



NCVO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Good employment practice case study: Recruitment

What happened?

A man who has experience of mental health services was successfully employed as a specialist mental health advocate.

Who was involved (e.g. paid staff, volunteers, trustees)?

Paid staff and people who have experience of using the mental health services and using advocacy services

What planning took place?

Planning involved arranging the dates, booking the venue, sourcing a group of service users willing to be involved in the process and then making sure they were able to attend.

We used a panel of service users to interview the candidates as part of a two day recruitment process. Candidates had to prepare a presentation and answer prepared interview questions to the panel of service users, as well as a separate interview with managers. The two panels then met and a decision was reached. People who use the service made the final decision.

The panel were well prepared and had some interesting and challenging questions for the candidates. All the candidates agreed the service user panel was a tougher interview, the successful candidate is extremely proud to have got through this process.

It was not as large a panel as we would have liked and there were no women on the panel, as the panel member was not well enough to attend on the day.

It would have been better to use a different venue as the rooms available on the day were too small and crowded. It was also important to make sure that everyone had a chance to read all the application forms beforehand.

What has been the overall impact?

Service users can see the achievements possible once they have fully recovered and they are supported by an advocate who truly understands the situation they are in.

Are you planning any future developments to maximise the impact of this process?

We will continue to use service user panels.

We want to change how and when we advertise in the first place, rather than the interview stage which we feel is now very successful.

What one piece of advice would you give organisations in a similar situation?

Make sure the service users understand the seriousness of the task, and that they are able to make that decision without staff influence.

Further comments

Although it shows an optimistic future, we are aware that panels of service users may pick someone who has used the service over someone who has not, even though they might not be the best candidate.

Organisationally, we need to be proactive and have an awareness of the impact to our workforce if high numbers of staff are employed with a higher risk of mental health problems.

About HR and your workforce

How many paid employees do you have?

51 - 100 full time, 11 - 20 part time

How many trustees sit on your board?

8 -10

How many volunteers do you have (non-paid staff, excluding trustees)?

21 - 50 full time

Does your organisation have an HR Strategy?

Yes

Does your organisation have a recruitment policy?

Yes

Does your organisation have a diversity policy?

Yes