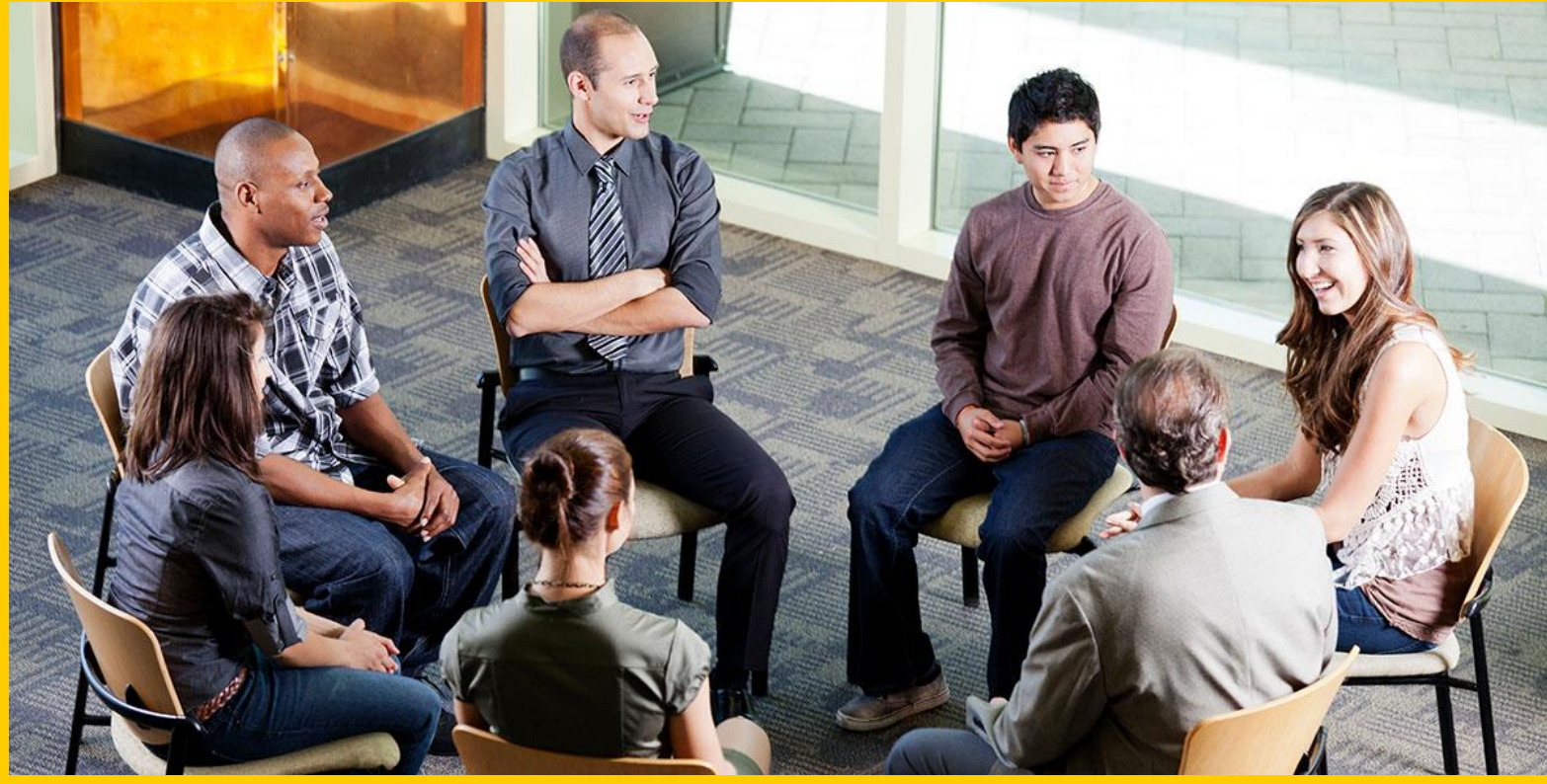


Facilitation of a service user group



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Purpose

The purpose of this poster is to discuss the skills required to facilitate an inclusive service user and carer group from both the facilitator and group member perspective.

Introduction

The importance of service user, carer and citizen involvement in health and social work professional education is evident in national policy and in standards set by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and Social Work England (SWE).

Service user and carer involvement is required across all aspects and stages of qualifying programmes and subsequent evaluations of social work education have continued to support its significant contribution¹.

The authors facilitate two groups at their university, 'Health Voices' and 'Social Work Voices', these groups are made up of service users and carers who have lived experience of health or social work services and contribute to the curricula. Language around such groups is problematic and that there is no consensus on what members of such groups should be called.

Group members co-produce teaching with academics, providing insight into life for someone in receipt of services. They produce podcasts, conduct interviews, deliver lectures, workshops and webinars.



Results

Four main themes emerged from the data – both the online questionnaire completed by the group members and the reflections of the authors:



Methods

- Ethics approval was granted by the university for this study
- The two authors have used an autoethnographic approach to describe their experiences of facilitating inclusive service user and carer groups at one University²
- Service users and carers completed an online questionnaire to provide feedback about their experiences of the
- The skills required to undertake this role are outlined and reflected on
- Data were reviewed and thematically analysed



Conclusion

It was clear from the responses to the online questionnaire that the members of the group felt that their contributions were valued, and that they felt empowered and encouraged to be creative and innovative. They enjoyed being able to contribute to the curriculum.

The authors found facilitating both groups to require a diverse range of skills and values, due to the varied nature of the participants.

The authors hope that their experiences will resonate with others working with service users and carers in order that everyone can learn, and as a result service users and carers can feel included, valued and supported.



References

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2. Ellis, C., Adams, T. E., & Bochner, A. P. (2011). Autoethnography: An Overview. *Historical Social Research / Historische Sozialforschung*, 36(4 (138)), 273–290. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23032294>

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