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Heart for
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POLICY:

Beneficiary Participation

Implemented:

Date of last review:

Date of next review:

December 2024

This Policy applies to all activity undertaken by Heart for Chorley in pursuing its purpose as a Registered Charity serving its beneficiaries, partners and the community.

Introduction

Having Beneficiaries involved in the operation and development of the Charity and its services is a central function of Heart for Chorley:

- The Person-Centred nature of the work of Heart for Chorley mandates beneficiary involvement in any activity that directly impacts or affects them. This ensures that beneficiaries are able to influence the impact and direction of services at the point that it directly impacts their lives.
- The Support Plan and Coaching Programme requires beneficiaries to partake in meaningful activity, especially where that activity encourages personal development and imparts new skills and experience that can increase personal and professional skills. This ensures that beneficiaries are able to influence the impact that services can have on their future.
- One of the greatest risks to Person -Centred Support Plans and Coaching Programmes is our stated purpose to *Conduct business in a prudent manner as an example of good stewardship to clients and using good business practices to ensure the stability and longevity of operations*. Conducting business can shift the focus from Person-Centred to Finance-Centred. In order to remain *an example of good stewardship to clients* and to fulfil our stated Aims, Purpose, Mission and Vision, the Charity must have beneficiary involvement in the way business is conducted to ensure that beneficiaries, not only learn about good stewardship and the skills needed to manage the component parts of a Charity, but also keep Heart for Chorley focussed on the needs of the town and the Charity's beneficiaries.

This policy has been developed using the guidance of the 1969 Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation model to create a simplified version:

Arnstein's							
No Power		Degrees of tokenism				Degrees of citizen power	
Manipulation	Therapy	Informing	Consultation	Placation	Partnership	Delegated Power	Citizen Power
Simplified							
Passive learning		Active learning		Active engagement		Influencing & directing	

This model indicates the expected progression of involvement based on understanding, capability, and availability of beneficiaries. However, the levels of understanding, capability and availability will not always be known and may change depending on the personal and changing circumstances of the individual. Whilst this progression may be fluid, it is the intention of the Charity to use this process under the guidance of this policy to enable and empower the growth and development of beneficiaries as they increase their experiences toward more independent living.

Passive learning

Where this presence does not pose a risk to confidentiality or safety, beneficiaries will be encouraged to be present in as many areas of operational and strategic considerations as possible. The purpose of beneficiary involvement is primarily to create the opportunities for experience. The secondary

purpose of this level of involvement is to give the beneficiaries the opportunity to engage with the process and take advantage of any openings for...

Active learning

This is where discussions and operations make way for staff and volunteers to learn and add learning value to beneficiaries. The primary purpose of an active learning opportunity is to increase the beneficiaries' knowledge and understanding. The secondary purpose is to encourage feedback, ideas and opinions from beneficiaries so that they step up to...

Active engagement

Whilst there isn't a high level of expectation from beneficiaries at this stage there should be a very high level of hope as the primary purpose of active engagement is to give space for the beneficiaries to question staff and volunteers so that they can begin to place their learning into live discussion and decision making. The secondary purpose of active engagement is for beneficiaries to build their confidence in their learning and experience enough to begin...

Influencing & directing

The ultimate goal for our beneficiaries' involvement is to create the environment, confidence and assurance of intention that opens the doors for beneficiaries to strategise in their thinking and develop ideas. The primary focus of influencing and directing is to constructively criticise, shape and reshape the way the Charity fulfils its charitable objectives. The secondary purpose of influencing and directing is to continue to offer an environment for learning, experiencing and implementing new things.

Scope of beneficiary involvement

With the above model of progression in mind beneficiaries can affect the Charity and contribute to the improvement of its service quality at every level. (See Service Quality policy). To add clarity to this the Charity recognises the levels as Strategic, Operational and Point of Access.

Strategic

- **Future and Planning** – Beneficiaries will support and inform the way Trustees and senior management analyse and interpret the political, social and economic impact of the Charity and its services.
- **Employment** – beneficiary will contribute to the recruitment and development of the staff and volunteer teams.
- **Growth** – Beneficiaries will be consulted on the increase or decrease of services available from the Charity.

Operational

- **Participation** – Beneficiaries will understand and participate in the development and implementation of policies and procedures and ensuring the Charity is stating its operations accurately.
- **Accountability** – Staff and volunteers will liaise with beneficiaries throughout the discharging of their duties to ensure that daily tasks and activities are person centred and ensuring the Charity is doing what it states in its policies and procedures.

Point of Access

- **Awareness** – Beneficiaries will promote the Charity and encourage access to services.
- **Fairness** – Beneficiaries will contribute to decisions for allowing access to services ensuring that decisions are fair and person centred as well as being balanced and wise for the longevity of service provision.

The Future

When beneficiaries begin to engage in the influencing and directing of the Charity and its services, there is an opportunity to recognise this maturity and wisdom with the title of Responsible Resident and to formally identify this as their voluntary work involvement that can justify the offer of employment references to bolster their curriculum vitae.