved with MHBD with a commitment to offer opportunities for involvement at different stages in a person's contact with the organisation.

Definition of someone with lived experience

This refers to anyone who has experienced personal mental health issues, or supported another person in the past or currently, and may or may not be a current MHBD client.

Responsibilities

Staff responsibilities when working to support clients

Staff will have appropriate skills in these key areas:

Knowledge – of the services provided by MHBD, openness and honesty in what Havering Mind can achieve collaboratively in partnership and accurately signpost to other organisations where necessary. A keen understanding of professional boundaries, safeguarding and confidentiality.

Approach and skills – openness, the ability to listen, empathise, understand the issues and offer appropriate guidance, a commitment to diversity, a non-judgemental approach, an ability to gain the trust and confidence of clients in developing a respectful relationship, an appropriate dress sense, the skill to value clients and carers, developed respectful listening skills

Accountability - the ability to 'follow-through' commitments and agreed actions, an ability to engage with clients in identifying their needs, a polite, and professional manner, determining

the client agenda and choice in partnership, have the ability to be available and accessible, the politeness to arrive on time for appointments, a genuine interest in the client's situation, an ability to challenge appropriately and positively, the ability to be open and honest within the client relationship using minimal jargon.

Client responsibilities

Be as honest as you can about your situation – our information, guidance and support is based on what you tell us

Respect – We believe that respect should be mutual and reciprocal between all users of our services, volunteers and staff We are under no obligation to accept abuse or threatening behaviour (See Harassment and bullying policy)

Expectations - groups

Following a collaborative individual assessment, a client may join a programme which includes being part of a group as a starting point in their journey towards recovery with MHBD.

Ground rules for groups and meetings

Ground rules and group agreements help to create safe and mutually supportive spaces that can make a group successful. They are a set of clear guidelines created by the group members with staff or volunteers to help them feel comfortable with each other in an atmosphere of safety, respect and trust.

While agreements are best generated by the participants themselves, the following outlines general ground rules which are expected with any group or meeting within MHBD in order to promote a safe group environment.

Confidentiality - covers issues about what is shared outside the group, what is shared in the group stays in the group (with the exceptions listed in the MHBD Confidentiality policy). Never identify someone as a member of the group in another setting. Also, judge if it is ok to speak to someone in another setting by the way they respond to your greeting. We all need to respect each other's need for privacy and appropriate boundaries.

Good timekeeping is helpful to keep groups on track

Listening – please remember to allow someone to finish speaking before you begin so you don't speak over each other. No private conversations between group members whilst someone is sharing so only one person talks at a time.

Focus – please keep to the subject in hand when a particular topic has been agreed to be discussed. Check with the group about changing the subject. No talking about other people who are not present.

Participation – everyone will be enabled to participate fully in a way which suits them and respects others. Group members can withdraw from any activity they are uncomfortable with.

Respect – please respect others' difference and their views (even when they are different to your own). This may involve exercising tolerance and listening without judgment. Respect moments of silence.

Safe Space – the intention is to always provide a safe haven where we can develop trust in each other: be supportive and supported. If the group facilitator believes that a member's conduct is not contributing to a safe environment, then (s)he may decide to discuss the person's behaviour with them individually or in rare cases remove them from the zoom session or ask them to leave the in-person session

Group Facilitation – the group facilitator should consult with the group about the development of the group. Group facilitators will ensure that everyone is included and no-one monopolises the group. Please note that there are both staff/volunteer led and client/peer led groups at MHBD

Advertising - Do not promote external businesses or own private business

Guests - Do not bring guests to meetings whether in person or virtual via Zoom unless this has been previously agreed.

Mobile phones – these should be switched off or on mute unless an important call is expected and it has been agreed that you can take a call outside the group.

Drugs Any distribution or use of illegal drugs is prohibited Please do not bring or use these at any of our events or meetings.

Alcohol Please do not attend any session or event whilst under the influence of alcohol as you may be asked to leave

Harassment - Verbal, physical, sexual, discriminatory harassment of MHBD staff, volunteers or other clients will not be tolerated. This includes online harassment via social media, WhatsApp, SMS etc. - Abusive language or aggressive behaviour towards members of staff, volunteers or clients is not acceptable and services may be withdrawn

Feelings happen – acknowledge that people may experience feelings such as hurt, sadness, boredom, or anger at some time in the group. An agreement in this area shows respect and opens the door for people to express feelings.

Safeguarding – this ensures the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse, harm and neglect. Please keep aware of any potential issues and report any concerns to staff immediately.

For more information, please read our Safeguarding policies.

Equality and Diversity We are committed to ensuring that no-one involved with MHBD is discriminated against. Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect and we will challenge any discrimination on behalf of our clients, volunteers and staff. We aim to be an anti-racist organisation, which is representative of our community and celebrates the differences between cultures and social groups. For more information, please read our Equality and Diversity Policy.

Confidentiality We take confidentiality seriously and do not share personal information about our clients unless we absolutely need to under our Confidentiality Policy.

Comments and Feedback If you have anything to say about our services then please do let us know. You can contact us in person or telephone or email. The Client (service user) forum is held quarterly

Data Protection GDPR

We adhere to all current data protection regulations in line with our GDPR policy

Complaints We hope you don't need to make a complaint, but if you do you can do so using our Complaints Procedure. Details of this are available from the office in Harrow Lodge House and from our website

Physical activity/exercise programmes

We strongly recommend that to stay safe and avoid injury that you consult with your GP before beginning any exercise programme.

Peer Support

Peer Support in the context of mental health support is a term used to describe a particular way of both giving, and receiving help with our lives, wellbeing and mental health recovery. Once clients have completed a programme with MHBD, they may where possible, continue to give and receive support this way.

MHBD will support clients for a time limited period (specific funding permitting) to design and arrange peer groups in the local community with the help of peer supporters.

Who are 'Peer Supporters'?

A peer supporter enables the experience and process of Peer Support in the community, and may take a leadership role to set up meetings, groups, and other activities and use their role to offer ways of doing Peer Support. The benefit comes from the mutual support, taking part in receiving help as well as giving it. A very powerful way of leading Peer Support is to be seen to do it and gain the additional confidence that supporting other people brings. Peer Supporters are not formal volunteers in that they do not have criminal record checks or references and have training only in specific peer support skills.

Support for peer groups

MHBD will offer support to peers attending our registered current peer groups if required during office hours. Clients and peers will be discharged from our services in line with Havering Mind's GDPR data retention policy.

Crisis support

People often worry about what will happen if they, or someone else, experiences a mental health crisis when they are attending peer groups. Also, what if someone who is vulnerable is a cause for concern? Within office hours- advice can be sought from MHBD staff. In the event of a serious crisis (risk to life) then the appropriate emergency services should be called using 999. NELFT provide a 24-hour mental health helpline on 0300 555 1000.

Influence and Involvement

MHBD is committed to ensuring that people who use our services and people with lived experience of mental health issues have the opportunity to be involved in decision making at every level of the organisation. Everyone using our services who wants to take this opportunity has the right to be involved. In that way we hope to be a client centred organisation in which involvement is a central part of everything we do.

Clients should have the opportunity:

- To attend quarterly service user forums
- To make informed, collaborative choices about the support they receive
- For co-production between participants and staff which allows the individualisation of service delivery, effective information exchange and shared decision making that responds to the complexities of client's needs.
- To be involved in defining what they want out of the services they are offered at MHBD
- To be involved in qualitative reviews of services including surveys/questionnaires and give feedback on their outcomes and journeys
- To be aware and informed of MHBD's complaints procedure which can be found on the website www.haveringmind.org.uk
- To be offered the opportunity to attend the Annual General Meeting

Strategic Planning

Those with lived experience of mental health issues will be pro-actively recruited to take up staff, volunteer and Board of Trustee roles, and therein encouraged to take part in strategic and business planning events, policy making and activities that determine the vision and direction of MHBD's development.

Recruitment of staff and volunteer roles

MHBD believes that lived experience of mental health issues can bring unique understanding and empathy to paid staff and volunteer roles and encourages people with lived experience to apply for posts and opportunities when they become available. Every application is subject to the Equal Opportunities processes, skills specification and recruitment procedures.

Recruitment procedures aim to include someone with lived experience on any panel appointing mental health service staff. They will play an equal role on the recruitment panel, bringing a valuable perspective to the decision making. People undertaking this role will be provided with training and support if required.

Client/Service User Forum Meetings

These will be held every quarter facilitated by a staff member. The agenda of the Client Forum Meeting will be set by clients where possible to consider new project ideas, any issues relating to the services provided by MHBD and any other issues that clients wish to raise including public mental health matters and wider discussions on issues facing those with mental health problems in the community.

Trustee Board & Governance

Involvement in organisational decision making and strategic decision making forums in MHBD are the role of the CEO, Board of Trustees and its sub-committees. The Board of Trustees proactively recruits people with lived experience of mental health problems according to its Trustee recruitment procedure.

Annual General Meeting: Every effort will be made to support clients to attend and participate in the annual general meeting.

Resources:

In consultation with staff, Sub-group Trustees, S/user forum date...09/11/21
National Mind Lived experience team
MQM Influence & participation policy checklist

Date passed by Operations and policies sub-group 31/03/22
Review date 31/03/2025

I have been provided with the client participation and involvement policy to read and retain for future reference.

Client Name:	Date:
Client signature:	Date: