

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY POLICY CHECKLIST

ORGANISATION AND POLICY NAME:

SUGGESTED CONTENT:

POLICY

WHAT IS THE POLICY ABOUT/AIMS

Who the policy is for and what it is trying to achieve

An enabling perspective, showing support for people's rights and responsibilities to develop and maintain relationships, taking into account the legal framework and the balance between opportunities and risks. Eg to promote acceptance of service users sexuality, to establish contexts in which sexual behaviours are appropriate and acceptable.

Cross reference to other policies - eg Protection of Vulnerable Adults, Intimate and personal care, Mental Capacity, Confidentiality, Dignity, Care Act.

SCOPE

Inclusivity should be to assist all those coming into contact with the organisation:

People who use the service, managers, Trustees/Directors, staff, volunteers, trainers, partner agencies.

RATIONALE

Reason for having the policy. National, local and organisational context. Care Act 2014, CQC, Learning Disability Framework (new Preferred Provider Framework), Public Health England. Groundswell of demand from self advocates. Importance of relationship to general wellbeing and protection of vulnerable adults.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Key responsibilities of staff, managers and organisations. Reference to processes and recording formats. Emphasis on organisational responsibility to offer support, advice and education for safe and positive relationships, in conjunction with universal providers.

VALUES AND ATTITUDES

Service principles and values

Person Centred Approaches-placing the individual in control of what happens

Respect for cultural and religious beliefs

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Ref: Sex Offences Act 2003

See additional legal information.

CAPACITY AND CONSENT

Ref: Mental Capacity Act 2005

See additional legal information

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Ref: Human Rights Act

See additional legal information

Differentiate between rights and responsibilities of adults with a learning disability, family carers and staff/managers. Refer to Person Centred Approaches Tools for example the Donut.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

PRIVACY AND DIGNITY

Refer to support for people to have privacy in order to engage in sexual activity.
The importance of education and advice to assist individuals to understand the concept of public and private spaces.
Staff respecting locked bedrooms and having permission to enter bedrooms.
Awareness of cultural and religious attitudes to sexuality.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Outline of the fundamental principle of confidentiality when personal and sexual matters are shared, with clarity on the legal and health based exceptions that may lead to a breach.
Refer to organisational confidentiality policy.
Refer to additional Legal Information Rights etc.

INTIMATE AND PERSONAL CARE

Individual choice and control should be stressed. Maximum participation-minimal intervention approaches.
Need to record preferences re gender of supporter and care procedures. Supporting individuals with personal hygiene issues. What to do if intimate personal care leads to arousal.
Refer to intimate and personal care policy.
Link to communication passport if individual uses this to communicate needs etc.

MENSTRUATION

A brief explanation. The staff role in enabling women to understand and manage menstruation, in a dignified manner. Importance of providing choices in relation to sanitary protection. Considerations when contraception is utilised to stop menstruation. Support and advice for women going through the menopause. Link to health Action Plan as relevant.

MASTURBATION

Emphasis on masturbation being natural and acceptable behaviour. The importance of assisting individuals to understand that masturbation should take place in private.
Procedure to follow if there is concern about an aspect of an individual's behaviour that is impacting on their wellbeing. Circumstances under which information and guidance will be offered and who by. Need to record intervention plans.
Note that any physical touching as part of a teaching procedure would be considered as sexual assault (Sexual Offences Act 2003)

CONTRACEPTION

Organisational role in ensuring that people have access to information and advice about the range of contraceptives available and are given support to decide which is best for them. Link to health Action Planning and local universal providers.

STERILISATION

Explanation about female and male sterilisation (vasectomy), that it is a radical procedure, with long term consequences and usually only considered when other means of contraception have been ruled out.
Importance of informed choice and use of MCA procedures if a person lacks capacity to make the decision.
Note that where a person is unable to consent, sterilisation, on a non-emergency basis can only be carried out as the result of a court application.

PREGNANCY AND PARENTING

Presumption that people with a learning disability have the same rights as others to be parent. Steps that may be taken to assist an individual to consider or maintain a pregnancy, including provision of support,

resources and information, with details of the legal implications. The issue of making a decision to terminate a pregnancy could be included here or may be included under a separate heading.

ACCESS TO SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICES AND INFORMATION

In order to enable sexual wellbeing organisations should seek to have a good understanding of support and services available in their local area, including proactive links to ensure that information is kept up to date. Reference to how this will be achieved. Staff should be confident in supporting individuals to access these services. The information about local services could be in an appendix, alongside national resources. Link to health Action Plans.

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS

Provision of information and advice and support to access STI/HIV screening and testing. Assistance to understand the nature of STI's and protection issues. Link to Health Action Plans.

LONG TERM RELATIONSHIPS AND MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP

Outline of the right to form relationships and that the wish to live together or marry/have a civil partnership should be respected. Support that will be made available to people to understand the nature of the options open to them, including legal, emotional and practical implications. Acknowledgement that sometimes relationships do not work out and that support will be provided through separation and/or divorce. Refer to review of care and support plans in response to shared living arrangements.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Acknowledgement that people should have a choice about the relationships they are involved in. For both staff and service users this may require access to accurate information about the nature of different types of relationships. These could be noted within the text. Links with relevant external agencies may be essential.

SOCIAL MEDIA PORNOGRAPHY SEXUALLY EXPLICIT MATERIAL

Reference should be made to the positive part that social media can play in assisting people to make connections, whilst ensuring that supporters are aware of their role in providing information, advice and guidance to enable people to stay safe on line. Distinguish between legal and illegal pornography. Procedure for supporting individuals who wish to purchase written materials. Education to understand that pornography does not necessarily reflect real life. Need to maintain privacy, having regard to others sensibilities. Support to deter access to illegal pornography via social media. Refer to additional Legal Information.

PROSTITUTION/SEX WORKERS

Explain legal and illegal aspects. Support and advice to be given if a service user chooses to access a sex worker, including risks and health related issues. Staff should not make arrangements on behalf of a service user. Refer to additional Legal Information.

SAFEGUARDING AND STAYING SAFE

Duty to protect from harm or sexual exploitation. Link to safeguarding policy and guidelines. Definition of sexual abuse. Prevention, through education, information and advocacy. Refer to MCA to guide decision making. Note that members of staff must have no sexual contact or relationship with service users and the consequences of doing so.

PARENTS/FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

The importance of partnership working. Outline of if, when and how family will be informed or consulted, taking into account the needs and wishes of the individual. Information, support and advice available for

<p>family members. Procedures in case of potential disagreements or conflicts relating to sexuality. Noting that an adult who has capacity may not wish to involve any family members and has a right to privacy and confidentiality.</p>
<p>TRAINING AND LEARNING - supporters and self advocates Demonstration of commitment to providing opportunities for staff and service users to develop knowledge, skills and understanding in this area, by formal/informal training provision and access to relevant materials and resources.</p>
<p>PERSONAL PLANNING The subject of an individual's sexuality and sexual needs should always be considered as part of the agreed planning processes, including Person Centred Planning, Care Planning, Risk Assessment, Health Action Planning and Support Planning - guidance should include how organisation systems will seek to accommodate this need.</p>
<p>DECISION MAKING PROCESSES People with a learning disability have a right to services that that are based upon planned, coordinated and documented processes. Some procedures simply state that any concerns should be communicated to a line manager. Good practice suggest that the process to be followed should be made more explicit, using principles from safeguarding, the Mental Capacity Act and positive behavioural support. For instance, the Manager should ensure that records are kept in respect of support and intervention relating to the individuals sexual needs, including reporting within the daily records, conversations that assist sexual understanding and knowledge.</p>
<p>ADVICE, COUNSELLING AND ADVOCACY When this will be made available, by whom and in what situations.</p>
<p>SUPPORTING AND PROTECTING STAFF Responding to inappropriate behaviour from people with learning disability and others. Dealing with false allegations Support and supervision. Reporting procedures and records to be kept. Access to expertise and internal resources.</p>
<p>ORGANISATIONS AND RESOURCES THAT CAN HELP See list of national organisations-to be supplemented/updated, including reference to local agencies</p>
<p>MONITORING AND EVALUATION Process for monitoring review and evaluation of the policy and guidelines Post holder responsible Time scale for review</p>
<p>ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS</p>
<p>An easy read version should be made available</p>
<p>Each section should not be too lengthy-one A4 sheet maximum per topic</p>
<p>Try to make the document bright and interesting eg colour coding sections</p>