

# Standards for Involving Service Users and Carers in the Degree in Social Work in Wales

June 2005

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## **1 Forward**

It gives me great pleasure to provide the forward to the Care Council for Wales's Standards for Involving Service Users & Carers in the Degree in Social Work.

In 2004, the Care Council introduced a new Degree qualification for Social Work. This development is an integral part of the wider Welsh Assembly Government agenda for improvement to social work services in Wales. A key principal of this initiative is the crucial significance of service user and carer views and experience in informing, shaping and evaluating the improvements to social work and social care. It has been important, therefore, to ensure that this principal is fully reflected within the Social Work Degree.

The involvement of service users and carers in the selection, training and assessment of social work students is recognised as necessary to ensure that qualified workers have a thorough understanding of the standards of practice, processes and outcomes that are required by service users and carers. The centrality of their involvement is also vital for the achievement of high standards in practice, conduct and training which is the focus of the work of the Care Council.

The Care Council Rules for the Approval and Visiting of Degree Courses in Social Work (2004) are clear that from now on, service users and carers have a major role to play "in all stages of the development and delivery of degree programmes".

To support the implementation of this Degree requirement, the Care Council has undertaken work to develop these specific Standards on Service User & Carer involvement. These Standards have been based on ideas from service users, carers, degree programme partners and a range of good practice guidance and research. A Care Council reference group of service users and carers has acted as the steering group for this work.

The Standards were the subject of wide consultation in the spring of 2005 and were agreed by the Council Board in July 2005. The standards will be monitored by the Care Council as part of its quality assurance of the Degree qualification.

I see the production of these standards as an important initiative in ensuring that service user and carer involvement is embedded into the practice of Social Workers from the very start of their career.

**Mutale Nyoni**  
**Chair**  
**Care Council for Wales**

## 2 Introduction

This introduction discusses:

- Why have Standards and what are they for?
- What's a Standard?
- How have the Standards been developed?
- What do the Standards cover?
- What else do the Standards link to?
- Who are they for and how are they to be used?
- What's the status of the Standards?

Followed by a list of each of the Standard statements

### **Why have Standards on involving Service Users and Carers?**

There are many excellent reasons for involving service users and carers in social work education and training, including making sure of its relevance to their concerns and building on the expertise that they bring. Most people involved in social work education do not need to be convinced of the benefits. Despite this the involvement of service users and carers has often been ad hoc, occasional and partial. A carer might be asked to 'do a session' on their experience of 'being a carer'; a service user might be asked for their views on the approach and skills of a social work student who has been working with them; a group of service users might be involved in developing a specific module on a social work course. Whilst each of these is valuable, (and these are just some examples of the important contributions provided by service users and carers) service users and carers have not routinely been involved across the whole range of tasks in planning, managing, delivering and evaluating social work qualifying training. Arrangements for service user and carer training and support have not always been adequately resourced. This 'ad hoc' approach will no longer be adequate. The Care Council for Wales Rules and Requirements<sup>1</sup> for all social work degree programmes state that they will need to involve users of services and carers in all aspects of the programme.

The Rules and Requirements do not specify the quality of involvement that is expected, nor what the evidence of involvement might be. A series of statements about Standards have therefore been developed to stand alongside the Rules and Requirements.

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<sup>1</sup> The Rules and Requirements are to be found in an Assembly document called Raising Standards – The Qualification Framework for the Degree in Social Work in Wales

## **What is a Standard?**

The Standards are designed to indicate a level of achievement in involving service users and carers in all the social work degree programmes below which none should fall. They are like a wedge on a slope that marks the level of involvement expected. The Standards are set neither at the bottom of the slope because there are already many good examples of involvement - it's not about starting from scratch. However, neither are they set at the top because learning about what works well takes time and expectations of what's sufficient may change and increase over time. Standards should not be static. It is planned that these Standards will be in place until 2009.

Together, the Standards are part of assisting social work degree programmes move from good intentions to concerted and focused action, so that, in future, involving service users and cares will be:

- Ongoing - not occasional
- Systematic - not fragmented
- Core - not peripheral
- Essential - not optional

## **How have the Standards been developed?**

The Standards have been developed through discussion with service users and carers about what needs to be in place to ensure that their involvement becomes mainstream in social work training. Other key people who are engaged in designing and delivering the social work degree such as lecturers and practice assessors have also contributed. The work of developing the Standards has been steered from the outset by the Service User and Carer Reference Group of the Care Council for Wales.

Another starting place has been the statements that are included in the Care Council Rules and Requirements for the social work degree which each degree programme has to meet. Where applicable these are quoted under each Standard. The 'suggested actions' for implementing each of the Standards have been developed through consultation, reading research and accounts of factors which have contributed positively to involving service users and carers in social work training. They are ideas to assist with development; recognising that programmes will be at different stages of implementing service user and carer involvement.

## **What do the Standards cover?**

The Care Council for Wales Rules require of social work degree providers that they *must involve users of services, carers and representatives of employers of social workers in all stages of the development and delivery of the degree programme (including the selection and assessment of students).*

There are expectations in other parts of the Rules and Requirements that service users and carers will be involved in:

- strategic planning and management of the degree;
- student recruitment and selection;
- designing, delivering and evaluating teaching and learning provision;
- designing, delivering and evaluating practice learning;
- assessment of students;
- quality assurance.

The Standards cover each of these expectations in turn and they are clustered under three headings - developing and sustaining involvement, key tasks and quality assurance. As Enid Levin says in the Social Care Institute for Excellence Resource Guide<sup>2</sup> *'this is an ambitious agenda in which the type of knowledge that service users and carers can impart is identified as a strong lever for improving social care.'*

Each Standard includes:

- a statement of what is expected;
- information on the Care Council Rules and Requirements or guidance that inform the Standard;
- the evidence that degree programmes must produce to show that the Standard is being met;
- suggestions for action;
- the outcome.

### **What else do the Standards link to?**

These Standards do not exist in isolation. They link to and are supported by a number of other documents and initiatives which specify ways in which service users and carers are to be involved in social work and social work training. Some examples are included in Appendix 3. Together these emphasise the move to making service users and carers involvement central to developing good social work and social care practice.

### **Who are the Standards for and how are they to be used?**

The Standards are for people who are part of designing, delivering, undertaking and evaluating social work qualification training. Such people include:

- service users and carers, teaching staff from agencies and colleges as well as agencies who provide practice learning opportunities and student assessment, all of whom contribute to the social work programme;
- students;
- programme evaluators such as those appointed by the academic institution and from the Care Council and the people already listed;
- people not directly involved in the social work degree but who might be part of the commissioning, administrative and support arrangements such as human resources, contracts and finance personnel.

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<sup>2</sup> Appendix 4 – References and Source Materials

Using the Standards may involve a number of different stages, though not necessarily in the order suggested here:

- **Firstly**, becoming familiar with the Standards statements and the evidence that is required;
- **Secondly**, using the Standards and the suggested actions to measure progress and achievements to date as well as any shortfalls;
- **Thirdly**, using the Standards to help build or modify a plan for service user and carer involvement. Such a plan might include actions on how to achieve each Standard or how to make sure that the evidence is available. The ideas for action might be useful for this planning; and
- **Fourthly**, the Standards can be used to decide how to gather and collect the evidence.

The Standards are therefore, the responsibility of everyone involved in the social work degree, but different people may have different responsibilities. For example, it is likely that the people who need to develop and implement an effective payment process will be different from the people who are developing other arrangements to support and offer training to service users, carers and professional staff. Deciding who is responsible for what will be an important part of an overall plan for service user and carer involvement.

Service users' and carers' responsibilities in relation to the Standards may vary from programme to programme as well as in relation to personal circumstances. For example - the extent of involvement in selection and recruitment of students may vary between programmes and over time, but all service users or carers who are involved in selection will need to understand the agreed processes.

Students may be interested to learn where and how service users and carers are to be involved in the degree in general as well as in their personal experience of learning to be an effective social worker. As students may also be service users and carers, their interest may be wider than just the student related aspects. People who work on the social work degree as professionals may also be service users or carers themselves, or have been in the past or will be at some time in the future. Again their interest in the Standards may be therefore wider than their professional responsibilities.

### **What is the status of the Standards?**

The recognition of the crucial role of service users and carers experience and expertise to improving social work practice and training forms the backdrop to these Standards; while the views of service users and carers and the statements in the Rules and Requirements, form the basis for the Standards.

All social work degree programmes are expected to meet the rules and requirements; their ability to do this will be reviewed by the Care Council on a regular basis as well as by the academic monitoring and regulating arrangements. Meeting the Standards on involving service users and carers will be part of the Care Council review process.

The Council intends to develop a Funding Scheme as a contribution to the costs which will be incurred by the Degree Programmes in developing and sustaining a strategy for Service User and Carer involvement. It is planned to introduce the funding Scheme from Autumn 2005. The Standards will be used by the Care Council as the benchmark against which the outcomes of the Funding Scheme can be measured.

Moving from involving service users and carers in an often fragmented and ad hoc way in social work training to the much more integral way that the Rules and Requirements and the Standards expect will take time, commitment, energy, imagination and finding new ways of working together. This may not be easy. However, it is essential and there are many existing sound examples that can be built upon. The Standards will provide a measure for how that development is progressing.

Ensuring the involvement of service users and carers in the degree via these Standards is thus part of the wider agenda to improve the quality and confidence in social services in Wales.

As the Social Care Institute for Excellence Resource Guide emphasises:

*Service users and carers are themselves experts in what would make for more control, choice and better quality in their every day lives and in existing services. The purpose of the agenda is to ensure that newly qualified social workers have a thorough understanding of the Standards of practice, processes and outcomes that service users and carers want. Thus, from the very start of their professional career, they will treat service users and carers as active participants in service delivery rather than passive recipients.*

### **A Note on Language**

The choice and use of words and language has been and continues to be an important issue in social work. Preferred words often change over time. Deciding what word could most usefully describe service users, carers and professionals working together on the social work degree on an equal footing has been important.

After consultation, it has been agreed to use the word 'involvement' as the word used to describe this working together. This mirrors the language used in the Rules and Requirements for the degree in social work.

'Involvement' is about both what people work on together as well as how the joint work is undertaken. Fundamental to it all is the belief that the views and expertise of service users and carers have equal standing to those of others involved in social work degree. What is meant in practice by 'involvement' is shown in each of the Standards which outlines the part of the degree in which service users and carers are going to be involved. The evidence asked for shows how 'involvement' is to be demonstrated.

While these Standards use the word 'involvement' it is important that people discuss together what words to use and what they mean. The Care Council for Wales had a discussion and reached agreement on what was 'consultation', what

was 'participation', and how far views and involvement would in reality influence policy and practice. Such discussion could be a useful part of developing the principles for working together as expected by Standard 2.

Appendix 1 explores what is meant by some other important words used in this document, including 'service user', 'carer' , 'programme' and 'disabled people'.

### **3 Summary of the Standards**

#### **Standard 1**

Service users and carers from the widest possible backgrounds and experience are sought and recruited to become part of developing and delivering the social work degree.

#### **Standard 2**

There is a jointly developed and agreed set of principles which specify what service user and carer involvement means in practice.

#### **Standard 3**

There is a strategic and operational plan for the degree programme which includes the plan and financial arrangements for service user and carer involvement in the degree programme, which has been developed jointly with service users and carers.

#### **Standard 4**

There are appropriate support arrangements in place to promote and sustain the involvement of service users and carers in the degree programme.

#### **Standard 5**

There are clear and understandable contracts/formal agreements negotiated with service users and carers covering responsibilities, expectations and arrangements for payment

#### **Standard 6**

The involvement of service users and carers is integral to the strategic planning and management arrangements for the social work degree.

#### **Standard 7**

Service users and carers are involved in developing and implementing the arrangements for selecting students on to the degree programme.

#### **Standard 8**

Service users and carers are involved in developing and delivering teaching and learning opportunities in colleges and agencies as contributors with equally valued expertise.

#### **Standard 9**

Service users and carers are involved in the assessment of individual students and in the programme assessment processes

#### **Standard 10**

The development of the degree programme is informed by the views and recommendations for change made by and about service users' and carers' involvement.

## **Five Standards about Developing and Sustaining Service User and Carer Involvement**

- 1 Finding the people and organisations who might want to be involved
- 2 Agreeing the principles for working together
- 3 Incorporating a strategy and plan for service user and carer involvement into the overall plan for the degree
- 4 Developing appropriate support arrangements
- 5 Formal agreements and contracts

## **Standard 1**

Service users and carers from the widest possible backgrounds and experience are sought and recruited to become part of developing and delivering the social work degree

### **What the Care Council guidance on application for approval to provide a social work degree programme requires**

- *We will be looking for evidence from programmes that they are seeking to work with representatives of groups, rather than individuals, but we realise that it is not practical to expect programmes to include representatives of every possible service user group. While we welcome evidence of the inclusion of carer groups we would not expect these to be the only type of service user represented.*

### **Evidence needed for Standard 1**

- A plan for establishing contact with service users, carers and their organisations including those people who might be facing exclusion or discrimination, such as carers from black and minority ethnic communities and young homeless people;
- Evidence of linking to networks set up in partnership between local authorities and the voluntary and independent sectors - possibly as part of the Social Care Workforce Development Partnership;
- Arrangements for monitoring the diversity of service users, carers and their organisations recruited to the programme over time;
- Links between the programme's equal opportunities policy and the access and recruitment of service users, carers and their organisations to become involved in the degree.

### **Suggested Actions**

- Develop methods for ongoing recruitment;
- Service user and carer organisation could consider what their terms and conditions for becoming involved in different aspects of the degree will be;
- Consider different approaches to recruitment and the balance between personal contact and more far reaching approaches such a slot on local radio to explain what getting involved could offer. Different approaches are likely to reach different people and organisations;
- Reach out to organisations **of** people who might or do use services as well as to organisations which work **for** service users and carers;
- Use existing networks to send out information and invitations;
- Have a named person/people to act as a point of contact for people /organisations who are considering getting involved - a direct line telephone number might also be useful;
- Consider different ways of inviting people to 'taster sessions' before they have to agree to become involved - go to places where service users or carers get together to explore how best to do this, or link to existing voluntary organisations;

- Make it clear that expenses will be reimbursed, or that refreshments will be available for such 'taster' events;
- Develop flexible arrangements as the people who need to be heard may have less time to be involved.

### **Outcome**

Programmes reach out in imaginative ways to make contact with people and organisations who might wish to become involved and ensure that minority viewpoints are meaningfully represented.

## **Standard 2**

There is a jointly developed and agreed set of principles which specify what service user and carer involvement means in practice

### **What the Care Council for Wales Rules require**

- *The institution must promote and respect equal opportunities , anti-discriminatory practice and human rights (in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998) in all aspects of the delivery of the programme;*
- *The institution must have an equal opportunities, an anti-discriminatory practice and a Welsh Language policy that reflect legal requirements and the Requirements of these Rules.*

### **Evidence needed for Standard 2**

- A clear written statement of the agreed principles for joint working, responsibilities and expectation, signed by all contributors and underpinned by the Code of Practice for Social Care Workers and Employers of Social Care Workers;
- Develop and implement the agreed principles;
- Evidence of how the differences as well as the similarities between service users and carers is acknowledged; and
- A plan for how the application of the principles will be monitored and revised if necessary in the light of experience.

### **Suggested Actions**

- Consult with service users and carers and their organisations separately as well as jointly;
- Build in time and supports such as advocacy to enable service users to say what they do and do not want in working together;
- Build on service users' and carers' experience of other sets of principles which they have used and found useful;
- Look at the ideas on principles and values contained in the publications listed in Appendix 2.

### **Outcome**

The principles that underpin all aspects of service user and carer involvement are understood and agreed by everyone and form the basis for respectful and meaningful ways of working together.

### **Standard 3**

There is a strategic and operational plan for the degree programme which includes the plan and financial arrangements for service user and carer involvement in the degree programme, which has been developed jointly with service users and carers.

### **Evidence needed for Standard 3**

A signed and dated plan which includes information on:

- the model of involvement that is being adopted (for example regional, local or a mix of these);
- the scope of involvement;
- time scales for actions to be taken;
- budget and resource allocation for service user and carer involvement;
- arrangements for monitoring and updating the plan, showing how the plan has developed and become more specific over time;
- links between this plan and other strategies that promote inclusiveness such as those on access, language and formats of printed materials, timing and style of meetings, facilities, interpretation services.
  
- An audit process to identify any factors that promote or are barriers to sustaining the involvement of service users and carers over time;
- Integration of audit results into successive action plans for service user and carer involvement .

### **Suggested Actions**

- Take actions that can produce results and benefits quite quickly - for example, developing an invitation to the 'taster sessions'; information on what being involved' might include - as well as longer term developments;
- Include space in the plan for service user and carer involvement to add new ideas as they arise, so that it is possible to be responsive and creative as experience develops;
- Use the suggestions for 'how to audit' suggested in the documents mentioned in the Appendix 4 ( eg Jerry Tew et al).

### **Outcome**

The involvement of service users and carers is planned for and resourced in a cumulative way and can be monitored for its effectiveness.

## **Standard 4**

There are appropriate support arrangements in place to promote and sustain the involvement of service users and carers in the degree programme

### **What the Care Council for Wales Rules require**

- *The institution must use its best endeavours to protect any person connected with the delivery of the programme from mistreatment in any form;*
- *All those involved in the provision of the degree programme, including users of services and carers, receive induction and ongoing training to enable them to contribute effectively to the programme and update their knowledge and skills in relation to the training of social workers.*

### **What the Care Council Application for Approval to provide a Social Work Degree Requires**

- *Academic staff, agency staff and service users will have different needs in relation to induction, support and ongoing learning. Programmes will need to show how they propose to evaluate and meet these needs.*

### **Evidence needed for Standard 4**

- A plan for accessible and relevant training and development for service users and carers on key aspects identified in the Rules and Requirements;
- Summary of feedback from service users and carers on the quality and effectiveness of the training they have received;
- A plan for accrediting the training undertaken and provided by service users and carers;
- A named link person for service users and carers to contact if needed;
- Information on how to complain and on how to use the procedures on whistle blowing and on harassment in accessible formats;
- Use of the audit findings required in Standard 3.

### **Suggested Actions**

- Develop sessions on key skills such as chairing meetings, how to prepare and present a session, working with groups as well as confidence building;
- Consider developing training regionally, perhaps via centres for practice learning and assessment;
- Consider linking in to existing training by organisations such as People First, Local Authorities and their partner independent and voluntary organisations or Life Long Learning Departments;
- Ensure that there are planned and resourced opportunities for debriefing and supervision for people who contribute to the teaching and learning, including service users and carers. Buddying arrangements might also be useful;

- Develop a regional plan for an accreditation process and/or link in to existing qualifications such as the City and Guilds adult education qualifications, Open College Network or NVQ if this is more practical than establishing local arrangements for very few people;
- Make it possible for service users and carers to access training opportunities that are available to academic or agency based staff.

### **Outcome**

Service users' and carers' support and developmental needs and circumstances are understood and responded to positively by the programme arrangements.

## **Standard 5**

There are clear and understandable formal agreements/contracts negotiated with service users and carers covering responsibilities, expectations and arrangements for payment

### **Evidence needed for Standard 5**

- Examples of formal agreements or contracts including those for individuals and/ or organisations representing service users and carers that include support arrangements, expectations, response to changes in circumstances;
- Availability of agreements, contracts and explanations about payment processes in accessible formats;
- Document explaining the agreed payment system for expertise, time; personal assistant or replacement carers, different tasks and responsibilities
- Arrangements for prompt, flexible and easy to use payments to service users and carers or their organisations;
- Resource plan for payment of service users and carers that makes provision for all the support required ( see also Standard 3);
- Process for evaluating and renewal of contracts/formal agreements.

### **Suggested Actions**

- Develop a variety of ways that people can be involved from short term for specific events or activities to longer term involvement; direct employment; agreements with individuals; contracting with service user and carer organisations;
- Involve commissioning and contracting personnel in developing agreements and contracting arrangements;
- Develop a form for fees and expenses which can be completed on the day, in circumstances where asking for invoices is inappropriate;
- Involve finance departments in developing ways of paying that do not result in a risk of losing benefit entitlements, they could liaise with the local tax and benefit offices. Negotiating new rules and procedures for payment of expenses on the day via a petty cash system may also be needed;
- Develop consistency of payment levels across a region if there is more than one programme locally or other related programmes ( such as post qualifying courses) which are also involving service users and carers;
- Explore other forms of payment that do not directly affect benefits - such as health club membership;
- Discuss the details of formal agreements /contracts with service users and carers for example what happens if circumstances change, before finalising them.

**Outcome**

Service users and carers are clear about what to expect and what's expected of them and receive prompt payment for their contributions in ways that suit their circumstances.

**Four Standards about the range of  
Service User and Carer involvement in the  
Social Work Degree covering:**

- 6 Involvement in strategic planning and management the degree programme
- 7 Involvement in recruitment and selection
- 8 Involvement in teaching and practice learning
- 9 Involvement in assessment

## **Standard 6**

The involvement of service users and carers is integral to the strategic planning and management arrangements for the social work degree

### **What the Care Council for Wales Rules require**

*The institution must involve users of services, carers and representatives of employers in all stages of the development and delivery of the degree.*

### **Evidence needed for Standard 6**

- Remit of the strategic planning groups involved in the degree including service user and carer representation and roles in these;
- Chart showing the links between the strategic planning for the degree programme and the plan for service user and carer involvement;
- Standing agenda item on service user and carer involvement on strategic planning and management meetings;
- Relevant training plan for membership effectiveness.

### **Suggested Actions**

- Review the current strategic planning and management arrangements to see if they are conducive to service users and carer involvement. For example, young people might be available only at weekends or after school/college while the middle of the day might be the only space for some carers;
- Might a pre-meeting be helpful as People First have often found? Consider setting up a 'preliminary group' where planning and management issues can be considered in an interesting way and in a conducive environment. Views can then be passed on or taken to the more formal arrangements. Use other methods such as email;
- Consider a buddy / rota system so that attendance is neither too onerous nor isolating;
- Offer training on participatory approaches to planning and decision making from an advocacy group to professional members of strategic management teams.

### **Outcome**

The views and expertise of service users and carers are integral to the ongoing strategic planning and management processes of the degree.

## **Standard 7**

Service users and carers are involved in developing and implementing the arrangements for selecting students on to the degree programme

### **What the Care Council for Wales Rules require**

*The institution must involve users of services, carers and representatives of employers in all stages of the development and delivery of the degree (including the selection and assessment of student).*

### **Evidence needed for Standard 7**

- Document outlining the selection and recruitment process, for example the Guidance for students;
- Update of progress to date on involving service users and carers in recruitment and selection;
- Example of formal agreements / contracts with service users and carers in relation to their involvement in selection processes;
- Arrangements for providing appropriate training as necessary on recruitment and selection to service users, carers and others such as agency based and academic staff;
- Relevant sections of the Equal Opportunities policies on recruitment and selection to ensure equity in the process and appropriate diversity;
- Feedback from service users and carers on the selection processes, including arrangements for their involvement.

### **Suggested Actions**

- Start by looking at what service users and carers expect of social workers as well as what's expected by the national occupational Standards for social workers. Build these ideas into the selection processes;
- Agree how service users and carers will be involved in different aspects of the selection process to ensure equity and fairness - for example, designing the programme publicity; reading applications; short listing; interviewing, observing a group; final decision making arrangements;
- Make sure the selection arrangements for both direct entry and agency sponsored students are consistent in the way in which they include service users and carers;
- Consider how service users and carers might also be involved in selecting staff who will work on the programme - agencies may have expertise in these approach that could be built upon.

### **Outcome**

All aspects of the selection processes are informed by the views of service users and carers.

## **Standard 8**

Service users and carers are involved in developing and delivering teaching and learning opportunities in colleges and agencies as contributors with equally valued expertise

### **What the Care Council for Wales Rules require**

- *A student completing a degree programme must demonstrate by the point of final assessment that he or she:*
  - (i) *has the basic interpersonal skills and values that are required in order for him or her to be suitable and safe to work directly with service users and carers; and*
  - (ii) *that he or she has acquired an understanding, directly from service users and carers, of the impact of social work practice upon them.*
- *Students are able to identify, understand and respond to issues which are specific to the needs of Wales.*

### **Evidence needed for Standard 8**

- Evidence of the range and scope of involvement in curriculum development e.g. modules, levels, planning for practice learning and practice learning opportunities;
- Information from local authority partners showing progress on developing service level agreements /contracts with service user and carer led or focused organisations and others providing practice learning;
- Examples of the integration into the teaching of:
  - theories and critiques of social work by both service users and carers; aspects of law, policy, research and social work models that relate to service users and carers;
  - service users and carers experiences and expertise into the teaching and learning of key skills of assessment, care management, promoting independence and inclusion as well as identifying and managing risk.
- Links to implementing Practice Learning Standards 12 and 19.

### **Suggested Actions**

- Develop opportunities for joint planning of modules between all contributors to the teaching team;
- Develop a range of teaching and learning approaches that include service users and carers such as direct delivery of training, web based discussion groups or acting as e-based consultants for enquiry based learning. Such approaches could also be part of learning opportunities within agencies;
- Support and use a variety of service user and carer created training materials to enrich learning - they might be written, spoken, painted,

video or acted. These could be followed up with discussion with service users and carers;

- Ensure that minority views and experiences are reflected in the teaching and learning approaches - including those of black and minority ethnic groups or lesbian and gay people who are actual or potential service users or carers;
- Consider how the teaching of service user and carer involvement can be part of the broader anti-discrimination teaching and enabling students to work effectively in the Welsh context;
- Ensure that professional staff have opportunities for developing positive responses to the challenges that fully incorporating service users' and carers' views may bring;
- Use the outcomes checklist which is on p 17 of *'Dancing with Angels'*;
- Practice learning facilitators and practice assessors in agencies could develop group sessions with students to present their work to service users and carers (confidentiality having been agreed). Or service users and carers who have been involved in evaluating the work of professional staff could discuss their findings with students in the agency;
- Develop contingency arrangements to cover changes to a service user or carer circumstances or well being that affect their ability to contribute as planned - these contingency arrangements will need to be developed in a positive fashion;
- Compile ideas from service users and carers for how they could be involved at different stages of student practice learning - from taking part in shadowing or observation, role plays, being involved with students who 'interview' them as part of developing skills;
- Consider how some of the support arrangements for practice assessors and practice learning facilitators could incorporate service users and carers who wish to become involved in practice learning;
- Provide information, in different formats, on where to find rooms, facilities, parking and refreshments in different formats.

## **Outcome**

The values, knowledge and skills that students demonstrate during the degree programme are informed throughout by the views and expertise of service users and carers.

## **Standard 9**

Service users and carers are involved in the assessment of individual students and in the programme assessment processes

### **What the Care Council for Wales Rules require**

*The institution:*

- *must ensure that the Examination Board includes all external examiners , the Chair of the Practice Assessment Panel and at least one representative of both employers of social workers and users of social services;*
- *must ensure that the degree programme has a Practice Assessment Panel ( made up of staff of the degree programme, representatives of employers of social workers and users of service) to manage the process of practice assessment, moderate practice assessor recommendations and make recommendations accordingly on each student to the Examination Board;*
- *must ensure that each student's practice learning will be assessed by a minimum of six direct observations in each period of assessed practice of which four observations must be of direct work with users of social services;*
- *ensure that there is provision for students to be assessed through the medium of the Welsh Language;*

### **Evidence needed for Standard 9**

- Section of the Student Handbook which outlines the role of service users and carers in assessment;
- Training arrangements on the assessment expectations and the work of the Examination Board and Practice Assessment Panel;
- Provision to ensure that the evidence provided for assessment of students is accessible and that service users and carers are able to contribute fully to the assessment;
- Feedback from service user and carer representation on their experience of involvement and any recommendations for improvement - see also Standards 4 and 10;
- Links to implementing Practice Learning Standards 7 and 13.

### **Suggested Actions**

- Consult with service users and carers on their ideas for how they can most effectively provide feedback and make judgements about directly provided practice in an agency or taking part in the Practice Assessment Panel;
- Develop training sessions or mini workshops to practise giving feedback and making judgements;
- Include different mediums for evidence presentation including audio tapes, large print;

- Collect information about the language preferences of service users and carers who hope to be involved in different aspects of the assessment processes;
- Use the ideas in the Standards for practice learning for involving service users and carers in assessment;
- Practice assessors could promote and collect service user and carer views in different ways.

### **Outcome**

The involvement of service users and carers in the assessment of individual students and in the application of the degree assessment processes is negotiated, clear and integral to the assessment arrangements.

## **A Standard on Quality Assurance Aspects**

### Standard 10

The development of the degree programme is informed by the views and recommendations for change made by and about service users and carers involvement.

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The development of the degree programme is informed by the views and recommendations for change made by and about service users and carers involvement

### **What the Care Council for Wales Rules require**

- *The quality assurance process must involve, as well as the staff of the degree programme, other persons ( including users of social services and carers) connected with the delivery of the programme;*
- *The institution must at least annually, seek and respond to the views of students , users of social services and carers, staff involved in academic and practice teaching and assessment and employers of social workers about the programme.*

### **Evidence needed for Standard 10**

- Plan for collecting and responding to the views of service users and carers on the processes and progress of their involvement as well as wider aspects of the degree programme;
- Evidence of implementation of ideas collected.

### **Suggested Actions**

- Involve service users and carers in developing the audit questions and the range of approaches for collecting and collating views;
- Ask students to comment on their experience of the integration of service users and carers in to their learning and assessment - link to Practice Learning Standard 22;
- Service users and carers, as well as other programme partners, could work together to develop and use methods for evaluating the outcomes of service user and carer involvement for future social work practice - what has made a positive difference?

### **Outcome**

The annual feedback sought and collected by the programme from service users and carers is used positively to develop the social work degree.

## Appendix 1 Language

As stated in the introduction, the choice and use of language in social work is evolving, and people may be more comfortable with some words than others.

The Social Care Institute for Excellence Resource Guide '*Involving Service Users and Carers in Social Work Education*' provides examples of how the words 'service user' and 'carer' have been defined by different groups, government documents and researchers. It is also pointed out that some service user groups reject any use of the term 'service user' as it seems to imply that being a service user is the most important characteristic of a person, rather than just one aspect.

For the purpose of this set of Standards:

**A service user** is someone who has used social care services in the past, uses them currently or might use them in the future. It could also include people who think that they might have a future need but who choose not to use the services that are currently available.

Carers UK defines **a carer** as someone who has or who currently 'looks after family, partners or friends who are in need of support because they are ill, frail or have a disability. The care they provide is unpaid'. Some definitions also include providing emotional as well as practical support.

**The Disability Discrimination Act (1995)** describes a **disabled person** as some one who has a physical or mental impairment that has an effect on their being able to carry out day - to- day activities.

The social model of disability advocates that most of the limitations experienced by disabled people are a consequence of physical barriers that disable people from accessing people and services. Tackling these will enable disabled people to access a wide range of learning and employment opportunities.

**A degree programme** means a course in relevant social work for people who wish to become social workers. It also refers to the people who together plan and provide all the different elements of the social work degree. The people include service users and carers, staff from the colleges or universities and from agencies as well as some administrators and possibly student representatives.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Sources for ideas on principles for working together**

Many of the documents listed under appendix 4 include ideas for key principles eg:

- The Social Care Institute for Excellence document *'Involving Service Users and Carers in Social Work Education'* outlines the importance of developing a set of principles and offers a range of examples on pages 11-16.
- The report by John Taylor to the South East Wales social work degree programmes suggests that a series of aims be developed by the partnership - many of these aims could form the basis for an agreed list of principles for joint working eg:  
  
'to use a model of participation based on human rights, equalities inclusion and the social model of disability'.
- Peter Beresford and others in *'Changing the Culture involving service users in social work education'* list steps that need to be taken to ensure fully participation.
- *Learning from Experience* by Jerry Tew , Colin Gell and Simon Foster includes a series of pointers under the heading 'remember' that could form the basis for a set of principles.
- The service user and carer subcommittee of one programme in Wales developed their own remit, requirements and ground rules which included statements such as 'all members of the subcommittee should be equal participants with shared responsibility and power'.

Examples of possible principles drawn from these documents include:

- a commitment to value equally everyone's expertise;
- a commitment not to use power positions within organisations as a basis for forcing through decisions or making some opinions seem more valid than others;
- agreeing language that feels comfortable to everyone to use and that challenges rather than reinforces inequalities;
- recognising the overlaps between service users, carers and service providers as well as the differences.

### **Appendix 3**

#### **Links between the Standards for Involving Service Users and Carers in the Degree in Social Work and other requirements**

Key links include:

- **The Care Council for Wales '*Code of Practice for Social Care Workers and Employers of Social Care Workers*'**  
This sets out a code of conduct for social care workers and is also to inform service users, carers and members of the public the Standards of conduct which they can expect from social workers. It sets down responsibilities of employers in regulating the workforce and in protecting the interests of service users and carers.
- **National Occupational Standards for Social Work 2003**  
This includes a statement of expectations of social workers developed through consultation with service users and carers and their organisations.
- **The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education**  
Developed the benchmark statements for social work which form the basis for the assessment framework of the degree. It has also produced a series of codes of practice for higher education, including one on placement learning and one on arrangements for disabled students which are relevant to these Standards.
- **The Care Council for Wales '*Standards for Practice Learning*'**  
These Standards have been developed to promote consistency in practice learning arrangements across Wales for the degree in social work. They include Standards which ask for evidence of service user and care involvement in student learning and assessment.

#### **Other relevant developments include:**

- The Social Care Workforce Development Programme - This is a programme supported and monitored by the Welsh Assembly Government which focuses on training and staff development across the social care sector. It requires service user and carer involvement in training and evaluation of training.
- Initiatives by Local Health Boards and Health, Social Care and Well Being Strategies to involve service users and carers in local developments.

## **Appendix 4**

### **References and Source Materials**

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