Job description and person specification – September 2019

**User Involvement Officer**

Job Description

* Service Area: Quality and Services
* Accountable to: CEO
* Salary: Points 34-36 (£25,735 - £26,911 pro rata)
* Hours: 19.5 per week (£12,867 - £13,455 per annum)

Location: Based in The Action Group’s Norton Park office with regular travel across Edinburgh, Falkirk and the Lothians.

THIS POST REQUIRES A STANDARD DISCLOSURE

**1. Job Purpose**

To promote the engagement and participation of service users (children, young people and adults) and their families across all elements of the organisation in line with The Action Group’s mission statement: ‘To value, listen to and involve people so that our every action is judged to be the best’.

This will include:

a) Developing and implementing a strategic plan to improve user and carer involvement in all levels of the organisation

b) Working with internal and external colleagues to run user groups and other consultation events and meetings as needed

c) Developing online engagement and communication as a further means of involvement, in conjunction with the Communications Officer

d) Working with Human Resources, Finance, The Senior Team and Board, as well as Learning and Development colleagues to ensure user involvement and empowerment are at the heart of all aspects of the organisation

**2. Group and individual work**

To build on existing service user groups and forums, facilitating these as meaningful places of engagement and influence. In some instances, this will involve running groups in partnership with service users, in others it will involve liaising with other colleagues to facilitate groups.

To develop new groups and forums in order to increase the range of involvement across all parts of the organisation, in particular increasing representation and ‘voice’ of those who may find it difficult to engage and those out with Edinburgh.

Developing the use of alternative methods of communication and engagement to include those ‘hard to reach’ groups, including, but not limited to, communication aids such as Talking Mats and Easy Read, and the use of social media and digital solutions.

To create a systemic approach to consultation and service user influence, which has a clear structure, ultimately feeding into the Board.

To assist service users from the Action Group to attend networks and forums of interest across the sector and in wider society.

To use the information from the above activities, as well as through all relevant government policies, to strengthen The Action group services and consultation processes.

**3. Policies and Procedures**

To work alongside the Quality Team in ensuring all policies and paperwork are user-focussed and accessible.

To lead on facilitating meaningful user / carer consultation and co-production across all Action Group systems.

To assist in the annual evaluation processes in all services, in collaboration with the Quality Team, to maximise user and carer influence.

**4. Internal departments**

To work with the Human Resource team in building on user involvement in recruitment processes.

To work with the Learning and Development team in extending user involvement in training of staff at all levels.

To maximise opportunities for involvement and influence in every element of the organisation.

**5. Development**

To assist in the work around the Charter for Involvement and ensure this action plan continues to full implementation to become embedded practice in the organisation.

To work alongside service managers to involve users and carers in the design and co-production of new services, groups and projects as appropriate.

To identify and apply for funding and grants that might strengthen user and carer involvement activity within The Action Group.

To seek out opportunities to extend The Action Group’s best practice in the area of user and carer involvement, including but not limited to, accreditation and quality awards

**6. Events**

To assist in delivering ‘user-facing’ events and opportunities for engagement, including the annual conference and connect events.

**7. Other duties**

**a) Health & Safety**

* Adhere to The Action Group’s Health & Safety policies at all times
* Assist the Health & Safety Advisor and H&S Committee in ensuring H&S policies, procedures and systems are compliant; and outcomes focussed where relevant
* Maximise ease / simplicity of use of H&S systems, tying in with other systems as appropriate

**b) Contributing to a Quality Service**

* Be familiar with, and work within, all organisational policies and procedures
* Participate in all necessary training and be committed to own personal and professional development.
* Contribute to the delivery of business plan aims and objectives, working alongside senior management as required.

**8. Confidentiality**

* High standards of confidentiality are required in relation to the roles, tasks and responsibilities described above.

**9. Supervision Received**

* The post holder will regularly meet their line manager for supervision as outlined in The Action Group’s supervision policy.

**10. Amendments**

* This job description is not intended to be exhaustive and the post holder may be required to perform other duties on occasion.
* This job description may be amended following discussions with the post holder and with approval from the Senior Manager for HR.

**User Involvement Officer**

Person Specification

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| **Criteria** | **Essential** | **Desirable** |
| **Motivation and outlook** | Acceptance and support of The Action Group’s values.  Shows enthusiasm and commitment for promoting user involvement across the organisation.  Demonstrates a proactive approach to job responsibilities. |  |
| **Skills and experience** | At least two years’ experience working with individuals who have support needs, with at least some user involvement or advocacy experience.  Strong administrative skills.  Excellent verbal communication skills, especially with individuals who may find it hard to communicate.  Good and clear written communication skills, especially in relation to accessibility (easy read / other formats)  Good knowledge of the regulatory and funding context of social care.  Strong IT skills particularly in Microsoft Word, Excel and Outlook.  Ability to prioritise and manage a complex workload.  A professional and credible approach to tasks and problems.  Clear understanding of regulation, standards and best practice context.  An understanding of safeguarding of vulnerable people. | Experience of group facilitation  Experience of digital communication tools, including social media and online groups  Experience of communication tools and aids, such as Talking Mats / Makaton or similar  Experience of training/coaching /mentoring others |
| **Personal qualities** | Strong inter-personal and relational skills  Ability to build effective working relationships across teams.  Ability to influence others, including those in more senior positions.  High levels of personal integrity  Ability to handle difficult situations and issues in a tactful and measured manner.  Approaches tasks in a consultative and collaborative manner.  A team player but also comfortable working autonomously. |  |
| **Other requirements** | Willingness to travel across Edinburgh and the Lothians; a full UK driving licence is essential.  Ability to work flexibly as required to meet service needs.  Evening and weekend work to meet service requirements. | Qualified to at least SVQ Level 2 or equivalent |