Involving Service Users and Carers in Education: The Development Worker Role

Guidelines for Higher Education Institutions

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Ducie

Developers of User & Carer
Involvement in Education

mhhe

enhancing learning and teaching about
mental health in higher education

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It can be accessed online at:
www.mhhe.heacademy.ac.uk/ducieguidelines

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Acknowledgements

This guide was produced by members of the Developers of User and Carer Involvement in Education (DUCIE) Network:

The participation of service users, patients, families and carers has been one of the most significant developments in professional education for health and social work over the past decade. The active contribution of people who are 'experts by experience' in higher education has reflected parallel developments in the fields of professional practice and research, where patient and public involvement (PPI) and participatory research have respectively gained credence. The recognition that people who use services and/or have caring responsibilities have a unique, valid and indeed essential contribution to make represents a remarkable shift in attitudes, and has the potential to re-shape and transform services, teaching and research in health and social care.

Nationally, professional and regulatory bodies have adopted policies that ensure that user consultation and participation is central to development in policy, practice and education. Mental health initiatives were in the vanguard here, reflecting the strong presence of the 'user/survivor' voice in service provision. As long ago as 1999 the National Service Framework for Mental Health proposed that 'service users…should be involved in planning, providing and evaluating education and training' (DoH 1999 p.109). With the introduction of the degree in social work from 2003, the four UK Care Councils stipulated that 'service users and carers must be involved in all aspects of planning, implementing and monitoring of the new degree, including the selection of students'; in some parts of the UK this is supported by a grant to each university offering the degree. The Health Professions Council's Standards of Education and Training guidance seeks evidence from training providers 'of the contribution that stakeholders (placement educators, employers, practitioners, past and present students, service users, and strategic health authorities) make' in the programme planning process.

However, it has also been recognized that the process of involving 'experts by experience' in professional education is complex – to be effective it must be carefully planned and executed and supported financially (Tew et al, 2004). As a result an increasing number of Higher Education Institutions have opted to employ people whose remit is to recruit, train and support service users and carers to contribute to professional programmes. In turn, service user and carer involvement development worker posts need to be well constructed and supported. That is the focus of these guidelines, which we hope will be of use both to universities considering or planning such posts and to those with a worker already in post, but where the post is to be reviewed.

Hilary Burgess
Project Director
Mental Health in Higher Education (mhhe)

In the summer of 2005 a small band of service user and carer involvement development workers met over two days in Nottingham. They had in common that they were fairly newly appointed to posts, based in higher education institutions, with the aim of facilitating user and carer involvement in education for health and social care. Lively discussion was accompanied by a shared sense of optimism and enjoyment in the possibilities of these new roles, which were seen to pose significant challenges too.

Some of the issues related to the cross-cutting nature of the work. Workers made reference to the need to 'juggle too many balls' or 'spin too many plates' at once. They spoke of 'wearing lots of different hats' and the complexity of 'working with different voices'. There was a sense of people being pulled in a number of different directions at once; a set of challenges which will be familiar to anyone who might be considered a 'boundary spanner' (Williams 2002).

Other concerns related to hidden agendas, lack of clarity in what was being expected of the role and tokenism; with one worker describing 'being parachuted in to rubber stamp things'. For some the role felt unstable, reflecting temporary or part-time contracts and 'inadequate resources'. One worker felt they were precariously 'standing on tip-toes'; another that they were 'about to be rained on'. Most were aware of an ambient fear of getting things wrong.

Two images from the meeting stand out for me. Firstly, when asked to describe a picture they had drawn of themselves in role, one person said "I'm trying to push the main door open when it seems that service users and carers are only allowed in through a little door that is open at the side!"'. Whatever progress may already have been made in involving service users and carers in education and engaging with communities, 'pushing the main door open' can be a major task. The second image relates to tensions involved in work that breaks new ground. "It's a challenge" one worker said "not being a *this* or a *that*"; with colleagues seeming able to assert much clearer, established and accepted role identities.

Supported by the Mental Health in Higher Education (mhhe) project, but with a remit that goes beyond mental health, the Developers of User and Carer Involvement in Education (DUCIE) network meets three times a year and has proved a means for the sharing of expertise and experience between those employed in development worker roles. These guidelines aim to share the accumulated group knowledge of DUCIE with those involved in the creation of such roles, and with support of workers, once in place. It is hoped that this guide can play a part in overcoming workers' sense of being 'neither a *this* nor a *that*' and help to 'push the main doors open'.

Jill Anderson
Senior Project Development Officer
Mental Health in Higher Education (mhhe)

These guidelines are dedicated to the memory of Ian Light – a contributor and founder member of the DUCIE network.

They draw on his warmth, intelligence and inspiration.

An award has recently been set up in memory of Ian – the Ian Light Award for Work in Pairs. Further details are available at:

www.mhhe.heacademy.ac.uk/ian-light-award

Aims

The Developers of User and Carer Involvement in Education (DUCIE) network aims to enhance the involvement of patients, service users and carers in the learning and teaching of professionals, by acting as a support network for service user and carer involvement development workers employed within UK higher education institutions (HEIs).

Objectives

To provide support, and contribute to meeting the needs for continuing professional development, of involvement workers employed in HEIs.

1. To share and disseminate good practice and examples of existing posts and initiatives

2. To provide opportunities for debate and the teasing out of complex areas of practice

3. To develop good practice guidance on:

• the establishment of involvement worker posts, and development of a context in which they can flourish.

• the involvement of service users and carers in   learning and teaching in higher education - building on work begun, in a mental health context, with Learning from Experience (Tew et al, 2004)

4. To act as a central point of contact for national initiatives, such as the Mental Health in Higher Education project, seeking to engage with users and carers involved in learning and teaching in Higher Education

5. To act as a campaigning and pressure group

A service user

"Developers of user and carer involvement need to be good organisers and effective communicators. They ought to have a clear idea of what they are working towards and an understanding of the workings of service providers. They need to have a diplomatic approach – and the person's personality must reflect that without compromising their goals. Ideally they should have direct or indirect experience of using services".

An educator

"It was 2004. We had a strategy document and a group for involvement in our School but, apart from a few enthusiasts, we had no-one to pull it together, develop the work or co-ordinate what was happening. Involvement at that time was bit of an 'underground' movement. It seemed to be shrouded in mystery and secrecy with no great examples out there in the wider world to draw upon. After tortuous deliberations, and liaison with the University Human Resources (HR) Department, we created two roles: a development worker post that we hoped to fill with someone external who had knowledge of the local community and who had done 'it', and an internal 'academic lead', to work with the development worker and offer a two pronged assault on the 'tried and tested' ways of doing things. To be honest we had no idea how the roles would develop, how quickly the territory for involvement would expand, or what we were letting ourselves in for".

A carer

"Our being involved in the teaching of students - relating personal experiences, of being a Carer, and highlighting issues we face - must surely be of great benefit to them. The development worker is so important in bringing together all concerned in health & social care studies".

A development worker

"I very nearly didn't apply for the post as I assumed on first and second skimming that they wanted a nurse. I went back to the job description a couple of days later, read it properly, and was attracted by the importance of opportunities for service users, carers and patients to be involved at the education stage. I could relate this to work I had done on disability rights, but also was rather nervous about the idea of getting involved with healthcare professionals. Reading the details again I realised I had lots of relevant experience and lots of personal motivation for the post – it was challenging, interesting and something I could believe in – and I was nearing the end of a fixed term contract! I think I remained very naïve about what would actually be involved".

A dean of faculty

"The development worker's role has been pivotal in providing a bridge between the university and local community, resulting in local community groups perceiving the university as 'a welcoming environment'. Service users and carers have been represented at a range of meetings and forums, in course developments and validations and in research. Student feedback has highlighted how service user and carer involvement, both in course delivery and in assessment, has enhanced their learning experience".

What is a development worker?

The term 'development worker' is used throughout these guidelines to refer to those roles which:

- are primarily located within, or otherwise funded by, Higher Education

- carry out direct work supporting patients, service users and carers throughout their involvement in learning and teaching, curriculum development, assessment, recruitment of students and / or pedagogical research etc.

- through liaison with Higher Education employees and the community, facilitate the creation and promotion of involvement opportunities.

Not all people carrying out such work will necessarily have 'development worker' as part of their job title. They may be otherwise known as: involvement worker, user academic, user lecturer, consumer academic etc.

Some distinction has to be made between posts like this, which are specifically created to develop user and carer involvement, and the work of academic and related staff for whom 'involvement' may be but one aspect of their role. It is recognised, however, that making such a distinction is not always easy, particularly where people have a number of responsibilities. A common key difference, where the development of user and carer involvement is the sole focus of the role, is that development workers often come from a background of significant service use and / or advocacy rather than from the health and social care professions, education or academia.

Employing a service user and carer involvement development worker is not an end in itself, but these roles have an invaluable part to play in the overall task of embedding a culture of involvement within professional education.

These guidelines aim to:

- increase awareness of the strengths and challenges of the development worker role

- support academic staff with an interest in establishing new roles, and a commitment to sustaining workers once in post.

- enhance future appointments by providing information and guidance to those who have a key role in ensuring good practice in recruitment and support

- provide support for service user and carer involvement development workers, assisting them in achieving positive conditions of employment

- assist service users and carers wishing to take forward such a proposal

It is hoped that the guidelines will be useful to anyone wishing to set up, support and evaluate a development worker post from scratch and may also help when established posts are reviewed. They cover some of the thinking behind, challenges and practicalities of doing so. Although no definitive solutions are offered (since there are a myriad of approaches) they are based on the experiences of pioneering development workers already working in the field; so enabling the reader to draw upon a wealth of learning from elsewhere. It should be noted that they are intended to complement and not replace the Human Resources (HR) policies already adopted by individual institutions.

Whilst the term 'university' is used throughout these guidelines, it is recognised that higher education programmes may be provided in other settings such as Further Education colleges. These guidelines will also be of relevance to them.

Note on links to documents and websites referenced in this guide.

All websites and documents referred to in this guide can be accessed directly from the online version of the guidelines to be found at **www.mhhe.heacademy.ac.uk/ducieguidelines**

Drivers for patient, service user and carer involvement in education

The past decade has seen a fundamental shift in the way in which health and social care education is delivered, with an increasing recognition of the contribution that service users and carers have to make as partners in the educational process.

This has been reflected in:

- policy developments such as From Values to Action; along with the **Chief Nursing Officer's Review of Mental Health Nursing** (2006) and **the GSCC requirements for social work training** (2003), both of which advocate the involvement of service users and carers at all levels in training

- Statements by professional bodies, such as the Royal College of Psychiatrists **http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/pressparliament/pressreleasearchive/pr597.aspx**

- developments within the Sector Skills Council, such as the **Partnership Quality Assurance Framework** developed by Skills for Health

- the establishment of new bodies such as the **Picker Institute** and the **NHS National Centre for Involvement**; the remit of which includes education and training.

- the development of user controlled organisations such as **Shaping Our Lives** and Advocacy in Action, which have had input to the development of service user and carer involvement in social work education

- user and carer involvement strands in a number of Centres of Excellence in Learning and Teaching. For example: **CETL4Health NE**, the **Centre of Excellence in Interdisciplinary Mental Health**, the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning about Mental Health and Social Work, and the Assessment and Learning in Practice Settings CETL.

- a range of publications, some of which relate to education and training across the board and others to specific areas. See the **mhhe reading list** for details.

As a distinct area of work, patient, service user and carer involvement in education is now supported by national grass roots networks such as DUCIE; the **Professional Education Public Involvement UK Network** (PEPIN) and the **Service User Survivor Trainers Network** (SUSTN). There have also been a number of high profile events which have included involvement in education as one strand or their sole focus, such as the 'Authenticity to Action' conference in Grange-over Sands in 2007.

International interest has also increased steadily, resulting in a wealth of published material from other countries. See, for example, the report for the 2005 Vancouver conference: '**Where's the Patient Voice in Health Professional Education?**'.

The Higher Education context

In many ways Higher Education should provide fertile ground for the involvement of patients, service users and carers. Recent years have seen an increasing focus on widening participation; on enabling access to higher education for those excluded due to social background or disability, for example. In addition, there has been a growing awareness of the wellbeing and disability support needs of existing students and staff. Steps have been taken to make the higher education context more comfortable for everyone; driven in part by changes to the Disability Discrimination Act which are intended to support the 'employability' of people with a disability.

Moreover, universities are increasingly exhorted to engage with the wider local community as active agents in community development. Most, if not all, now make this a formal element within their overall university strategy and the involvement of community members in teaching is arguably one means to that end.

Yet, despite all of the above, there are a range of barriers to user and carer involvement in professional education in universities – identified in an article by Basset *et al* (2006) and summarised here:

- Despite the public perception of universities as places of freedom, they can in fact be very hierarchical with distinct "pecking orders" – not easy for those in non-traditional or ill-defined posts to navigate.

- Bureaucratic systems and lengthy lead in times for programme planning can be obstacles to achieving changes in curricula.

- Academic jargon can be a barrier to those new to the world of higher education, and can make the process of acclimatising to a new job a slow one.

- Academics can appear to demonstrate particular 'skill' in the creation of personal barriers to the involvement of service users and carers; what Basset *et al* refer to as "clever people, clever excuses".

- Difficulties can arise from the emphasis, within many academic institutions, on the importance of the head and not heart.

- Lack of a team approach in higher education can mean a lot of individual approaches rather than a joint one – adding to the time it can take to bring about a change in culture.

- Lack of awareness of the need for support and supervision can make it difficult for a worker new to the higher education setting to thrive.

Stigma and discrimination can also be problems, as in many other areas of the working world; and those attempting to involve service users and carers may encounter attitudes which are surprising in a place that is characterised by learning.

None of the above obstacles is insurmountable, but the ways of tackling them will vary from one university and one discipline to another. Basset *et al* provide a useful overall checklist for thinking about participation.

Existing models and approaches

A range of approaches to involvement in professional education have developed over recent years, including:

- involvement through word of mouth / personal contact by individual lecturers

- establishment of a lead lecturer / tutor role

- support for user and carer involvement through the establishment of a social firm. For example: **The Comensus Project** at the University of Central Lancashire.

- engagement with and support for autonomous initiatives. For example: **Citizens as Trainers** at Salford University

- development workers based in HEIs or across an HEI and a third sector organisation. For example: The partnership between **Self Help Nottingham** and the School of Nursing, University of Nottingham.

These approaches may be used individually, or in combination.

The Key is finding the right approach for the particular local context.

There are a number of things to consider when establishing a broad strategy for making involvement happen within your organisation. You may decide to start by looking at your institutional values as a whole and whether these are inclusive. How does the organisation tackle widening participation or ensure anti-discriminatory practice, for example?

The development of involvement is often driven by opinion leaders and visionaries - people passionate about promoting positive change. These useful allies may not necessarily be formal leaders within the organisation, but can act as catalysts for change. A network of like-minded people can also be very personally supportive in taking forward a sometimes contentious area of work.

It is important to identify those who have formal influence and get them on side too. If involvement work is unfamiliar territory for them, then an opportunity for direct experience is often the best way to sell the idea. Some people may be swayed most by whatever research evidence you are able to marshal, along with good practice guidelines, policies and legislation etc.

Other things to consider when building a case for involvement are:

- How does what you already do compare with other Schools within the Faculty, or with other universities?

- How can this work contribute to the wider reputation of the university; and could the involvement of service users and carers become a selling point, attracting more students, funds and kudos?

- What does this work mean in terms of the university's stated mission in relation to the local community?

- How does it link to the requirements of different professional regulatory bodies?

There is no magic recipe for developing involvement. The important thing is to start somewhere, however small, whilst constantly reflecting upon your higher aims. Development happens on a continuum, with different stages of realisation. If you spend too much time trying to come up with the perfect plan, then you won't allow yourself to learn from mistakes. Isn't this what we tell students?

Fortunately there is a growing body of experience out there, and it may be that you choose to adopt a model of working developed in another institution. Some have found it useful to start out with a written strategy document; others have managed without. There is also variance in whether involvement is tackled at a school, department or faculty level. You might begin to ask how your approach to involvement fits in with similar work ongoing in local NHS Trusts and other local universities. There may even be opportunities for you to work in partnership, perhaps through some sort of service level agreement.

Resources

When you have decided how you want to do things, then there are practical considerations to deal with. The most obvious of these is the question of resources.

- Some tips for resourcing are:

- Be clear, open and honest about what is needed

- Provide tangible evidence to justify the costs

- Show value - what you will and won't get for the level of funding

Acknowledge the qualitative limitations and benefits of different levels of resourcing. For example: tokenism versus partnership.

Resources are not enough in themselves. Other changes in organisational culture may be needed; whether that be through staff awareness raising; an audit of disabled access facilities; a rethink of how you process payments for visiting speakers or a change in recruitment policies. Again, other people are already tackling these issues and it may help to draw upon the large body of experience in the wider involvement community of practice.

Once a decision has been taken to appoint a development worker - usually based on the perception that the task is sufficiently complex to require a person with both time and the expertise to forge links between the HEI and the wider community - then the real work begins.

Thought needs to be given to the peculiar challenges of the higher education context and what needs to be put in place; well in advance of a worker arriving for an interview, let alone their first day of employment.

There are a range of possible configurations for such a post and the choice is dependent on context.

It may be:

- full time or part time

- reserved for a person with experience of using services or open to all

- located within a single department or cross-faculty

- restricted to a particular subject specialism or all-embracing

- primarily focused on facilitating the involvement of others, or including an element of direct input

- given lecturer, administrative or other status

- focused on 'learning and teaching' and / or 'research'

- supervised internally or offered external supervision

- entirely based within the university, or offered in conjunction with a third sector partner

Whatever approach is taken, it is important to be clear that a development worker - whilst hopefully able to act as a broker - will not be a universal panacea. Indeed, their employment may be just the beginning of an important process of organisational change. It will be important to see the worker as an active participant in that process; involving them in any future strategic developments (the creation of additional future posts, for example) that may arise from their appointment and activity.

Organisations may differ slightly in their Human Relations (HR) policies and in the guidance they provide on drawing up a job description. This section is intended to help you think about what you really want and need in advance of a dialogue with HR.

The role of development worker can encompass a wide variety of tasks, and is dependent on the exercise of wide ranging skills, expertise and knowledge. There is no specific professional body for development workers and these skills have not to date been encapsulated in written form, outside of individual institutions. They are likely to have been acquired by workers in a variety of paid and non-paid contexts.

In setting up a development worker post you might want to consider the following issues and concerns:

Grading and status

An important first step is to establish at what grade the post holder would need to be employed in order to carry out the functions of the post effectively. Most HR departments should now be able to provide generic role profiles, in support of appropriate grading. Bear in mind that, for such an unusual role, identifying a suitable profile may be challenging.

It is important that the grading is not pitched too low, especially when it's likely that the role itself will develop quite quickly in the first year or two. Growing room should be built in from the outset. The eventual post holder may not begin with all of the skills to the degree required, but personal and professional development should form an important part of their overall work as a development worker - it comes with the territory.

A generic role profile will usually address the following areas of work and, with regard to each, indicate the level at which the employee will be expected to operate:

- Communication
- Teamwork and leadership
- Liaison and networking
- Service and quality standards
- Decision making
- Planning and managing resources
- Initiative and problem solving
- Analysis, research and scholarship
- Sensory and physical demands
- Work environment
- Pastoral care and welfare
- Team development
- Teaching and learning support
- Knowledge and expertise

Academic status is important within higher education institutions, and the grading of a post can have an impact on the value ascribed to the work by others. If it is intended that the post holder should influence policy and practice at a fairly strategic level, then careful thought will need to be given to the appropriate grading of the post.

It is important to note that standard university requirements and recruitment procedures can present a few tacit barriers to appointing, to academic and related posts, people from non-academic work backgrounds or with substantial experience of service use. Employing a development worker with direct personal experience and / or voluntary sector expertise can bring benefits, however. Any resistance to this should be countered.

Accountability

In employing someone in such an unusual position, it can be easy to overlook who it is that they will be accountable to and what preparation *they* might need as a line-manager. It may be good practice to formalise some accountability to external partners.

Supervision and support

The job description for a development worker can end up reading like the responsibilities of the prime minister of a small country! It is important for an appropriate supervisor to sit down with the post-holder regularly, review strategic aims and identify realistic steps to take in meeting these.

Who will be responsible for this? Is the proposed supervisor experienced in working with service users and carers, and sensitive to issues the post-holder may be dealing with? Conversely, if supervision or employment is by a third party organisation, will the post-holder also have support from somebody sympathetic who understands the HEI's internal politics?

Careful consideration may also need to be given to contingency arrangements; identifying, for example, aspects of the work that could be covered by somebody else during periods of sickness or long term absence. What will happen to sustain the work should the post-holder leave?

Evaluation

Consider how the post (as well as the post holder) will be periodically reviewed. Development work inevitably involves change and so requires reflexivity. The role may need to evolve in order for new challenges to be met.

Here's an actual example:

"The post was initially for two years, and the job description included outlines of a two year work-plan. The post became permanent at the end of two years, with few changes to the job description - which means it was general enough to reasonably reflect what I actually do! The changes that were made reflected reporting structures, including recognising the role of the Service User and Carer Advisory Group which developed during the first two years. Subsequent work-plans have been agreed between the post's steering group and the line manager and are increasingly based on the action plan agreed by the Service User and Carer Advisory Group".

Once the job description has been written it can be used as the basis for determining what kind of person will most successfully fill the vacancy.

As with a job description, individual institutions will provide guidance on drawing up a person specification. This should be linked to the job description and drawing it up provides an opportunity to check for hidden and potentially discriminatory criteria.

It may be unrealistic to expect that the person will have all of the essential skills when they are first employed, but they should show willingness to grow with the job as it evolves. Thought will need to be given to how training and support for this will be facilitated.

Here are some key points to consider:

Personal experience

Experience, other than that gained from paid work, is often considered very valuable in the context of the development worker role; in particular, personal experience of being a service user or carer. It will be important to discuss where you stand on this in drawing up the person specification, and how it relates to the full scope of the post.

It's hard to prescriptive here, but this is one DUCIE member's view:

"I think direct personal experience is highly desirable but not quite essential. Whether or not the person has direct experience, they will (almost definitely) not have direct experience of all the relevant issues & services. They also need to able to judge when to draw on and when to set aside their own experiences, and be able to see their own experiences as part of a wide diversity of experiences and approaches".

Familiarity with the Higher Education environment

This can certainly be very useful in ensuring effectiveness within the role, but opinion differs on whether it is essential or indeed desirable. It needs to be remembered that for *many* people taking up a post within a university, the environment can seem alien and unfamiliar. This applies, for example, to health and social care practitioners new to academic roles. Attention to the induction process can circumvent some of this. Special attention may need to be given to issues regarding recruitment of members of traditionally underrepresented groups and the challenges that they might face.

It could be argued that unfamiliarity with the environment and its rituals can bring a very fresh perspective to bear on development work; that someone who has become 'institutionalised' may not share. Here's one DUCIE member's view:

"Depending how the job is set up, I think the person does need to be able to feel reasonably at home and confident in a university environment. The most usual route to this would be being a graduate, but I feel strongly that this should not be seen as the only route, and should not be an essential or even desirable requirement for the post".

Hidden requirements or assumptions

It is important to cover everything with the person specification, so that it matches with the actual day to day needs of the job. For example, do not underestimate the level of IT skills needed, the amount of travel involved or the requisite level of writing and presentation skills.

- Some common items for inclusion in a person specification

- Experience of working with service users and carers

- Experience of working with diverse groups, or familiarity with local community groups and populations

- Experience of working with or in a large organisation

- Experience of development work and / or project management

- Understanding of the public and citizen involvement agenda

- Good communication skills (possibly including a second language or other interpreting skill, such as British Sign Language).

- Influencing, diplomacy and assertiveness skills

- Group facilitation skills

- Report writing skills (academic or otherwise), including the ability to produce material in plain language.

- Presentation skills

- Teaching experience and / or qualification, or willingness to undertake training

- Requisite financial experience

- IT skills

Recruitment and selection for interview

Key to successful recruitment is appropriate advertising of the role. It may be usual for the institution to advertise in broadsheet newspapers and online, but for this role thought should be given to a range of outlets. Local community and voluntary sector newsletters may be good for awareness raising, and informal email networks may be useful to tap into.

Remember that your ideal candidate may not recognise that their knowledge and experience is transferable (see the development worker voice at the beginning of this guide), so the advertisement needs to catch people's interest and encourage them to make connections between what they do now and the role of a development worker in a university.

It is extremely important to think about how service users, carers and staff 'enthusiasts' will be represented, both in the selection of candidates for interview and in the interview process itself.

Interview

Whilst a formal interview is invaluable in providing detailed information about candidates, some form of additional interactive exercise can provide an opportunity for candidates to demonstrate the required skills and attributes. For example, a group facilitation exercise, where candidates are asked to host a discussion on some aspect of involvement, provides an opportunity for them to put their claims into practice and allows for the inclusion of a diverse range people in evaluating their strengths.

Induction

It is crucial to consider what systems need to be put in place for induction, support and supervision when employing someone in a user and carer involvement development worker role. Some of these may be the same as for those in academic or administrative roles, but others may be quite different.

- A development worker may not be from an academic or professional background, and so a tailored induction programme should be in place to provide:

- ample opportunities to discuss the background and expectations of the role

- a 'primer' on the terminology, organisational process and structures within which the worker will be operating

- a tour of the university and induction into the organisation as a whole

• clarity and honesty about the likely boundaries of the role's sphere of influence and how this may extend. (It is important that new workers are not 'over-informed' about tensions and differences of opinion within the existing staff team; but equally, they should not be set up to fail due to such information being withheld). A good approach is to arrange an opportunity for the team to present to the new worker the background to creation of the post and their views on the current state of play.

• an opportunity to meet key individuals at an early stage

• a public declaration of support from key individuals at an early stage. A senior colleague might, for example, send an organisation-wide communication that introduces the post-holder, outlines their specific role and stresses the organisation's commitment to the development of user and carer involvement. Administrative departments should also receive this (e.g. Finance, libraries etc.)

• an orientation with respect to the local voluntary and community sector

• an orientation with respect to the wider involvement context (NHS, PPI, Skills for Care / Health, GSCC etc.)

• a clear plan for how professional and personal development needs will be met.

Support needs and supervision structures need to be considered for development workers, in the same way as for any appointment made within an HEI. As new posts, often without precedent, there may be additional thinking and preparation needed in advance of any appointment.

Management

Consideration needs to be given to where the post fits in to the whole structure of the organisation. Sensitive line management support will be needed, to maximise the influence of the role and address any organisational constraints.

Supervision

An appropriate person should provide regular, structured supervision during which targets and work plans can be negotiated and any barriers or difficulties encountered in fulfilling the role discussed. This may not necessarily be the line manager.

Mentoring, pastoral care and clinical supervision

These should be considered as essential. Independent support, coaching and guidance will assist the post holder in getting used to their environment; as well as help them to identify and tackle any issues as they arise.

Special consideration should be given to the emotional and psychological support needs of the post holder if they are working closely with people with significant physical and / or mental health problems.

In addition, it should be recognised that development work can be stressful in itself, due to the inevitable change and uncertainty surrounding it. That is, of course, what makes it exciting too!

Thought needs to be given to the relative merits of external versus internal mentoring, support and supervision. One lecturer commented:

"We proposed that the post-holder would be asked to identify someone from an external patient / carer / community organisation who could provide external mentoring. This would allow them to discuss in a 'safe place' any difficulties or frustrations they were experiencing in the role and to obtain advice and support in deciding how best to address and tackle such problems. This arrangement was also intended to help the post-holder to retain an 'outsider' viewpoint in order to encourage our organisation to make the necessary changes, etc".

A DUCIE member has drawn attention to the potential pitfalls of reliance on external support:

"One difficulty for the voluntary organisation is in knowing the changing context in the HEI in order to give support. And there is a risk of over-reliance on extremely supportive individuals on the project steering group."

Personal and professional development

It is reasonable to expect that the post-holder should be encouraged, and financially enabled, to access in-house and external training opportunities which will enhance fulfilment of their role.

Peer support available through face-to-face and online networks, such as DUCIE, should be encouraged and considered as core work.

There are no current career structures for development workers, making personal and professional development an essential part of a regular role review.

A development worker should have access to all of the basic resources and facilities necessary to carry out their role effectively. Important amongst these are:

- office space appropriate to the type of work being undertaken, which may differ in nature from that needed by other staff. For example, consideration needs to be given to issues such as easy access for members of the public who are unfamiliar with the layout of the building, and who may also have disabled access needs.

- suitable space to meet with users and carers

- access to a telephone, a computer (including email and internet), library resources and any keys, swipe cards or codes necessary for building or room access. These are 'standard issue' for teaching staff, with most universities now enabling staff members to log on from home and access their emails and other work folders. These rights should be equally afforded to the development worker. If the role is community based then some extra support may be needed to access the university network – through provision of a laptop and/or IT advice to the relevant community organisation.

- a mobile phone, if working off site

- information about basic systems – what time does the post go? where are spare print cartridges kept?

- information about relevant email / mailing lists

- access to a parking space

These arrangements need to be considered in relation to all of the locations where the post holder may be employed and / or based.

Location

The physical office location of the post can send out a message as to the seriousness (or not) with which the work is regarded (e.g. consider the implications of being stuck in a windowless basement office next to the toilets). Similarly, sharing office space with others can help integration within the organisation.

Sometimes there is the need for trade-offs to be made. For example, better office space may be available in more isolated locations (away from easy access to day-to-day support). Where difficult decisions have to be reached then care should be taken to address the losses so far as is practicable (e.g. through ensuring coffee breaks are taken in a main staff room etc.).

Access needs of the post holder need to be discussed with the person and addressed (e.g. physical access of lecture rooms; supportive environment conducive to good mental health etc).

How you budget for your involvement project or post will be of central importance to your application for support. A full costing sets out financial need and provides the base around which your argument will be developed. Try to avoid cutting corners at this stage, because false economies will only limit the success of the project later. A brief outline of key costs and some indicative justification for them is given below. These highlight the wide range of areas where careful thought needs to be given to the true price of best practice. Further down there are some example budgets for different configurations of provision.

Employment costs, salaries and pensions

Appropriate rates of pay plus national insurance and pensions must be costed in to your budget. Current development worker rates vary greatly according to their remit and degrees of responsibility; but the pay scales reached after job evaluation have often underestimated the nature of the work and failed to take into account the amount of strategic and planning input that the worker will be required to make.

Experience has shown that it is quite normal for development worker posts to start vague in remit, then develop quite rapidly as the area of work develops. Whilst it is often hard to predict the rate and direction of development work, any salary scale used should take into account the likely escalation of responsibility and include increments which recognise and appropriately reward the worker over time, subject to a regular review of progress.

Support and supervision

If priority is to be given to the appointment of a current service user or carer to a development worker post, then some contingency costing for the post / project will be needed to allow for flexibility in responding to illness, unforeseen caring responsibilities and to accommodate any appropriate supportive measures.

Whilst most large organisations have standard occupational health and disability access guidelines and rules, the unusual circumstances of using positive discrimination in employing a service user may require some creative thinking in terms of the mechanisms used to support them in their role.

The nature of development work has the potential to impact upon the post holder's emotional and mental wellbeing, and so it is good practice to seek out experienced outside support, supervision or mentoring. If this is not available as a standard part of the institution's employment package then it will need to be additionally budgeted for.

Premises and equipment

For some organisations, rent, heat, lighting, cleaning, business rates, public liability insurance etc. will all need to be included in a project budget.

For every new post / project basic equipment is necessary and may also require specific budgeting. Obvious examples are a desk, chair, computer, printer, phone, filing cabinets, etc

Even if premises are provided to the project free of charge, for true community engagement to take place there are occasions when work will probably need to be taken outside the institution. It is important to budget for room hire to cover such eventualities.

Clerical support and other administrative costs

The nature of involvement work makes it important for documents and materials to be in accessible formats. This can be a time consuming endeavour and may need costed clerical support.

Regardless of whether clerical support is available, there will be basic administrative costs when producing documents and promotional information such as web pages, leaflets, posters, etc.

Staff travel

In order to facilitate the carrying out of community engagement duties, and to fulfil core requirements of the post, staff travelling expenses must be costed appropriately.   It is important that provision can be made for tickets to be booked in advance, so that the worker is not out of pocket whilst waiting for expenses to be reimbursed.

Training

The empowerment, confidence boosting and support of service users, carers and staff requires co-ordination and facilitation. They will all have some basic training needs which need to be costed in to the project.

A development worker may also have very specific training needs and should be allowed the opportunity to access funds for personal and professional development.

Involvement fees and expenses

The success of the post / project relies on the involvement of service users and carers. Whether voluntary or paid, people involved will have basic travel, replacement carer and other expenses that need to be covered. Volunteers who spend a significant amount of time with the project, on any one day, will need basic subsistence expenses to be met or lunch provided.

It is good practice for fees and expenses to be offered for teaching and attendance at meetings, and it is advisable to consider this in thinking about budgets in the longer term.

If payment of a fee is to be offered, it is also a good idea for remuneration / a stipend for work between meetings and events to be costed in.

Disability access

The project must have access to interpreters, sign language etc when required. Some research will need to be done into the cost of such services, as these are often underestimated.

Conferences and events

It is important that the work of the project is promoted and the post holder given the opportunity to network and learn from others in the same field. Whilst it is often difficult to predict when conferences and events will occur, a specific pot of money to cover attendance should be identified as part of the project budget. A sum should be built in to cover travel expenses to regular meetings such as those of the Developers of User and Carer Involvement (DUCIE) network.

The project may also decide to run similar events of its own.

Accountancy and audit

All work and financial activities must be transparent, so independent examination is recommended where this is not part of the organisational infrastructure.

Other running costs

It is clearly important for a project to be appropriately resourced. Less obvious examples of this are journals or books which support and influence the project that may not necessarily be available in the library.

It is also wise to think about other sundry running costs, such as tea, coffee, biscuits, milk, birthday and thank you cards. These small items can be integral to the success of a project or post.

Clearly the costings for a development worker post will depend to some extent on the scope of the task. Whilst some may only hold responsibility for developing engagement for one programme, others may encompass work across a whole Faculty with a plethora of programmes for several hundred students.

Four costed models are provided.

- Each model includes 40% of total salary costs to cover office/project running costs.

- Minimum and maximum range allows for employment of a development worker at different points on the pay scales.

- Total salary costs include national insurance and pension contributions.

- Service user and carer support costs (eg payment, training, subsistence, travel for those involved) are essential to the success of projects but have not been included here. Levels will vary depending on the scope of the individual development worker post and project.

Packages could be adjusted to provide different levels of worker input, different levels of admin support and different levels of user/ carer support. However it should be stressed that without adequate admin support, some development workers may be overstretched, and that support packages for users and carers are integral to the successful development of user and carer involvement. In particular, there is evidence that training activity is especially empowering and is strongly associated with continued involvement by the participants (Wykurz & Kelly, 2002; Lockey et al; 2004). Support funds will also cover payments for attendance at meetings, transport, replacement costs, interpreters and translators, etc. This will ensure that the development worker is able to engage with and recruit members of the local communities that are often excluded.

The following models are given as an illustration of the wide range of approaches to costing a development worker post that can and have been taken; not all are recommended as viable models, as their subtitles indicate.

Model 1: The Special

Full-time development worker

Part-time administrative worker (2 days/week)

User/Carer support

Cost of development worker role:
- Lecturer Grade 7 pt 31- 36   Salary £30,594   Total costs: £37,139
- Lecturer Grade 8 pt 37-43   Salary £36,532   Total costs: £44,448

Cost of admin worker:
- Clerical 3 pt 13   Salary £16,336 (f/t)   Total costs: £8,451

40% Salary cost overheads to cover office/project running costs:
- Point 31-36+ Admin = £18,236
- Point 37-43 + Admin = £21,160

Total:
- Minimum £63,826 pa
- Maximum £74,059pa

Plus service user and carer support costs.

Model 2: The Stroller

Full-time development worker

NO administrative worker

User/Carer support

Cost of development worker role:

- Lecturer Grade 7 pt 31- 36   Salary £30,594   Total costs: £37,139
- Lecturer Grade 8 pt 37-43   Salary £36,532   Total costs: £44,448

40% Salary cost overheads to cover office/project running costs:

- Lecturer Grade 7 = £14,856
- Lecturer Grade 8 = £ 17,780

Total:

- Minimum £51,995
- Maximum £62,228

Plus service user and carer support costs.

Model 3: The Struggler

Part-time development worker (3 days/week)

NO administrative worker

User/Carer support

Cost of development worker role:
- Lecturer Grade 7 pt 31- 36   Salary costs: £37,139(ft)   Total costs: £22,284
- Lecturer Grade 8 pt 37-43   Salary costs:£44,448(ft)   Total costs: £26,669

40% Salary cost overheads to cover office/project running costs:
- Lecturer Grade 7 = £ 8,914
- Lecturer Grade 8 = £10,668

Total:
- Minimum £31,198
- Maximum £37,337

Plus service user and carer support costs.

Model 4 – The Strangler

Part-time co-ordinator (3 days/week)

NO administrative worker

NO User/Carer support

Cost of development worker role:

- Lecturer Grade 7 pt 31- 36   Salary costs: £37,139(ft)   Total costs: £22,284
- Lecturer Grade 8 pt 37-43   Salary costs:£44,448(ft)   Total costs: £26,669

40% Salary cost overheads to cover office/project running costs:

- Lecturer Grade 7 = £ 8,914
- Lecturer Grade 8 = £10,668

Total:

- Minimum £31,198
- Maximum £37,337

No additional service user and carer costs.

All Higher Education Institutions will want to be assured that the employment of a Development Worker or the creation of a lead role for involvement will give 'added value' to their particular strategy, vision or mission. Everyone wants evidence these days and there may be pressure to prove, numerically, that taking this route is a good move. However, the very essence of this work is the emotional component of caring practices (see Freshwater and Stickley 2004). Our experiences of either receiving services, or setting up and promoting the involvement agenda in HEIs, tend to be shared from the heart. It is this is which is perceived to be missing in current health and social care practice.

So how do we evaluate this in a way that pays attention to the emotional component and satisfies the other stakeholders?

We may ask simple questions:

- What have we done? How does it work? Why has it worked? Who is benefiting?

- Where are the improvements in the curricula? More importantly, but harder to measure, what has been the impact on practice?

- How far along the involvement continuum towards a 'Partnership' model are we?

- Are students' perceptions of service users and carers and their personal/ professional value base changing?

- Is the University, School or Department modelling involvement - of its own students, service users and carers, and health and social care staff - in its overall educational provision?

Such questions are not an end in themselves, but may form the basis for co-operative enquiry. Gathering evidence for the benefits of involvement may not be difficult, but how that evidence is interpreted and acted upon will depend on how much of a priority involvement is in the HEI community.

Each HEI will have its own internal policies and guidelines regarding probation periods, managerial supervision, personal development planning etc. It needs to be clear to the development worker what is being evaluated at each review and how any actions required will be supported by training etc. Review points are often at 6 months, a year and then annually.

Evaluation Tools

It may be useful to consider evaluating the impact of involvement work on the wider school or department. The ladder of Involvement, included in Learning from Experience and the National Continuous Quality Improvement Tool for Mental Health Education can be useful in gauging the progress being made. The 10 Essential Shared Capabilities pack also contains review questions for involvement as do the Trent 'Principles for Practice' guidelines.

- *National Quality Improvement Tool*

- *Learning from Experience*

- *Ten Essential Shared Capabilities*

- *Principles for Practice*

We hope that you have found these guidelines helpful.

Other useful sources of information include:

- *The Developers of User and Carer Involvement (DUCIE) page on the Mental Health in Higher Education website*

- *The Professional Education Public Involvement Network (PEPIN)*

This is an evolving area of practice and we are aware that there is far more expertise out there than we have been able to tap into here. Please do *contact us* with improvements and amendments to this guide.

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All websites and online documents referred to in this guide can be accessed from the on-line version of this guide: **www.mhhe.heacademy.ac.uk/ducieguidelines**