

Client Influence and Participation Policy

Version 2
June 2023



Client Influence and Participation Policy

Title	Client Influence and Participation Policy
Version	2
Date first published	December 2019, June 2023
Previous review dates	N/A
Next review date	June 2026
Review schedule	This policy will be reviewed every 3 years.
Responsibility	Board of Trustees
Responsibility for development, review and implementation	DCEO, Executive and Senior Leadership Team and Operational Service Team.
Description	Provides a framework to make sure that we have a consistent and co-ordinated approach to client influence and participation, and to ensure our services are fit for purpose and the best they can be.
Target audience	All staff, volunteers, the Board of Trustees, clients, students on placement with Mind in Bradford, visitors to Mind in Bradford, our funding bodies, job and volunteer applicants and third party providers
Accessibility	Staff: People HR Volunteers: People HR Clients and others: Mind in Bradford website If you would like this policy in another format, such as large print or audio, please request one by contacting us on 01274 730815 or at email admin@mindinbradford.org.uk
Associated policies	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy Recruitment and Selection Policy Client Code of Conduct Plus: Client Influence and Participation Action Plan.

1. Purpose

Mind in Bradford knows and appreciates that clients are very much members of our team. They are a vital voice when designing and improving services, working with us to recruit staff and volunteers and understanding the training needs of the team.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide a framework to make sure that we have a consistent and co-ordinated approach to client influence and participation.
- ensure our services are fit for purpose and the best they can be.

As a local charity we are committed to providing opportunities for people from our community with lived experience to work with us in developing our services and structures.

We recognise that more needs to be done to ensure client influence and participation is embedded. We will ensure that we listen and respond to client feedback. This policy will be supported by the Client Influence and Participation Action Plan.

We know that it is only when we understand a client's needs, by asking them and not second guessing, that we can work in a way that ensures they receive maximum benefit from our service.

2. Background

This policy was developed using staff and client feedback. Feedback was invited online, in a face-to-face forum, paper copies of the policy were provided to clients as requested. Staff consultation was provided via email and during team and individual meetings.

3. Scope

The policy applies to all people working on behalf of Mind in Bradford. This includes staff, volunteers, trustees, contractors, agency workers, apprentices and students. This policy should be applied when planning new services, evolving current services and de-commissioning of existing services.

4. Responsibilities

Board

The Board hold the accountability for this policy and will support the Executive Team to enable the policy to be fully implemented.

Executive and Senior Leadership Teams

Executive and Senior Leadership Teams are responsible for ensuring the operational implementation of the policy.

DCEO

- To lead the review and updating of the policy every 3 years.
- To have oversight and management of the implementation of the policy through our operational management and reporting processes.
- To ensure that all staff are familiar with this policy and that client influence and participation remains a consistent priority and is embedded in operational practice. This will demonstrate compliance with this policy.

All Staff

- Ensure that they have read and are familiar with this policy.
- Ensure that they apply this policy and seek the views of the client at every appropriate opportunity. This may be during or after a client support session or in the weeks following.
- Promote and facilitate influence and participation of people with lived experience.
- Support clients to share their views in a way that is most comfortable and individual to them.

5. Definitions and Points of Understanding

People with lived experience are any person who has experienced mental distress. People who use the services of Mind in Bradford are either experiencing or have experienced mental health distress.

Influencing means that a person who is using our services will have their opinion heard and considered when services are being both delivered and evolved. Participation means that clients will be included in how the services are run.

We are committed to meaningful client involvement in all aspects of our work. The commitment requires all Board members, staff and volunteers to encourage and support client involvement.

Mind in Bradford is committed to this client involvement policy because it:

- Helps us to understand and celebrate the uniqueness of all.
 - Helps us to improve and shape our services by listening and learning.
 - Ensures that we work together for a shared purpose and to make the biggest positive difference.
 - Ensures we live our organisational values of supporting everyone, working together, caring always, improving continually and enabling all.
 - Enables and maintains positive relationships with our stakeholders and funders.

6. Opportunities

Client influence and participation can take several forms and is accepted verbally, written, via text, from the website and social media, or it can be gathered from within services themselves.

The way we gather feedback can be within a 1-1 session, group work, during an intervention, during a planned feedback session, during recruitment, via a third party or from families or carers.

We also use the experiences of staff with lived experience to influence our services. We aim to keep clients and staff informed about how their contributions have influenced planning and service delivery.

7. Support and Benefits

At all formalised client feedback sessions, drinks and light refreshments are made available. Clients are able to claim travel and meal costs for some activities. Reasonable adjustments, where applicable, are made to support the client when working with staff to influence services, an example of this may be a pre-meet, providing training for specific tasks or adapting the environment to suit their needs.

We recognise that our population is diverse and that we have clients who have English as a second language. We ensure that we use interpreting services, understanding that a language difference is not a barrier.

8. Promotion and Recruitment

Opportunities to influence and participate in the shaping and development of services are made to all current clients. Clients who have used services within the last 6 months are invited to share their experiences.

We are reaching out to clients in a range of ways, via social media, written invites, email, via the client newsletter, which is a dedicated monthly communication written for and contributed to by clients. All of these methods are provided with the intention of supporting clients to share their experiences in the most convenient and appropriate ways possible

9. Governance

Client Trustees

Clients and former clients who wish to become involved with our governance (the Board) should be informed of what this involves. We are committed to ensuring that all members of the Board receive training and support to enable them to achieve this.

We are mindful of the potential conflict of interest or breach of confidentiality that could arise when clients and former clients are elected as Trustees. This is especially the case when there is potential involvement with staff, steering groups, and volunteers with whom they have had a working relationship.

Trustees who are or have been clients of services at Mind in Bradford will be supported in this matter by the Chief Executive Officer or their nominee. All trustees will receive training and guidance on conflict of interests and confidentiality.

Clients will be encouraged to take part in strategic planning events, policy making and activities that determine the vision and direction of Mind in Bradford.

10. Monitoring

This policy will be monitored by gathering nonperson identifiable data relating to feedback. This will be captured on quarterly and monthly reports.

The Client Influence and Participation Action Plan set out the actions to be followed.



Your local mental health charity in Bradford, Airedale, Wharfedale and Craven