



Hart Voluntary Action Limited

Service User Charter

1. Introduction

1.1 Hart Voluntary Action Limited (HVA) provides a range of services aimed at contributing to the wellbeing of individuals. The nature of each service is determined by the needs of its service users.

1.2 Hart Voluntary Action's Service Users come into the following categories:

- Voluntary and community organisations, which are registered members of Hart Voluntary Action
- Other voluntary and community organisations
- Individuals who register their interest in volunteering via the Hart Volunteer Centre
- Individuals who benefit from accessing one of Hart Voluntary Action's services. These may be individuals who have health conditions or a disability
- Professionals/representatives of agencies who refer individuals to Hart Voluntary Action's services

1.3 As a user of any of these services individuals enter into a partnership with HVA and, in order to have an equal partnership this charter sets out below the rights and responsibilities of service users. HVA's implementation of this Service User's Charter forms the basis of its contractual obligations to its service users.

1.4 Those who use any of the services delivered by HVA have the right to expect:

- To be treated with respect, dignity and in a manner that promotes independence
- To receive the same service irrespective of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, sexuality or physical or learning ability
- HVA, its staff and volunteers to be open, honest, accountable and consistent in their relationships with service users
- Group sessions to be conducted in accordance with agreed protocols
- Detailed information about the service and to be consulted on any proposed changes
- A clear explanation of the HVA Service User Confidentiality Policy, including details of when information may be shared without consent
- To have all other policies with which they may have to comply brought to their attention and explained to them
- To have any complaints handled in an appropriate and timely manner
- To be involved in the evaluation of the service to support future service delivery

1.5 Along with these rights, Service Users have a responsibility to:

- Be respectful of HVA staff, volunteers and other service users
- Follow the instructions from HVA staff to ensure their own safety and that of others around them
- Always behave in a non-confrontational and non-discriminatory manner
- Disclose all relevant information that could affect their own safety or the safety of other service users, staff or volunteers
- Comply with all relevant HVA policies and procedures
- Participate fully in the services being provided
- Provide constructive feedback to help improve the services delivered by HVA

1.6 This Charter underpins the core delivery of individual services and should be reflected in all areas of HVA activity. The protocol is to be explained to every user of HVA's services when they first enrol

2. Hart Voluntary Action Service User Involvement Policy

2.1 HVA provides a range of services aimed at contributing to the wellbeing of individuals. The nature of each service is determined by the needs of its service users and therefore HVA believe that service users should have a say in the way its services are delivered and developed

2.2 The aim of this policy is to set out how HVA will involve service users in shaping and developing and thus in improving the quality of its services

2.3 As an overriding principle HVA's services are to be developed and delivered in partnership with those who use the service. This requires staff to listen to what service users have to say and where appropriate acting on it. Account has to be taken of any outcomes or constraints placed on the delivery of a service by funders and it will assist dialogue if these are explained to service users as part of any consultation process.

2.4 To support their involvement in developing services, staff are to ensure that service users are:

- Given the opportunity to define what they want from the service
- Involved in planning group activities
- Involved in regular reviews of the service
- Encouraged to freely offer constructive feedback on the delivery of services

2.5 Where appropriate service users should be represented on any steering groups, management meetings and other strategic planning events/activities that may shape a particular service. The representatives' roles on such groups must be agreed and clearly stated

3. Evaluation and Monitoring

3.1 All HVA services are to be formally evaluated at least once every 12 months

3.1.1 The aim of any evaluation is to provide evidence that the service is meeting the needs of its users and delivering its stated outcomes

3.1.2 The methods used to evaluate individual services will depend on their nature and may include questionnaires, interviews or meetings/workshops

3.1.3 Where the evidence suggests that a service is meeting user needs or delivering its stated outcomes, the data gathered is to be used to reshape the service. Service users are to be consulted in any reshaping exercise

3.1.4 Irrespective of the method used, all evidence is to be recorded, evaluated and acted on. All findings and outcomes are to be feedback to service users

3.2 HVA is committed to offering its service users the opportunity to become involved in not only shaping their own particular service but also in shaping the wider delivery of services across the county. Service users will therefore be kept informed of all regional (and where appropriate, national) policies and initiatives that impact on their needs. This will allow them the opportunity to make representation themselves

3.3 The views of service users will also be sought in any consultative processes in which HVA are involved. This may, on occasion, require individual service users to act or speak in partnership with HVA. This places additional responsibilities on the service user which must be explained to them before they enter into the involvement. Equally any such partnership must be underpinned by mutual respect and open and transparent communication

Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Support Group Procedures
- Appendix 2 - Boundaries Guidelines
- Appendix 3 - Drugs and Alcohol Procedure
- Appendix 4 - Complaints Procedure