SERVICE USER ENGAGEMENT, PARTICIPATION AND CO-PRODUCTION POLICY

PRN-123: Service User Engagement, Participation and Co-production Policy
Company Name: AI Auto-Tech Ltd
Trading/Business Name: CAREHOPES
Company Registration Number: 15556946
SIC Code: 88100 – Social Work Activities Without Accommodation for the Elderly and Disabled
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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish the organisation's commitment to meaningful service user engagement, participation, involvement, and co-production in the planning, delivery, review, and development of services.

The organisation believes that people who use services are experts in their own lives and experiences. Their views, preferences, and feedback are essential in shaping effective, person-centred, and responsive services.

This policy aims to:

Promote person-centred practice.

Empower service users to influence decisions.

Support meaningful involvement.

Improve service quality and outcomes.

Encourage shared decision-making.

Strengthen accountability and transparency.

Promote dignity, choice, and independence.

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2. Scope

This policy applies to:

Service users

Employees

Volunteers

Managers

Directors

Trustees

It applies to all organisational activities where service users may contribute to or influence service development and delivery.

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3. Policy Statement

The organisation is committed to ensuring that service users have genuine opportunities to:

Express their views.

Influence decisions that affect them.

Participate in service development.

Contribute to organisational learning.

Help improve services.

Engagement and participation activities will be inclusive, accessible, meaningful, and proportionate.

The organisation values partnership working with service users and recognises co-production as an important principle in delivering high-quality services.

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4. Guiding Principles

The organisation will promote:

Respect

Valuing lived experience and individual perspectives.

Inclusion

Providing opportunities for all service users to participate.

Accessibility

Reducing barriers to engagement.

Equality

Ensuring fair opportunities to influence decisions.

Collaboration

Working together to achieve positive outcomes.

Transparency

Providing clear information about decision-making and outcomes.

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5. Definitions

Engagement

The process of involving service users in discussions, consultations, and activities relating to services.

Participation

The active involvement of service users in influencing decisions and activities.

Co-production

A way of working in which service users and organisations design, develop, review, and improve services together as equal partners.

Consultation

Seeking views and feedback from service users to inform decisions.

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6. Objectives

The organisation aims to:

Involve service users in service planning.

Improve service responsiveness.

Increase service user satisfaction.

Promote independence and empowerment.

Improve communication.

Strengthen accountability.

Enhance wellbeing outcomes.

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7. Commitment to Co-production

The organisation will seek, where appropriate, to involve service users in:

Service design.

Policy development.

Service reviews.

Quality improvement activities.

Community initiatives.

Evaluation activities.

Co-production should involve meaningful participation rather than tokenistic consultation.

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8. Areas of Participation

Service users may contribute to:

Individual Support Planning

Influencing decisions about their own support arrangements.

Service Reviews

Providing feedback on services received.

Policy Consultation

Commenting on new or revised policies.

Service Development

Helping identify improvements.

Quality Assurance

Participating in surveys, forums, and evaluations.

Community Projects

Contributing to local initiatives and activities.

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9. Person-Centred Decision-Making

Service users should be supported to:

Express preferences.

Make informed choices.

Set personal goals.

Participate in reviews.

Influence support arrangements.

Where appropriate, individuals should receive information in accessible formats to support participation.

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10. Accessible Engagement

The organisation will seek to make participation opportunities accessible through:

Plain language communication.

Alternative formats.

Large print documents.

Audio resources.

Telephone engagement.

Online participation options.

Face-to-face discussions.

Reasonable adjustments will be considered where necessary.

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11. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Engagement and participation activities will be designed to promote:

Equality of opportunity.

Inclusion.

Respect for diversity.

Cultural sensitivity.

Particular attention should be given to ensuring underrepresented groups have opportunities to participate.

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12. Service User Feedback

The organisation values feedback regarding:

Quality of services.

Communication.

Accessibility.

Volunteer and employee interactions.

Service outcomes.

Suggestions for improvement.

Feedback should be encouraged and welcomed.

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13. Methods of Engagement

Engagement methods may include:

Surveys.

Feedback forms.

Review meetings.

Consultation events.

Focus groups.

Community forums.

Informal conversations.

Telephone discussions.

Digital engagement activities.

A variety of methods should be used to encourage participation.

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14. Encouraging Participation

Employees and volunteers should actively encourage service users to:

Share opinions.

Ask questions.

Raise concerns.

Suggest improvements.

Participate in reviews.

Participation should always remain voluntary.

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15. Working with Families, Carers and Advocates

With consent, families, carers, and advocates may support participation.

Their involvement may assist where individuals:

Require communication support.

Need advocacy assistance.

Want support in expressing their views.

The wishes of the service user should remain central.

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16. Advocacy and Independent Representation

The organisation recognises the value of advocacy.

Where appropriate, service users should be informed about access to:

Independent advocates.

Community advocacy organisations.

Support services.

Advocacy can help individuals participate more fully in decisions affecting them.

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17. Consultation on Organisational Changes

Service users may be consulted when significant changes are proposed, including:

Service redesign.

Policy changes.

New programmes.

Changes to service delivery methods.

Consultation helps ensure changes reflect service user needs and experiences.

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18. Service User Forums and Groups

The organisation may establish opportunities such as:

Service user forums.

Advisory groups.

Consultation events.

Community engagement sessions.

These forums can provide opportunities for collective feedback and discussion.

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19. Participation in Quality Assurance

Service users may contribute to quality assurance through:

Feedback surveys.

Interviews.

Focus groups.

Review meetings.

Improvement projects.

Participation supports service improvement and accountability.

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20. Responding to Feedback

The organisation will seek to:

Acknowledge feedback.

Consider suggestions carefully.

Explain decisions where appropriate.

Share learning outcomes.

Implement improvements where feasible.

Service users should be informed when their feedback contributes to change.

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21. Recording Participation Activities

Records may be maintained relating to:

Consultation events.

Feedback received.

Improvement suggestions.

Service user involvement activities.

Outcomes of engagement initiatives.

Records should be maintained securely and appropriately.

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22. Barriers to Participation

The organisation will seek to identify and reduce barriers, including:

Communication difficulties.

Mobility issues.

Digital exclusion.

Transport difficulties.

Confidence issues.

Language barriers.

Reducing barriers promotes wider participation and inclusion.

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23. Recognising Contributions

The organisation values the contribution of service users and may:

Provide feedback on outcomes.

Recognise involvement in improvement activities.

Thank participants for their contribution.

Recognition demonstrates respect for service users' time and experiences.

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24. Confidentiality and Participation

Personal information obtained during participation activities will be:

Handled confidentially.

Shared only where appropriate.

Managed in accordance with data protection requirements.

Individuals should understand how their information will be used.

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25. Safeguarding Considerations

Participation activities should always be conducted safely.

Employees and volunteers should remain alert to:

Safeguarding concerns.

Exploitation.

Undue influence.

Wellbeing concerns.

Safeguarding responsibilities remain applicable throughout engagement activities.

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26. Monitoring Participation

The organisation may monitor:

Participation levels.

Feedback received.

Diversity of participants.

Satisfaction with engagement activities.

Improvements resulting from engagement.

Monitoring supports continual improvement.

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27. Measuring Impact

The organisation may evaluate:

Changes made following feedback.

Service user satisfaction.

Participation rates.

Quality improvement outcomes.

Accessibility improvements.

Evaluation helps determine whether engagement is effective and meaningful.

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28. Case Study

Scenario: Improving Community Wellbeing Activities

Service users attending a wellbeing group suggest introducing additional creative activities and more opportunities for peer support.

Action Taken

Feedback is gathered from participants.

A consultation meeting is held.

New activity options are explored.

Volunteers assist with implementation.

Outcome

Additional activities are introduced, participation increases, and service users report greater enjoyment and social connection.

Learning Point

Engaging service users in service development helps create activities that better reflect their interests and needs.

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29. Responsibilities

Board of Trustees

Responsible for:

Promoting a culture of participation.

Reviewing service user feedback.

Monitoring engagement outcomes.

Directors

Responsible for:

Implementing this policy.

Supporting co-production opportunities.

Monitoring participation initiatives.

Managers

Responsible for:

Facilitating engagement activities.

Encouraging participation.

Monitoring outcomes and improvements.

Employees and Volunteers

Responsible for:

Listening to service users.

Encouraging involvement.

Recording feedback appropriately.

Supporting inclusive participation.

Service Users

Responsible for:

Participating voluntarily where they wish.

Sharing views and experiences.

Helping shape service improvements.

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30. Monitoring and Quality Assurance

The organisation will monitor:

Service user participation levels.

Feedback and survey results.

Co-production activities.

Equality of participation.

Improvement actions arising from engagement.

Service user satisfaction.

Monitoring findings will be used to strengthen service quality, inclusion, and organisational learning.

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31. Review Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed:

Annually.

Following significant service changes.

Following quality assurance reviews.

Following service user feedback.

Following legislative or regulatory developments.

Related Policies

Person-Centred Support Policy

Service User Participation and Feedback Policy

Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement Policy

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Accessibility and Inclusive Communication Policy

Compliments, Complaints and Feedback Handling Procedure

Service User Review and Outcome Monitoring Procedure

Partnership Working and External Agencies Policy