Service User, Stakeholder and Community Engagement Policy

1.   Purpose

Inala Community House (ICH) is committed to working together and engaging with service users, stakeholders and the broader community. Working collaboratively and engaging with service users, stakeholders and the community means that:

- There are more meaningful and sustainable outcomes achieved
- There is a shared understanding of needs, challenges, barriers, solutions and alternatives
- There are shared goals between interested parties
- There is greater transparency and accountability

2.   Scope

This policy applies to all employees, Board members, volunteers, students, trainees and contractors. For the purposes of this policy, these persons shall be referred to as workers.

3.   Definitions

Stakeholder: A range of professional and community organisations, government and funding bodies

Interested party: A service user, stakeholders or the community

4.   Policy

4.1   Key Groups

4.1.1 Community

Effective community engagement can result in a range of positive outcomes for the community and ICH, including:

- Increased community awareness of the organisation
- Increased community ownership in development and implementation of the organisation's strategic directions
- Equitable access to services for service users and the community
- Continuous improvement in service delivery incorporating feedback from the community
- Strengthened accountability and transparent governance practices.

4.1.2 Stakeholders

Collaboratively working with key stakeholders:

- Results in stronger outcomes for service users and the community
- Reduces service duplication
- Develops strong partnerships
- Means sharing knowledge and resources as appropriate

4.1.3 Service Users

Engaging effectively with service users results in:

- Improved service user participation
- Identifying risks and barriers to accessing or engaging with services
- Strengthened service delivery through tailored services
- Services which empower and promote self-determination
- Stronger outcomes

4.2 Engagement Strategies

There are different levels of engagement however specific strategies can include:

- Promoting ICH's services, activities and events
  - Both in print and electronically (e.g. brochures, newsletters, social media, website, etc.)
  - Attending and promoting ICH at networking meetings and events
- Supporting strong governance
  - Incorporate feedback from service users, key stakeholders and the broader community into strategic planning processes
  - Communicating the Strategic Plan
  - Promoting the Annual General Meetings
  - Sending the Annual Report to key stakeholders and having it published on the ICH website
- Continually improving service delivery
  - Encouraging engagement with the broader community and/or key groups in planning new services or activities
  - Promoting ICH's Client Service Charter
  - Providing opportunities and gathering feedback from service users, stakeholders and the community regarding service delivery and any gaps including through meetings, groups, surveys, and other appropriate methods
  - Utilising feedback to improve service delivery
  - Providing opportunities for service users, key stakeholders and the community in reviewing service delivery processes, policies and procedures
  - Respecting service users' self-determination (having dignity of risk)

Appropriate strategies will be selected based upon the following approaches:

- Informing: provide objective, easy to understand and accurate information to interested parties
- Consulting: obtaining feedback from interested parties
- Involving: working with interested parties to understand key priorities and concerns
- Collaborating: partnering with interested parties to identify solutions and alternatives
- Empowering: interested parties have the decision-making power

4.3   Engagement Considerations

Key considerations in effectively engaging with service users, stakeholders and the broader community include:

- Identification of any risks or barriers to communication and engagement
- Providing clear and accessible information in a way which meets the needs of interested parties
- Identifying a key stakeholder group including relevant people, organisations or target groups to involve
- Determine appropriate strategies to engage with the key stakeholder group and the level of engagement necessary
- Giving sufficient time for feedback

5.   Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years.

This policy remains in effect unless otherwise determined by resolution of the Board of Directors.

6.   Related Documents

Policies
ICH Commitment to Community Policy
ICH Service User Support Policy

Procedure
ICH Working with Diverse Peoples Procedure