**Managing Stakeholder Engagement**

The aim of the unit is to enable the learner to develop the knowledge and understanding required to engage with stakeholders and to learn how to manage stakeholders in projects and organisations.

**Indicative Content**

**1. Be able to analyse key stakeholders**

Analysis

* The concept of stakeholder and underpinning principles, determinants of key stakeholders for a project, process or organisation, range of stakeholders e.g. internal and external stakeholders; other organisations, individuals (depending on organisation - patients, service users, customers), groups (interest groups, user groups, pressure groups etc.), statutory requirements to involve specific stakeholders, industry guidance on stakeholder involvement, change ineffective, lack of support for service, products etc.

Mapping and evaluation

* Stakeholder maps, grids, matrices, RACI analysis – responsible, accountable, consulted and informed and stakeholder roles

Importance

* Reasons to involve stakeholders – statutory, guidance, support for change implications of not engaging effectively with stakeholders

**2. Understand how to build an effective stakeholder engagement strategy to implement policy**

Ways to engage

* Establishment of long-term stakeholder groups, establishment of specific ‘action’ groups, role of communications and marketing specialists, ensuring comprehensive representation, equality and diversity issues and reaching ‘hard to reach’ groups and individuals

Communications strategies

* Methods of communication with stakeholders – face to face (meetings, presentations, focus groups, interviews); telephone (interviews, using questionnaires); electronic (email, social networking, websites etc.); written (questionnaires, reports), managing communications – in-house (is contact with organisational representatives important?); outside specialists (is, independence/ neutrality important?) and identifying suitable communications methods for specific stakeholder groups

**3. Understand how to build and maintain stakeholder relationships**

Building relationships

* Valuing stakeholders and making stakeholders feel valued, appropriate methods and timings of contact, maintaining contact – methods and importance and managing stakeholder expectations

Monitoring and review

* Importance of monitoring and reviewing stakeholder engagement e.g. to ensure still engaged with process, to gain continued support, to engage with new stakeholders that emerge and how to obtain feedback e.g. interviews, questionnaires and focus groups, reviews of policy, Importance of acting on feedback – re-engaging stakeholders where necessary and changing policies/strategies for engagement

Issues

* Political and legal issues, economic and social issues, equality and diversity, resource issues, barriers to engagement – physical (location or spread of stakeholder group); non-physical (attitudes, disengagement, cultural, social)

Conflict

* Conflicts that may arise e.g. between organisation goals and stakeholder expectations; between stakeholders; between resource availability and resource needs, Resolution of conflicts – dealing with conflicts on an individual and group level

**4. Understand how to engage with the stakeholder groups**

Methods of engagement

* Determining outputs required from engagement – opinions, ideas and agreement etc.

Choosing suitable methods

* Methods and how to use them – meetings, presentations, focus groups, interviews, electronic methods, telephone methods, written methods, assigning responsibility and accountability, recording and analysing results, reporting and taking account of results

Agreement

* Importance and relevance of stakeholder agreement e.g. is it required? How to elicit agreement or validation e.g. showing how issues and concerns have been dealt with and sign off and negotiation skills