



University of Edinburgh/NHS (Scotland) Clinical Psychology Training Programme

Advisory Panel of Experts by Experience – APEX (formerly Service User and Carer Group)

Terms of Reference

1 Purpose of the Panel

- a)** To have an overview of the **Academic Curriculum and Placement experience** to ensure that our trainees:
 1. understand the experience of Experts by Experience (EbE) and the impact of using mental health services
 2. understand the experience of carers, especially when a large number of professionals are involved
 3. respect the views of Experts by Experience
 4. maintain non-stigmatising and non-discriminatory attitudes in particular recognising people as having a rich life experience prior to their health difficulty, and during it, and not just seeing people as a diagnosis, a condition or a case
 5. understand the power of being in a professional role
 6. understand the history of mental health services and the history of the Experts by Experience movements
 7. understand the impact of gaps in service provision on Experts by Experience
 8. understand the importance of physical wellbeing in mental health
 9. understand the importance and impact of early identification of need in all specialties (eg mental health, autistic spectrum disorders and learning disabilities)
 10. understand the value of focussing on hope and on an individual's assets as part of their recovery journey and understand the importance of transitions in that journey
 11. balance the technical elements of their training with caring and compassion
 12. understand the rights of Experts by Experience in current legislation
 13. understand the status of their role when working in teams
- b)** To consider and develop ways of including and delivering the topics/themes listed above. This could be as part of teaching using video recording, audio recording or live presentation/discussion or it could be on placement through meetings, visits or shadowing. Experts by Experience who chose to be involved in such activities may need specific support before, during and after the session and appropriate consent will need to be in place.

- c) To have input into **Selection** to ensure that candidates selected:
 - have excellent communication skills including being able to use and understand body language and other non-verbal communications
 - have non-judgemental attitudes and values
 - have capacity for warmth and compassion
 - are able to be assertive in their professional interactions
- d) To have input to the **Research** aspects of the programme to:
 - suggest ways that Experts by Experience could be involved with trainee research projects, not just as “data collectors”, and communicate these clearly to trainees and supervisors
 - ensure that involvement in a project includes those Experts by Experience receiving feedback about the findings and potential impact of them

Ways of doing this may include linking trainees with on-going research projects/research ideas or existing data in organisations or local areas; having an Expert by Experience on the steering group for a project. Organisations might wish to promote their projects through the Programme’s Research database which allows trainees to be aware of on-going research projects and ideas.

Projects or ideas can be promoted through written information given out to trainees at the annual Research Fair in autumn when trainees again can become aware of projects that they might wish to pursue. University Academic staff can also link with particular organisations, projects or individuals in order to assist them in developing their ideas in more detail towards a project suitable for a trainee.

- e) Review specific areas of the Programme and its delivery as required

The current priority areas of the Panel are: Teaching, Selection and Research.

2 Limitations of the Purpose of the Panel

The Panel will not take a role in advocating or promoting the development of new services in the NHS to address areas of unmet need. It may be appropriate to clarify what the process was for doing so and which organisations did fulfil this role so that Panel members can take these areas forward outside the Panel and find support in doing so.

3 Membership of the Panel

The Panel is intended to be open and inclusive to move towards representing all of the service areas in which trainee Clinical Psychologists are on placement, although needing to balance this with wanting also to establish a cohesive group that was able to develop together. There will continue to be an open invitation to other Experts by Experience to join us, whilst monitoring the size of the group and considering the ways in which new members could give input (for example by email or on any smaller sub groups established in future). Members

are expected to have experience of health and social care services in one or more of the partner health boards involved with the programme.

4. Recruitment to the Panel

Experts by Experience wishing to join APEX would have a conversation initially, either on the phone, face-to-face or via email exchange to discuss the your experience of health and care services, the roles available to Experts by Experience and these Terms of Reference. The aim of this is to clarify expectations on both sides and provide information to any prospective members to be able to make informed choices as to the extent of any involvement with APEX.

Thereafter, it may be appropriate for the Expert by Experience to attend an APEX meeting. If there are significant numbers of Experts by Experience wishing to join APEX, then a method of selection will need to be used to ensure a range of areas of experience (eg range of services in which Clinical Psychologists are active, previous experience of Clinical Psychology services).

All Experts by Experience being involved with the Programme whether attending APEX meetings or via email or with specific tasks will sign the Volunteer Agreement which sets out what Experts by Experience can expect from their involvement with the programme and the expectations of the Programme in relation to Experts by Experience.

5 Payment/reimbursement

APEX members are offered a gift of thanks at pre-agreed rates for contributions they make to the programme such as teaching, involvement in selection or any other relevant tasks OR offered reimbursement for reasonable travel expenses incurred. Attending routine APEX meetings or other meetings as APEX rep eg Selection subcommittee or Joint Training Committee is seen as acting in a voluntary capacity and therefore a gift of thanks is not offered for these activities but any travel expenses incurred are reimbursed.

The University position is that a gift of thanks can be provided for particular activities OR reasonable travel expenses reimbursed but not both.

6 Practical aspects of meetings

The group will meet approximately every 2 months. Afternoon meetings are preferred and meetings will be 2 hours with a break in the middle to find a balance between making the meeting long enough to be worth the journey but not to be too tiring.

7 Convening and chairing meetings (see also Role Profiles)

In keeping with the principle of co-production, all aspects of APEX work should include involvement of Experts by Experience, for example in APEX being co-convened by an Expert by Experience and a member of staff.

APEX meetings could be chaired by any member of APEX with the agreement of other members. At the end of an APEX meeting, the chair for the following meeting is agreed. In the absence of interest from other APEX members, the Co-Convenors will be the default choice for chairing meetings.

8 Ground Rules (please also see Volunteer Agreement)

Meetings shall be conducted following these agreed Ground Rules to ensure the meetings are productive and comfortable for all.

1. Panel members should be respectful of others and their experiences, accepting that everyone's input is of equal validity
2. This will be expressed through listening to others and allowing them time to finish their contribution
3. This will also be expressed through Panel members keeping to the point, respecting that everyone has come together to contribute to the Panel and to the Purpose of the Panel agreed in the Terms of Reference. The Chair will take the role of redirecting the discussion if necessary.
4. As described in the Terms of Reference, the Panel is not aiming to make changes to current NHS service provision.

Discussed at Group meeting on 6th March 2012 and amended at meeting on 12th June 2012.
Ground Rules added at meeting on 26th February 2013.

Terminology amended to reflect name change to APEX 2016.

Updated with change in frequency of meetings, recruitment and payment information 2019.
Amended to reflect move to 'gift of thanks' system January 2026.