



Consumer Participation Workplace Audit

Organisation:

Auditor (name and role):

Date:

Introduction

Consumer participation has been described as 'the active participation of people who, because they have used services or are potential service users, can bring their knowledge and experience to contribute to the design, planning, delivery and evaluation of services'. (Voices on Choices: working towards consumer-led alcohol and drug treatment, Anglicare Tasmania, Social Action and Research Centre, July 2010.)

The Work Place Audit is a process of gathering information against key questions to understand what is currently happening in your organisation in relation to consumer participation. It is a process of observing, collecting and analysing to facilitate reflection, decision making, and change management.

This audit will inform the level of participation currently occurring at your service. It will also help identify activities which create greater levels of consumer participation. In leading the audit process, it is suggested that organisations use the outcomes of the audit to nominate three areas for development to strengthen consumer participation.

NADA recommends that the audit is conducted with two consumers, this could be either current or previous services users. This may seem daunting for services that are still in early stages of involving consumers in service planning and design. It may be that your first audit is conducted internally, however we recommend that an action area for development is to include consumers in future audits.

Outcomes of the audit should include:

1. Review and assessment of current organisational philosophy, culture and service delivery models to ensure that consumer participation is a core activity of the service
2. Identification of organisational service delivery and skill changes necessary for achieving consumer participation
3. Development of service delivery models, practice standards and strategies for consumer participation
4. Implementation of consumer participation initiatives and practices.

More information on consumer participation is also available on NADAs website at:

<http://www.nada.org.au/nada-focus-areas/consumerparticipation/>

** This tool has been adapted by NADA from the Family & Carer Workplace Audit by Family Life, Victoria and Straight from the Source: A practical guide to consumer participation in the Victorian alcohol and other drug sector, Association of Participating Service Users (APSU) 2010.*

Consumer Participation Activity Levels

The following table is provided to give you an idea of the different types of consumer participation activities

Degree of consumer involvement	Type of participation	Example of activity
Low	Consumer participation built into values and policies of service	Consumer participation incorporated into vision or mission statement; consumer charter of rights: is there a document outlining service user rights, responsibilities and expected levels of service
	Activities which provide information to, or receive information from, consumers	Current consumers are actively involved in their own treatment and care plans: do consumers have access to easy to understand information about treatment options; consider other services client may be accessing
		Resources for consumers that include information about service planning; are these readily available/distributed
		Complaints procedure: ensure process is widely promoted
		Suggestion box: is regular feedback provided to consumers on the actioning (or not) of suggestions provided
		Surveys: these need to specifically ask consumers for their opinions on how programs and services could be improved
		Forums: open meetings held in which consumers can express their views about how services or programs are run
		Consumer councils: committees or groups of consumers whose role it is to advise the service about how services and programs are run
		Consumers family or carer involvement: is appropriate information available for this group of representatives to be involved in various activities
		Service displays relevant publications: the service displays or makes available in other ways publications of drug user organisations e.g. NUAA, AIVL or information on AA and NA
Mid	Non decision making roles	Consumers involved in resource development: consumers involved in writing or reviewing written materials such as brochures, fact sheets, newsletters, magazines or educational resources
		Consumers are supported to conduct their own activities: the organisation has ways to help consumers facilitate and run their own support groups (e.g. fitness groups, mums and dads groups) such as providing space, training or transport
		Consumers involved in staff training: consumers involved in determining the content of in-service training that is directly relevant to consumers and their treatment
High	Consumers sharing in decision making	Consumer representatives involved in a planning committee: the organisation has consumer representative/s as a member of any committee that plans or makes decisions about services or programs
		Consumer representative attends staff meeting: the organisation has consumer representative regularly attend staff meetings
		Consumer representative involved in staff recruitment: service has a service user representative involved in the recruitment process for new staff at the service e.g. service user contributed interview question or was a member of an interview panel
		Consumer representative involved in staff performance appraisal: the organisation has had consumer involved in assessing staff job performance e.g. consumer representatives meet with unit manager to give feedback on staff performance
		Consult/involvement with local community drug action team or community groups: services (through staff or consumers) engage with relevant stakeholders to ensure that all possible consumers are considered (potential future consumers) in service planning

This table has been adapted by NADA from: NUAA's Ladder of Participation; NSW Health Consumer Participation in NSW Drug & Alcohol Services Guide 2005; Treatment Service Users Project Phase Two: Final Report AIVL 2011.

Please note: NADA acknowledges the diversity of organisations within our sector and realise that some questions may not apply to all services. If a question is not relevant to your organisation, please go to the next question.

Organisational philosophy and attitudes

1. Generally, how does the organisation view the involvement of consumers in service and planning roles? Is the whole organisation supportive or just certain individuals/teams? For example, does everyone in the organisation, from the receptionist to the Board, give out the same message about consumer participation?

2. What is the philosophy of your organisation? How does this allow for the participation of consumers? For examples, is input of consumers in service delivery included in the organisational vision/mission statement?

Organisational values and processes

1. What are the organisational values and how are these expressed in practice? For example are the values centred on providing quality services for consumers? Are consumer's rights and responsibilities clearly expressed?

2. Are consumers involved in development and review of organisational values and strategic planning? When and how?

3. Is there formal documentation about consumer participation, such as a policy? Where are these kept? Who develops them? Who sees them? Is there a review schedule?

Physical facilities

1. Thinking of the physical facilities of your organisation, in what way do they support and promote consumer participation? For example, are there appropriate resources displayed? Is there easy access to the suggestion box, with a clear process for how it is used?

2. Do you have promotional materials and activities that encourage consumer participation in the organisation? Are there resources from relevant groups available? e.g. from NUAA, AIVL

3. Are there resources targeting the range of consumers accessing the service (e.g. CALD; LGBTI; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders; those with low literacy levels)

Service delivery

1. At intake, is information provided to consumers on how they can contribute to the design, planning, delivery and evaluation of services? What type of questions are asked? What activities are offered?

2. Is consumer participation discussed at other points of the services being provided?

3. Do staff in your organisation have skills and training to support consumer participation initiatives and activities? If yes, provide examples.

4. Are consumers provided with training, mentoring and/or support to participate in activities? If yes, provide examples.

5. Do position descriptions include specific details about supporting consumer participation?

6. How are consumers involved in service evaluation?

NEXT STEPS

Questions to consider:

- ▶ Reviewing the above, what areas would you see as important to focus on in developing consumer participation in your organisation?
- ▶ How will you share the outcomes of this audit process with staff and consumers who have not participated?
- ▶ Are there any opportunities for them to comment on the priorities?

It might be useful to discuss the outcomes of the audit at a staff meeting and consumer/service user meeting at your service and brainstorm ideas and identify priorities.

We suggest your priorities include at least one smaller project which might make an immediate and significant difference (e.g. Suggestion box; resources that contain information on service planning; complaints procedure) as well as specific practices you may wish to review (e.g. the intake and assessment process, job descriptions).

After identifying priorities we suggest putting together an action plan for implementing solutions that address these areas with clear responsibilities and timeframes, and how consumers will be involved in the process.

Prioritise and nominate three areas for strengthening the consumer participation practices of your organisation (you might want to use the activities table from page 2)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Auditor: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Consumer: _____

Consumer: _____

Signed: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date for next review: _____