



HEAR US
Croydon's Mental Health Service Users Group
www.hear-us.org
AQS@hear-us.org
020 8681 6888

Hear Us

QUALITY MANUAL



SECTION A: Access to Service

A.1.1. Access to Service Policy

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Hear Us
Orchard House
15a Purley Road
South Croydon
CR2 6EZ

Telephone: 020 8681 6888
Email: AQS@hear-us.org
Website: www.hear-us.org
Registered in England No. 6891337
Charity No.1135535



Hear Us

To promote, educate, communicate and empower, for the benefit and interest of people affected by mental health issues

1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the circumstances and conditions under which service user are accepted for Hear Us Services.

“Service Access: The service manages access, commencement and leaving a service in a transparent, fair, equal and responsive way.”

This policy applies to all Hear Us services of support, activities and signposting

2. POLICY STATEMENT

Hear Us provides services to people with a serious mental illness on the proviso that it can meet the needs of the person, and address any of their requirements in relation to safety, communication, or personal support. All people wishing to enter the service are considered for entry into the service and, if Hear Us is unable to offer them a service, it will provide the person and/or their family/carers with information about other service options which may suit them. Hear Us provides clear information to potential service users and their families/service users about the services it offers and how the service operates.

Service Users are accepted into Hear Us services based on their needs for support, available capacity and service compatibility.

3. PROCEDURES

The following procedures are to be implemented to enable Hear Us to meet its policy objective, of ensuring that, within the constraints of available funding and resources, people with a mental illness who most need services available through Hear Us are accepted for services. In addition, that services are only withdrawn at the client’s initiative or when the organisation’s duty of care responsibilities to its service users or staff are demonstrably compromised.

Hear Us will:

- a) Develop and distribute an information brochure on Hear Us services and distribute it through local area co-ordinators and major health, welfare, local government and other community outlets in the area, in accordance with its Annual Operational Plan,
- b) Funding permitting, distribute information about its services in a range of accessible formats, such as in Braille, or other languages or formats, as applicable,



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- c) Welcome and accept referrals from service users, family members/carers, advocates, local area care co-ordinators or other government or non-government agencies,
- d) Within two weeks (or an agreed time) of receiving the referral, invite potential service users and their family members and advocates to meet with a Hear Us staff member to discuss what the person wants from the service and to determine the person's eligibility for services. This is done by collecting relevant information from the person and /or their family/carers in accordance with the Policies on Privacy and Confidentiality,
- e) Offer services to persons found eligible based on Hear Us available resources and the person's relative need and explain to them and their family/carer how they can start accessing services/support,
- f) Ensure people entering the service are informed of their right to access and to have an advocate or support person with them during any dealings with Hear Us,
- g) Provide information to people entering the service and their family/carers information about what the service offers, how services are delivered, any costs, requirements for agreements and service planning, and service reviews over time,
- h) Provide information to people entering the service and their family/carers in relation to under what circumstances services can be withdrawn. Support will not be withdrawn or denied solely based on a dignity of risk choice made by the client,
- i) If a person is not eligible for services from Hear Us, refer that person to alternative services which may meet their needs and preferences,
- j) If a person is found to be eligible for services, but Hear Us is not able to provide a service, offer to place the person on a waiting list and inform the person of the expected waiting time before services might become available,
- k) Seek feedback from people with a mental illness, and their families/carers about the service access procedures and implement improvements to service access and transparency where applicable,
- l) Investigate barriers to access to its services, and where appropriate, address them. Reasonable adjustments to the support delivery are made and monitored where appropriate,
- m) Maintain records of people who have been referred to Hear Us and denied a service, summarising reasons for their being found ineligible or, if found eligible, reasons for being placed on the waiting list,



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- n) Collaborate with other relevant organisations and community groups/agencies to build and maintain a referral network.

4. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The following performance standards must be met to ensure that the procedures specified in Section 3 are implemented effectively:

- a) All Hear Us employees are familiar with the Hear Us Access to Services Policy and a staff copy of the policy is kept in Hear Us office,
- b) Hear Us service users and families have access to its Access to Services Policy and have been provided with a copy of the policy if requested,
- c) An information brochure describing Hear Us services is available on request and can be found on the Hear Us website (www.hear-us.org),
- d) Persons referred for services have been interviewed within two weeks of the referral being received by Hear Us,
- e) Services have been offered based on eligibility, relative need and available services,
- f) Records have been kept on a central file of people who were found to be ineligible or found to be eligible, but denied services based on insufficient resources or relativity of need,
- g) Records are kept on a central file of people who are on the organisation waiting list and contacts they have had with Hear Us while on the waiting list.

5. REVIEW OF THE POLICY

This policy will be reviewed on a two-yearly basis. However, if at any time the legislative, policy or funding environment is so altered that the policy is no longer appropriate in its current form, the policy shall be reviewed immediately and amended accordingly.