

FLOATING SUPPORT CUSTOMER NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT PLANNING POLICY & PROCEDURE



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Author: Louise Lucio-
Palk

Approved by: Senior Management Team

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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 All customers receiving a support service should have a mutually-consented drawn up needs assessment and support plan, which includes short and long term goals unique to them. This needs and support plan is reviewed every three months and when needs change.
- 1.2 This Needs Assessment and Support Planning policy and procedure is designed to provide Housing Solutions colleagues with the policy, procedures, processes and guidelines to undertake an effective and comprehensive Needs Assessment. It also details how to write a customer support plan and how to review both, focussing on the outcomes the customer wishes to achieve.

2 SCOPE

- 2.1 Support planning follows the principles of: co-production, holistic needs assessment and outcome focussed goal setting.
- 2.2 This policy is for all Floating Support colleagues, who produce or are involved in customers' needs assessment and support plans. It may also be appropriate to share this policy with some colleagues from other organisations
- 2.3 The opportunity and right to own a support plan detailing the needs, aspirations and service commitments must be made available to all customers using Housing Solutions' support services.
- 2.4 It is vital that Housing Solutions colleagues work in partnership with representatives of statutory and voluntary agencies, as well as other individuals important to the customer, to enhance the full benefits and meaning of a customer's support plan. Housing Solutions aims to ensure that a full range of resources are made available to customers to ensure that their aspirations and support needs are met. This can mean, for example, linking our support plans in with the care programme approach process.

3 DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 Needs Assessment The needs assessment involves Housing Solutions colleagues working with customers to identify the things that customers need assistance with. It is there to help work out the most appropriate type of support needed, decides whether Housing Solutions is able to provide it and to act as a 'snapshot' of how things are progressing for the customer.
- 3.2 Support Plan A support plan is unique to each customer and

provides a framework by which the customer can maintain a healthy, balanced and fulfilling life, whilst receiving a service from Housing Solutions and afterwards, when services from Housing Solutions are no longer needed. This plan takes into account the needs assessment and risk assessment and with the customer, sets out actions to meet their desired outcomes.

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|-----|---------------------------|---|
| 3.3 | Outcomes | These are the ultimate results that the customer wishes to achieve, often these will be in-line with the elements shown in the Supporting People Outcome Framework, however sometimes the results that a customer wants to achieve, may fall outside this framework and therefore it should not be used exclusively. |
| 3.4 | Goal | Goals are set in the Support Plan and breakdown the outcome that a customer wants to achieve, into manageable and measurable steps. They form a key part of support planning as an overall outcome and could take months or years to achieve, but the goals along the way, show the progress a customer has made towards achieving this ultimate outcome. All goals should be SMART. |
| 3.5 | SMART | <p>Targets or goals which are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timed. Specific – both parties should be clear about what the target is and who will be doing what in order to achieve it.</p> <p>Measurable – There must be some way of identifying whether the target has been met.</p> <p>Achievable – can it be attained, is it agreed.</p> <p>Relevant – Each target should be relevant to what the individual is aiming to achieve overall. Timely – A timescale or deadline should be agreed so that both parties are clear about when a target is to be reached. This should be realistic.</p> |
| 3.6 | Mental Capacity Act (MCA) | The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) provides the legal framework for acting and making decisions on behalf of individuals who lack the mental capacity to make certain decisions for themselves. It supports the individual's right to make their own decisions even when others may think their decision is unwise. Support colleagues must keep this in mind whenever supporting customers. Please refer to the Mental Capacity Act Policy for full details. |
| 3.7 | Co-Production | This is a development on, but also includes customer involvement, and means that customers are involved in designing and developing all aspects of a service as well as their own support |

plan.

- 3.8 Positive Risk Enablement This means that support colleagues should support customers to undertake action which may have risks as achieving the outcome will be beneficial for them. All the risks need to be assessed and managed, but a specific course of action should not necessarily be discouraged just because it has risks attached to it.

4 WHAT IS SUPPORT?

4.1 Support (in terms of maintaining a tenancy) may be defined as:

- Promoting and enabling opportunities for customers to develop skills and confidence to support themselves and increase independence.
- Taking steps to reduce the risk of potential homelessness - for example supporting the customer to make regular rent payments, develop budgeting skills and claim benefits.
- Assisting in the search and identification of the most suitable, permanent accommodation and related resettlement activities.
- Involving and consulting with customers (co-production) in the support they are receiving and who is providing it (recruitment, induction, organisation's policies and procedures).
- Identifying and coaching the skills needed to promote independent living – for example daily living skills such as cleaning.
- Assisting with resolving neighbour disputes and promoting a safe and healthy environment which is secure.
- Assisting the customers to make links with the local community and health care services, such as GP surgeries and dentists.
- Signposting people to specialist agencies, such as drug and alcohol services, advocacy, social services, day services.
- Enabling people to find access to education, training and employment.

4.2 This list is not exhaustive and customers may ask for support with things not mentioned above. Colleagues must be clear on what they are able to support customers with, under the Supporting People Contract.

5 PURPOSE OF NEEDS ASSESSMENT & SUPPORT PLANNING

5.1 Needs Assessment

- To help identify the customer's strengths and things with which they need help.

- To enable colleagues to understand the customer's way of life: what is important to them, how they like to do things, what they believe in, what they enjoy and what they dislike.
- To help identify risks and take steps to enable customers and colleagues to manage these risks through the risk assessment process.
- To assess whether the needs of the customer continue to fall within the level of support currently provided by Housing Solutions colleagues.

5.2 Support Planning

- To enable the customer and, where appropriate, their relatives/carers/advocates to take a lead in agreeing how and when they want to receive support.
- To have a mutually agreed and written plan; this can be used to ensure continuity between different, individual colleagues, volunteers and other agencies.
- To manage risks identified in the Needs Assessment and to identify any further areas that may present a risk.
- To review progress over a period of time, particularly when the customer is being assisted to develop practical skills.
- To help with goal setting and motivation towards an enhanced quality of life.
- To provide a tool which enables customers and colleagues to feedback on changes and acknowledge achievements.
- For colleagues to evaluate the effectiveness of their involvement in a customer's support.

5.3 Rarely, but occasionally Needs Assessment and Support Plans can be used to arbitrate situations, where disagreement arises, such as needing to gain possession of a room or property or if there was a need to evidence self-neglect.

6 THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT PLANNING PROCESS

- 6.1 The Needs Assessment and Support Planning process begins before or as, a customer enters the Floating support service and carries on until they move on from our services.
- 6.2 The Needs Assessment and Support Planning process starts with information gathering at the first point of contact; it then goes through assessing the needs of the customer to enable the customer and Housing Solutions to jointly develop a Support Plan. The Needs Assessment and Support Plans are reviewed every three months to enable the customer to meet their desired outcomes. Throughout this process Housing Solutions colleagues must manage and review all risks, which occur or are presented.



- 6.3 The needs assessment and support planning process actively involves the customer and it is their plan of how they wish to receive a service. It is not just a procedure for recording the needs that are assumed by/made by support colleagues. Where a customer is unable to make a full contribution, efforts must be made to enable them to be represented by an independent advocate or by carers and relatives. Where a this is option is not available, the support colleagues will review the customers' needs within the 3 month period and will share the review with the customer, involving them at the earliest opportunity.

- 6.4 The amount that is written in a needs assessment or support plan will be determined largely by the level of dependency of the customer and the complexity of their needs.
- 6.5 The support planning process also needs to take account of the needs of other customers, so that each individual support plan does not impact unfavourably on the rights and dignity of other customers

7 INFORMATION GATHERING

- 7.1 This process starts from the very first contact or referral point to the support service. Basic details will be gathered from the Referral form which will be completed by the referring agency. Information on need will be gathered through completing a Needs Assessment which will be carried out at the assessment interview (see Accessing services policy and procedure).
- 7.2 This must be undertaken prior to the agreement to offer a place. Information will be supplied by the customer themselves, their advocate, their relatives or carers/support officers, as well as by other professionals.

8 THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCESS

- 8.1 The Needs Assessment is an on-going process and at any one time it represents only a current 'snapshot' of the customer and their needs. It will develop and change. On occasion it will record improvements in ability and at other times it may show deterioration. It will also show how the customer's preferences can change and their tastes alter. It should be a constant reference point for risk management.
- 8.2 Needs Assessments regarding the new customer need to be completed before (or whilst) the service is accessed by the new applicant. The main focus of the assessment is to establish the support needed to be able to maintain a tenancy and to identify any associated risk factors.
- 8.3 The Needs Assessment should be carried out jointly with the customer and/or their advocate, relative or carers/support officer, college tutor or other professional. Care should be taken to only include those people who the customer wishes to be involved in this process.
- 8.4 Needs Assessment consists of a full evaluation of the following areas:
- Offending
 - Money
 - Independent Living Skills
 - Social and Community Networks
 - Move on and Resettlement
 - Employment
 - Education and Training
 - Substance Misuse

- Addictions (Gambling, sexual, retail etc)
- Mental Health
- Vulnerability and Safeguarding Issues
- Suicide and Suicidal Intentions
- Self-Harm
- Physical Health and Mobility
- Threats to Others

And any other areas the customer feels they have a need.

8.5 It may be helpful to base the Needs Assessment around the five high-level outcomes that Supporting People funded services are required to measure against.

- Achieve Economic Wellbeing
- Enjoy & Achieve
- Be Healthy
- Stay Safe
- Make a Positive Contribution

The Outcomes Framework covers many of the elements of support that will be provided by Housing Solutions colleagues; however it should not be used exclusively as some elements of need may be overlooked if the individual's needs as a whole are not examined.

8.6 Once an initial assessment has taken place the support planning process must pick up on the needs identified in the assessment and use these to formulate the support plan. Obviously it may not be possible to focus on all needs at once and colleagues should agree with the customer, which four or five goals they wish to focus on initially.

8.7 Following the needs assessment, a full risk assessment should be undertaken with the customer, to examine risk factors. Please refer to the Customer Risk Management Policy and Procedure.

9 SUPPORT PLANNING

9.1 A support plan is unique to each customer and provides a framework, by which the customer can maintain a healthy, balanced and fulfilling life, whilst receiving a service from Housing Solutions and afterwards when services from Housing Solutions are no longer needed.

9.2 As with the Needs Assessment it is the customers plan to enable them to reach the outcomes they have identified. It is a well-constructed plan that has been developed using all the best information available about the customer's needs, including his/her own views about how these needs should be met. Where the customer is unable to voice an opinion, then a relative or advocate should contribute on the customer's behalf.

The support plan also takes into consideration any risks, which have been identified.

- 9.3 Support planning can refer to the social, cultural and emotional aspects of the customer's life. Bringing these together in a seamless approach is the key objective of good, holistic practice.

10 WRITING A SUPPORT PLAN

- 10.1 The Support Plan consists of a number of plans the customer has formed, to enable them to reach their desired outcome. It is written with support from Housing Solutions and any other individual the customers wishes to be involved.
- 10.2 It may be appropriate to involve relatives/advocates of the customer; and/or social support and health professions who are already involved in the customer's support. As with the Needs Assessment process care should be taken to **only** include those people who the customer wishes to be involved.
- 10.3 Housing Solutions colleagues, should negotiate and agree the Plan with the customer, having given a full explanation and discussion of the choices to be made.
- 10.4 A written Support Plan should:
- Contain person centred, SMART targets which detail in clear, descriptive terms how support will be delivered in the areas identified on the needs assessment, that are currently being worked on.
 - Be set out in such a way that it is understandable and clear, and in a way that the customer can understand for language and format (visual, graphic, simple-printed English, other language, in Braille etc)
 - Be concise so, that it can be used as a daily working tool by support colleagues.
 - Specify what levels of support the customer should expect, who will provide it and when it will be provided.
 - Identify any risks involved. These risks should be given an identifying number/letter that will correlate with a written risk assessment.
 - Be signed by all those persons involved in its development (this may include the customer/relatives/advocate).
 - Be kept up to date and include the date by which the Support Plan will be routinely reviewed. It must be recognised, that this review date may need to be brought forward in the event of a significant change of circumstances affecting the customer.
 - Be kept confidential and copied to the customer (and or their relatives/advocate, if appropriate)

- 10.5 When supporting a customer and especially when writing a Support Plan, it is important to remember the Mental Capacity Act. This means that unless it has been proven otherwise, the customer has capacity to make their own decisions, this includes accepting that the customer can make unwise decisions or decisions that Housing Solutions do not agree with. For full details of the Mental Capacity Act and how it impacts on all care and support please refer to the Mental Capacity Act Policy.
- 10.6 The Support Plan should consist of a number of goals (4-5) that the customer has identified as a current priority to achieve. These goals form the stepping stones a customer needs to take to reach their desired outcomes. Some goals will relate to very practical tasks that the customer needs to develop or acquire in order to maintain or work towards full or greater independence e.g. food preparation, budgeting, using public transport, training or work. Other goals will relate to the customer's wishes to develop skills and abilities in activities such as, sports and crafts or building relationships. Remember to think as widely as possible about the Customers' needs and aspirations, rather than simply just thinking about day to day tasks.
- 10.7 All goals set, should aim to improve or maintain the quality of the customer's life and should be set within the SMART framework (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-Bound)
- 10.8 Support colleagues should support and enable customers to set realistic and achievable goals and make best use of the help available. The emphasis within their Support Plan and their goal should be on empowering customers and maximising their options to make their own choices and decisions.

11 IDENTIFYING & ADDRESSING RISKS

- 11.1 In preparing a Needs Assessment or a Support Plan, it is likely that risks or hazards to the customer will be identified. This is not a negative issue and customers should be encouraged to take positive risks, where the benefit of carrying out a specific task outweighs the risk identified. However all risks should be identified and properly managed.
- 11.2 In addition, the Needs Assessment and Support Planning process will also help Housing Solutions to identify risks to other customers, the general public, colleagues and volunteers.
- 11.3 The purpose of a risk assessment is to:
- Identify potential hazards
 - Identify how each hazard can be managed to minimise the risk
- 11.4 Those risks identified by a risk assessment should be given an identifying number/letter that correlates with a written risk assessment.
- 11.5 Please read the Customer Risk Management Policy and Procedure for full details.

12 MONITORING AND REVIEWING

- 12.1 Many plans are informally reviewed on a daily or weekly basis, through key working sessions and when working towards goals, however it is necessary to formally review and monitor both Needs Assessment and Support Plans quarterly (every 3 months.).
- 12.2 Monitoring and reviewing a customer's Needs Assessment and Support Plan, is a continual process. Many factors can affect whether the Assessment or Plan is still current and appropriate e.g. changes in the customer's health or personal circumstances. Any changes in the customer should be monitored and recorded by their key officer in particular.
- 12.3 The review process, integral to support planning, requires customers to assess their own progress.
- 12.4 The frequency will be determined by the changing needs of the customer but routine reviews will take place quarterly. Routine review times will be set by the customer and key officer/manager and must be carefully monitored for efficient implementation.
- 12.5 Any substantive change will trigger an immediate review of the Needs Assessment and Support Plan. If no such change takes place, the review will take place on the date planned, at the time of the drawing up of the plan.
- 12.6 It is the manager's responsibility to ensure that all colleagues involved with the customer, assess and record any changes in need and that these changes are communicated to the team and other appropriate professionals accordingly and in line with Housing Solution's Confidentiality and Data Protection Policies to ensure consistency.
- 12.7 Ultimately, it is the customer's choice to invite who they want to the review. Persons involved in a review, may vary according to the changing needs of the customer. The group of people to be consulted will be reconsidered at each review to ensure that no aspect is being overlooked. If it is not possible for all relevant persons to attend a designated meeting, then the support officer will seek the views of the persons not able to attend the meeting and bring these views with them to the meeting.
- 12.8 The persons most involved with the Support Plan should be involved in the reviewing of that plan on a regular basis. Persons who may participate in a review if the customer wishes them to be involved include the:
 - Customer
 - Relative/ carer
 - Friend /Advocate
 - Manager
 - Key officer
 - Any GP, CMHT officer, CPN, Drugs officer, Social Officer or community nursing/support, probation officer or any other relevant professional who has current or regular involvement with the customer
 - Previous key-officer

13 REVIEW

13.1 This policy should be reviewed at least every two years.

14 RELATED DOCUMENTS AND LINKS

1. Housing Solutions Confidentiality Policy
2. Housing Solutions Data Protection Policy
3. Accessing Services Policy and Procedure
4. Mental Capacity Act Policy
5. Safeguarding Policy and Procedure
6. Customer Risk Management Policy and Procedure
7. Risk and Needs Assessment Matrix
8. Health and Safety Policy
9. Lone working Policy and Procedure

15 TRAINING ACCEPTANCE CHECKLIST

I understand and agree the purpose of using Housing Solution's Needs Assessment and Support Planning Policy and Procedure.

I have read, understood and accept this Needs Assessment and Support planning Policy and Procedure.

Name: _____
(Print name)

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Please detach this sheet from the Policy and Procedures and return it to the HR department.