**Service Specification for Engagement on Adult Social Care Issues (Lived Experience)**

**Overview of specification**

1. **Introduction**

This specification outlines the requirements for a service focused on engaging individuals with lived experience of adult social care issues. The aim is to ensure their voices are heard and influence service delivery, improvement, and policy development, in alignment with the Adult Social Care Practice Quality Framework and to support CQC inspection visits. A key component of this service will be developing a co-production approach with Adult Social Care to ensure meaningful collaboration between service users and providers.

**2. Service Objectives**

* Collect and document lived experiences of individuals using adult social care services.
* Provide a platform for these individuals to share their stories and feedback.
* Ensure this feedback is utilized to inform and improve adult social care services.
* Foster collaboration between service users and providers to co-design and co-produce solutions.
* Act as a critical friend, bringing an independent view to support the views of those with lived experience to Adult Social Care.
* Support the implementation and enhancement of the Adult Social Care Practice Quality Framework.
* Integrate lived experience input to support CQC inspection visits.
* Develop a co-production approach with Adult Social Care, ensuring service users and carers are active partners in shaping services.
  1. **Scope of Services**

The service will engage with individuals across diverse backgrounds who have direct experience with adult social care services, including but not limited to:

* Older people
* Individuals with learning disabilities
* Individuals with mental health issues
* Service users
* Carers and family members
* Individuals from marginalised and underrepresented groups

**4. Key Activities**

* **Outreach and Engagement**: Actively reach out to and engage with individuals who have lived experience, with a particular focus on older people, individuals with learning disabilities, and those with mental health issues.
* **Data Collection**: Gather qualitative and quantitative data through interviews, focus groups, surveys, and other methods.
* **Analysis and Reporting**: Analyse the collected data to identify trends, issues, and opportunities for improvement. Produce regular reports for stakeholders.
* **Feedback Loop**: Ensure there is a mechanism for service users to receive feedback on how their input has influenced service changes.
* **Advocacy and Representation**: Represent the voices of individuals with lived experience in relevant forums, meetings, and decision-making bodies.
* **Critical Friend Role**: Act as a critical friend, providing an independent perspective to support and amplify the views of those with lived experience to Adult Social Care.
* **Support for Adult Social Care Practice Quality Framework**: Integrate feedback and insights from individuals with lived experience to support and enhance the Adult Social Care Practice Quality Framework.
* **Support for CQC Inspection Visits**: Provide lived experience input to support CQC inspection visits, ensuring inspectors have access to real-life experiences and feedback from service users.
* **Co-Production Approach**: Develop and implement strategies for co-production, ensuring that service users and carers are involved in the design, delivery, and evaluation of adult social care services.

**5. Expected Outcomes**

* Enhanced understanding of the needs and experiences of service users, particularly older people, individuals with learning disabilities, and those with mental health issues.
* Improved adult social care services that are responsive to user needs.
* Increased trust and collaboration between service users and providers.
* Evidence-based recommendations for service improvement.
* Strengthened Adult Social Care Practice Quality Framework through continuous user feedback.
* Informed CQC inspection visits through the inclusion of lived experience input.
* Effective independent oversight and constructive challenge provided to Adult Social Care services.
* Successful development and implementation of a co-production approach, leading to more inclusive and effective service design and delivery.

**6. Performance Indicators**

* Number of individuals engaged, and types of engagement activities conducted.
* Quality and impact of the feedback provided.
* Changes or improvements made to services based on the feedback.
* Satisfaction levels of individuals engaged in the process.
* Contributions to the Adult Social Care Practice Quality Framework.
* Number and quality of lived experience inputs provided to CQC inspection visits.
* Effectiveness of the critical friend role in influencing Adult Social Care improvements.
* Successful integration and outcomes of the co-production approach in service development.

**7. Roles and Responsibilities**

* **Service Provider**: Responsible for planning, executing, and monitoring engagement activities, analysing data, and reporting findings. Additionally, support the integration and enhancement of the Adult Social Care Practice Quality Framework, provide lived experience input for CQC inspection visits, and act as a critical friend. Develop and implement the co-production approach.
* **Service Users**: Actively participate and share their experiences and feedback.
* **Commissioners and Providers**: Act on the feedback provided to improve services and inform policy, ensuring alignment with the Adult Social Care Practice Quality Framework and considering feedback for CQC inspection visits. Collaborate in the co-production process.

**8. Governance and Accountability**

* Establish a steering group with representatives from service users, providers, and other stakeholders to oversee the implementation and progress of the service.
* Regularly review and update the engagement strategy to ensure it meets the needs of the community and aligns with best practices and the Adult Social Care Practice Quality Framework.
* Ensure accountability and transparency in providing lived experience input for CQC inspection visits.
* Maintain an independent stance to provide effective critical friend support.
* Implement a governance structure that supports the co-production approach, ensuring active participation and decision-making by service users.

**9. Budget and Resources**

* Outline the financial resources required to deliver the service effectively.
* Detail any additional resources needed, such as staffing, training, and technology.

**10. Evaluation and Continuous Improvement**

* Implement a robust evaluation framework to assess the effectiveness of the service.
* Use the findings from evaluations to make continuous improvements to the engagement process, the Adult Social Care Practice Quality Framework, and the input provided for CQC inspection visits.
* Regularly review and refine the co-production approach to ensure it remains effective and responsive to the needs of service users.

**11. Legal and Ethical Considerations**

* Ensure compliance with relevant legislation and guidelines, including data protection and confidentiality.
* Uphold ethical standards in all engagement activities, ensuring respect, dignity, and inclusivity.
* Maintain transparency and accountability in all aspects of the co-production approach.

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