

User Led Policy

Compass Disability Services

Units 11 – 12 Belvedere Trading Estate
Taunton TA1 1BH

February 2015

Review: February 2018

Introduction

In line with our Equal Opportunities Policy, Compass Disability Services is committed to identifying and eliminating all forms of discrimination, providing equal opportunities to all and promoting diversity throughout our organisation. All people that come into contact with our organisation can expect to be treated fairly, with respect, dignity and understanding.

Compass Disability Services is a user led organisation that was developed in response to peoples' needs. Compass Disability Services recognises and values the experience and knowledge that users bring to the organisation, and aims to continue to involve them in decision making at every level, through consultation and representation. Compass Disability Services is committed to providing needs-led, strategically planned quality services.

Compass Disability Services also provides representation through membership of public and third sector bodies and provides support services through contractual arrangements.

Definition

For the purpose of this policy:

'Users' are people who use or benefit from Compass Disability Services' activities and services. Made up as follows:

- Individual service users or individual members of any project managed or facilitated by Compass Disability Services.
- Individuals who participate in consultation activities.
- Any disabled person or carer who has an interest in our services / organisation.
- Trustees and other volunteers.

'Partners' are organisations who use or benefit from Compass Disability Services' services and activities. Made up as follows:

- Associate or organisational members of any project or service managed or facilitated by Compass Disability Services
- Organisations we work with as part of a project
- Commissioning bodies
- Strategic organisations/groups.

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Being ‘**user led**’ means including users and partners in decision making processes and working together to implement change and ongoing service delivery.

Purpose

The aim of this policy is to:

- Set out how Compass Disability Services will involve users in effective, ongoing and informed joint working
- Ensure user involvement is central to the organisations activity, service delivery and monitoring
- To ensure user engagement is meaningful.

User versus commissioning and contracts

Compass Disability Services has a commitment to our User Led policy but acknowledgement has to be given to the restraints of contracted and commissioned work. Although the types of work undertaken by Compass Disability Services will initially be driven by our user led approach, once engaged with a commissioner, Compass Disability Services must adhere to its contractual obligations relating to that piece of work. In addition the work undertaken has to be linked to that for which funding can be obtained.

Service Delivery

Compass Disability Services will ensure that, in all service delivery planning, the organisation’s plans, aims and proposed outcomes will be based on the needs of users and partners. This will be done through:

- Keeping users and partners informed of consultation opportunities, events, forums and meetings.
- The opportunity to share views being included in every magazine and on the website.
- Users and partners being invited to evaluate all projects and services delivered by Compass Disability Services at least annually. The results of these evaluations will be considered by the management team and the Board of Trustees when preparing business plans and work plans.
- Research, findings from consultations, individual and group feedback being fed into and taken account of by the management team and the Board of Trustees when preparing business plans and work plans.

Access

Compass Disability Services will endeavour to ensure that all services and facilities are fully accessible to all users and partners. Where support is needed to enable user participation every effort will be made to make this available i.e. transport to meetings, advocacy, sign language, electronic note taking, interpreter, care support etc.

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Any event organised by Compass Disability Services will be held at an accessible venue. Where Compass Disability Services has been invited to attend or be part of an event that is organised by another agency we will encourage the use of an accessible venue and the provision of support to enable participation.

Reporting

Compass Disability Services are committed to keeping users and partners informed of our user led approach through:

- The production of an annual review distributed to all users and partners.
- The maintenance of the Compass Disability Services website. This will contain a copy of:
 - Compass Disability Services Business Plan
 - Our User Led policy

Trustee Appointments

Trustees will be elected by our users as defined above, in line with Compass Disability Services' Articles of Association and our Recruitment and Election of Trustees Policy.

To reflect our aims, The Board of Trustees has a minimum of 80% controlling interest by disabled people and is representative of the projects delivered by Compass Disability Services, e.g. carers. To ensure Compass Disability Services' commitment to a User-led approach, the Board of Trustees may establish steering groups to support the management and development of significant projects. These steering groups are answerable to the Board and will therefore always have Trustee representation within them.

Responsibilities

All staff and Trustees have a responsibility to adhere to this policy and promote a user led approach through:

- This policy informing the decision making of Trustees and the Management Team when developing the organisation and its projects and services.
- This policy being part of the induction process for all new staff.
- This policy being considered when developing and introducing any policy or procedure in the organisation.

Development

Compass Disability Services will continually look to develop new ways of integrating its user led approach throughout the organisation.

Policy Revisions

This policy will be reviewed every three years and amended as necessary or earlier in accordance with forthcoming legislation.

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Other information:

- Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Equality Analysis Policy.
- Articles of Association.
- Recruitment and Election of Trustees Policy.
- Terms of reference: Compass Carers Steering Group.

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