

Mental Health Engagement Structures and Roles

We want to hear your experiences to improve our mental health services.

1 Literature Review

A review of the literature, relevant guidelines and recommendations on service user, family member and carer engagement¹ suggests several consistent messages for service providers and service users, family members and carers to ensure that engagement is meaningful and effective.

1. Understanding the value and purpose of engagement

- Service providers must be committed to engagement.
- Service providers, service users and supporters must have a clear understanding of importance of engagement and how it will improve service design, delivery and implementation.
- Service users and supporters should have access to clear information to facilitate informed understanding.

2. Who should be engaged?

- All service users and supporters should be eligible to be involved in service user engagement activities.
- Special efforts should be made to involve a representative group of service users and supporters.
- Staff with the right skills for engagement should be involved.

3. How should engagement happen?

- Services should adopt a rigorous approach when identifying the purpose, aims and objectives of engagement activities.
- Service user engagement opportunities should take a variety of forms.
- Ongoing monitoring should incorporate measures identified and endorsed by service users.

4. Is it making a difference?

- The impact of service user engagement efforts must be evaluated, despite the challenges this presents.
- The success of service user engagement should be celebrated with service users and staff.

1. Kennedy, L.A., Rafferty, M. and Price, A. (2017) Service user, family member and carer engagement in mental health services in Ireland – A review of the literature (Mental Health Engagement Office, HSE, Mental Health Division, St. Lomans Hospital, Lucan Road, Dublin.)

3 Local Forum

The purpose of the Local Forum is to deliberate and engage on issues of importance as identified and prioritised by service users, families and carers in relation to the planning, design, delivery and evaluation of HSE mental health services through:

- Providing a space and opportunity for service users and carers to voice their experiences, present their views and to raise issues in order to improve outcomes for those who use the services and those who care for them
- Bringing the voices and experiences from the Local Forum to the Area Forum to enhance service delivery
- By providing a space/mechanism for service providers to respond to issues raised, consult with, and share information on delivery of services.

2 Context

Two documents, commissioned by the National Mental Health Division of the HSE, provided the basis for the new Mental Health Engagement (MHE) structures. They were the *Report of the Listening Meetings (2016)* and the *Reference Group Report, Partnership for Change (2016)*. The *Report of the Listening Meetings* identified those themes in mental health which concerned service users and their families and supporters, while *Partnership for Change* set out the structures for MHE.

Ten Key Themes of the *Report of the Listening Meetings*

1. Developing respectful and empathetic relationships.
2. Service user, family member and carer involvement.
3. Challenging societal attitudes.
4. Providing continuity of care and supporting people in recovery.
5. Providing specialist services.
6. Accessing helpful information.
7. Peer support.
8. Providing the full range of interventions.
9. Access to out of hours care.
10. Avenues for assessment and admission.

Five Key Recommendations of *Partnership for Change*

1. The role and function of the Head of Mental Health Engagement (MHE) as a member of the National Mental Health Division Management Team.
2. Role and function of the 9 Area Leads of MHE as members of the CHO (Community Health Organisation) Area Mental Health Management Teams and as convenors of Local and CHO Area Fora.
3. Structures and mechanisms for feedback and consultation through Local and CHO Area Fora.
4. Capacity building required to support the engagement mechanisms and roles.
5. The role and function of the Office of the Head of MHE.

4 Area Leads for Mental Health Engagement

- Presents the views of service Users, family members and carers in mental health services, including (a) being a full and proactive member of the Area Management Team for Mental Health Services, and (b) participating effectively in all related processes.
- Implements the development of structures that allow for the involvement of service users, family members and carers in the planning, design, implementation and evaluation of mental health services.
- Presents the feedback from the Area Forum, and associated structures and mechanisms, at the Area Mental Health Management level and return regular and updated information to service users, family members and carers.

5 Area Forum

- The purpose of the Area Forum is to work collaboratively for improved mental health services across the CHO through gathering information from local forums and ensuring that this feedback goes to the Area Management Team and where necessary the National Management Team for deliberation and consideration

6 CHO Area Mental Health Management Team

The team comprises of:

- Executive Clinical Director
- Area Director of Nursing
- Head of Psychology
- Head of Social Work
- Head of Occupational Therapy
- Head of Mental Health Services
- Area Lead for Mental Health Engagement

7 Head of Mental Health Engagement

- Leads the development of engagement structures, systems and mechanisms to ensure that the views of service users, family members and carers are central to the design and delivery of mental health services.
- Works as an effective team member within the National Mental Health Management Team, including participating effectively in National Mental Health Services decision-making processes.
- Leads the development of the Office for Mental Health Engagement within the Mental Health Division.
- Drives improvement and positive change in the experience of service users, family members and carers and supports quality, safety and service improvement agendas from a recovery perspective.

8 Mental Health Engagement Office

The team comprises of:

- Head of Mental Health Engagement.
- Business Managers x 2.
- Administrative Support.

Purpose of the office:

To support the development and implementation of structures, systems and mechanisms for engagement and to support the Head of MHE.

10 What We Hope to Achieve

- Better recovery and wellbeing focussed mental health services to the benefit of all stakeholders.
- Empowerment of service users, their families and carers
- Partnership between service users and their supporters and service providers

11 How to Get Involved and Make a Difference²

How to get involved?

- Join your Local Forum to give your views and share your experiences on using your local mental health services.
- Members of the Local Forum may participate in the Area Forum.

Why get involved?

- To help plan, monitor, review and evaluate services.
- Recruit, train and develop staff.
- Improve the responsiveness and quality of services.
- To participate in decisions about the way services are designed, managed and monitored.

2 (Adapted from Welsh Assembly Government, October, 2008, Stronger in Partnership 2: Involving Service Users and Carers in the design, planning, delivery and evaluation of mental health services in Wales, p.17, Crown copyright)



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