

Exclusion-proofing your 'Red' services

How will you make your building-based service as inclusive as possible?

1. Be person-centred and curious by listening to the person's unique communication, resisting 'tick box' thinking and asking open questions to explore the person's lifestyle before they arrived and their personal plan for after they leave.
2. Keep stays as short as possible by planning for departure from the beginning, individualising care and reviewing progress. Ensure inclusion is in the care plan. Keep green activities going whilst in red.
3. Introduce managed risk – build confidence with regulators and reduce support wherever possible. Leave the room sometimes. Disrupt routines. Promote a culture that favours a move towards green – sell the positives of amber and green options.
4. Advertise community opportunities and point people to the right thing and the right help supported by specialist inclusion workers or visitors from JobCentre Plus etc.
5. Identify the benefits that can accrue here and ensure that the person gets them.
6. Encourage peer support with others in the red service, but also with people in the community. Can people meet each other outside your activity?
7. Visit the green activity frequently. Jointly run the red activity with someone from the green setting, so people have a familiar face when they move on. Match activities that take place in the red place with identified parallel activities in the community and show people how they can transfer. Move the group into amber or green if you can or start the group in the red place and then transfer it. Widen eligibility to include some people who are doing well.
8. Watch language (temporarily closed or visiting hours, missing or absconded, short breaks or respite etc).
9. Ensure inclusion is an explicit goal of the red place. Employ staff who have lived experience of exclusion and who are active in the community. Train staff in inclusive practice. Review working hours and job descriptions to ensure they promote inclusion. Address poor performance (excluding, risk averse, pessimistic or unskilled) and include inclusion in professional development.
10. Can some relatives, friends, or the general public attend as participants or guest speakers? Build relationships with community organisations. Arrange Open Days. Combat negative attitudes by community members – exhibit red art in a green gallery?
11. Mix drop-in and structured activities and do more individual work. Address minority needs that might get missed in red services.
12. Find out what makes this feel like a safe haven and encourage safety and progression - sometimes by discharging the reluctant. Build knowledge and confidence about green and raise personal aspirations.
13. Maximise empowerment, by involving service users in leadership, setting agendas, shopping, management committee, budgets, keys, fire drill.
14. Strengthen people's identification with their inclusive roles (e.g. electrician or dad rather than service user) and use these things in the red setting wherever possible.
15. Get people to tell their stories.

Exclusion-proofing your 'Amber' Services

How will you make your community groups as inclusive as possible?

1. Wherever possible, use ordinary meeting places rather than special rooms. Find areas to share with other groups in the building: notice boards, café, relaxation areas.
2. Choose group size and activities that promote interaction. Change the time of your meeting so it coincides a similar community group. Find opportunities for collaboration with the community group that might lead to merger or some members transferring.
3. Invite guests from the venue into your group and swap skills. Run an open day. Consider the potential of volunteers. Appoint or borrow specialists who help people make connections (e.g. JobCentre Plus staff, access workers etc) and ensure they visit often.
4. Watch out for labels or other things that set people apart within the building, such as using a 'therapeutic' name for your group. Leave engaged and independent people behind by moving your group to a new place from time to time.
5. Minimise the disability label by booking in the name of one of the group, like friends do. Find the people who are active in the community venue and draw on their assistance rather than your staff doing everything.
6. Be person-centred. Raise your expectations – people can move on to independent and inclusive activities. Reinforce this confidence through peer education.
7. Involve group members in decision making. Plan towards group self-management (transfer budgets, promote peer support etc.) or individual participation.
8. Regularly advertise mainstream activities. Help members utilise the facility at other times - joining in with other activities and interacting with other users.
9. Help people develop the skills they need to participate individually – booking, negotiating reception staff, getting coffee, and friendship-building skills – greetings, dinner parties etc.
10. Help people leave behind the behaviours that get them noticed in an unhelpful way. Promote discussion in the group about doing individual activities in the setting.
11. Open your group so that relatives, friends and other citizens can participate as equals.
12. Run your inclusive group like similar groups in the community (such as by charging the same fee, issuing membership cards, members taking responsibility, lift sharing).
13. Take care that subsidies promote rather than curtail independent participation.
14. Withdraw direct staff support by moving staff to another room in the facility or available by phone – and establish the principle that this is responsible risk management.
15. Improve links with venue staff so that they learn about disability and promote participation for all – they welcome newcomers to an attractive venue and promote independence.
16. Get the venue management on board with your plans and offer them training or mentoring so that they respond well to your group members, alongside help to remodel their activities so everyone can participate. Build friendly links so that discrimination can be addressed.
17. Support people in ordinary community participation and share stories about people who have moved on to jobs, education, hobbies and friendship beyond the service.
18. Link up with NDT and others to find out what is working.
19. Ensure your approach to risk management supports inclusion.