

CORE 1

Unit 1

Introduction

User involvement in health and social services

A summary of Unit 1

Why is this unit important?

User involvement work has been growing in health and social services for a few years. Unit 1 provides an overview of what has been learnt from doing this work. It sets the scene for all other units and parts in this resource. It is particularly useful if you do not know very much about user involvement in health and social services. There are four parts to Unit 1:

- **Part A: Deciding on language** - This explains **who** is included when talking about user involvement. It will help you decide what terms fit the best for you and the organisation in which you are involved.
- **Part B: User involvement** - This discusses **what** user involvement work means. You will learn several reasons why user involvement work is important. Everyone does not agree about which reasons are the best. As you will talk to many different people in health and social services about user involvement, it is useful for you to know the range of possible reasons.

- **Part C: Views about user involvement** - There are also many different opinions about what doing user involvement work means. As a user consultant do you present your personal view - issues unique to your own experience and opinions? Do you represent other people - issues frequently shared with other users, carers and members of the public? Doing both is important, but you need to decide what fits best with your user involvement role. In this part you learn about 'user perspective,' which helps you work these issues out. You will also think about how to talk about differences among people. This is very important, as you have to think about the many different people who use health and social services. Learning about user perspective will help you think about the experiences of user involvement you have had already and other skills that you bring to user involvement work.
- **Part D: Health and social services** - Health and social services are getting more support from the government to do user involvement work. In fact, they are expected to do it now. This is quite a shift in the way health and social services work and it is also important to understand. In Part D you will focus on what work happens in health and social

services, including user involvement work. This helps explain the areas in which you could do user involvement.

What will I learn by doing Unit 1?

At the end of this unit you will be able to:

- Understand the different terms used for users, carers and the public - Part A
- Agree on a term that you want to use during the training - Part A
- Decide on the term that fits your own situation - Part A
- Understand what user involvement means - Part B
- Explain why user involvement is important - Part B
- Explain differences between personal and user perspective - Part C
- Discuss respectful ways of talking about different groups of people - Part C
- Identify what knowledge, skills and attitudes you bring to user involvement work - Part C
- Understand how health and social services support user involvement - Part D

Summary of parts and content in Unit 1

Unit One	
PART A Language in user involvement	1. Users, carers and the public - who do we mean?
PART B What is user involvement? Why is it important?	1. What is user involvement?
	2. Why is user involvement important?
PART C Views about user involvement	1. Whose view do you represent?
	2. Language for talking about difference
	3. What have I done and what do I bring to user involvement?
PART D Health and social services	1. Health and social services in the Department of Health
	2. What are health and social services doing to support user involvement?