
Substance Use Education and Training Policy

Turas Training

Approval date:

Revision date:

1. Responsibility for approval of policy	Board of Directors
2. Responsibility for implementation	Management Team
3. Responsibility for ensuring review	Management Team

Policy Statement

- 1.1. Turas is committed to providing substance use education and training in a way which meets the needs of the organisation's specific target group/s.
- 1.2. We believe that substance use education and training should provide an opportunity for skills development enabling people to examine their own values and attitudes by providing age, developmentally and culturally appropriate knowledge in an experiential learning environment.
- 1.3. This policy draws on the quality standards outlined by the Drug Education Workers Forum (DEWF)¹; Turas will endeavour to be consistent with these standards in the provision of any education or training.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. The purpose of this policy is to:
 - 2.1.1. Outline standards for the provision of education within Turas including the sourcing of external facilitators / trainers.
 - 2.1.2. Outline protocols for the provision of training to external agencies, including in schools.

3. Scope

- 3.1. The policy applies to all staff, volunteers and locum workers of Turas and relates to the provision of all substance use education including the provision of drug information, drug interventions, drug prevention, life skills and harm reduction.
- 3.2. Substance use education should be done in accordance with the provisions of the Health and Safety, Child Protection, Anti-bullying and Confidentiality Policies.

4. Statement of Approach

- 4.1. Turas advocates the use of participatory models of learning. Sessions will have a strong focus on group work and utilise active, participative education methods of teaching.
- 4.2. Training will always be learner centred, which means taking into account the needs of the group, and therefore adapting standard training to each group.
- 4.3. Ideally a needs assessment will be undertaken, this may be as simple as asking the facilitator or group prior to the session what information they require. The needs assessment will be ongoing and will be incorporated into the session so that information can be adjusted as required.
- 4.4. Each session and/or course will have clearly aims and objectives.
- 4.5. The approach will also be flexible and facilitators will be open to change the lesson plan and adapt to the needs of the learners on any particular day.

5. Principles

- 5.1. Training should be made as accessible as possible to all service users, taking into consideration literacy levels and any cultural considerations.
- 5.2. Trainers should be well prepared with current and factual information and research.
- 5.3. Training should be interactive, with a balance between group discussion and information provision.
- 5.4. Participants should be provided with sources of information/ resources and additional information for their own inquiry.
- 5.5. Staff engaged in training should have access to appropriate support and supervision.
- 5.6. All programmes should have a full evaluation to assess effectiveness in engaging participants, addressing participant needs, and enhancing skills and knowledge. The level of evaluation should be commensurate with the level of the programme.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

- 6.1. Management are responsible for ensuring that all staff are suitably trained, resourced and supported to perform their role.

¹ A Manual in Quality Standards in Substance Use Education (2007) Drug Education Workers Forum has informed this policy.

- 6.2. Staff are responsible for ensuring that substance use education is undertaken to the standards outlined in this policy.

7. Substance Use Education to External Youth and Community Settings

- 7.1. All programmes should be accessible to their targeted demographic.
 - 7.1.1. Where possible, the organisation should provide youth /community education in a venue with disabled access, at a time that best suits the target population, and at a suitable literacy level.
 - 7.1.2. Imagery and illustrations used by the trainer should convey diversity.
- 7.2. If a trainer is providing training with a demographic unfamiliar to the trainer, best practice would be to meet with representatives from that community to ensure that training meets the needs of the demographic. For example, if providing substance use education programmes with Travellers, curriculum should be developed in partnership with/ or with advice from a Traveller organisation.
- 7.3. All programmes should be delivered by appropriately trained facilitators.
 - 7.3.1. Adult: trainers should have awareness of the key principles of adult education.
 - 7.3.2. Youth: trainers need to have experience in working with youth.
- 7.4. Training should have: clearly written learning objectives, based on a needs assessment; a clear programme outline and objectives; written description of exercises and handouts; and where appropriate, accreditation / certification for the course.
- 7.5. If a peer worker is engaged in training they should be given adequate training and support (see Peer Work Policy).
- 7.6. Drug education should be offered within the broader continuum of care. If a service user requires a referral or additional support this should be offered as described by the organisations Key Working / Referral Policy.

8. Using External Facilitators / Trainers

- 8.1. External trainers should be sourced through a tender or open application process, wherever possible.
- 8.2. External facilitators / trainers should be appropriately trained. The selection of an external facilitator should be made by the management team, based on agreed written criteria.
 - 8.2.1. A contract should be agreed which includes:
 - 8.2.1.1. Scope of the training (aims and objectives), including an outline of expected outcomes, and limitations if appropriate.
 - 8.2.1.2. Roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders, contact information and reporting requirements.
- 8.3. Managers/staff should declare any conflict of interest in relation to external trainers to ensure that processes are fair and transparent.
- 8.4. External facilitators / trainers should be provided with:
 - 8.4.1.1. The aims and ethos of the organisation.
 - 8.4.1.2. Information regarding the profile of the group members.
 - 8.4.1.3. Aims and objectives of the group.
 - 8.4.1.4. Timescale, level of input and costings (if known).
- 8.5. External facilitators / trainers should be prepared to produce:
 - 8.5.1.1. An up-to-date C.V.
 - 8.5.1.2. Evidence of accreditation / certification.
 - 8.5.1.3. References from previous organisations the facilitator has worked with.
- 8.6. All external facilitators / trainers will be requested to provide written confirmation that they have read and comply with the organisations policies and procedures, specifically the: Code of Conduct, Child Protection and the Confidentiality Policy. External facilitators / trainers should also be made aware of the health and safety policy and procedures.
- 8.7. External facilitators / trainers will be expected to complete evaluation forms which should be given to the organisation upon completion of the group work.

9. Substance Use Education in the School Setting

- 9.1. Teachers are the best resources in the provision of substance use education. However on occasion, a school may ask a drug education worker to deliver education in the school. If so, the following processes will be followed:
 - 9.1.1. If invited to deliver training in a school, Turas should be provided with a designated link person in the school to deal with all communications.
 - 9.1.2. The school in partnership with Turas will need to develop a service agreement which includes:
 - 9.1.2.1. programme outline and objective,
 - 9.1.2.2. curriculum,
 - 9.1.2.3. resources used / required.
 - 9.1.3. The trainer should be prepared to present a clearly written lesson plan.
 - 9.1.4. The trainer must abide by the schools code of conduct / behaviour, and should have an awareness of the school's values and approach to substance user education, drug use confidentiality, and disclosure policy.
 - 9.1.5. If the school has conducted a review of the current situation in the school regarding substance use education needs, the facilitator should be briefed in this. If the school has not done so, a best determination should be reached in conversation with the designated link person. The trainer should be aware of SPHE aims in regard to substance use:
 - 9.1.5.1. 1st Year: alcohol facts, why use drugs, smoking and its effects.
 - 9.1.5.2. 2nd Year: the effects of drugs (alcohol, cannabis).
 - 9.1.5.3. 3rd Year: ecstasy and heroin - the realities.
 - 9.1.6. The trainer should contact the designated link person the day before the training to ensure that required equipment will be set up.
 - 9.1.7. Training should be developmentally appropriate and student centred. Trainers should use an open, facilitative teaching style, and utilise active, participative and experiential methodologies. Trainers will avoid fear-based, moralising, judgemental, horror stories or threats of exaggerated dangers. While personal testimonies may be useful, care should be taken that they are experientially and developmentally appropriate for the target group. If unsure, talk with the designated link person. If still unsure, avoid telling the story.
 - 9.1.8. The school should conduct its own evaluation. If so ask for a copy of the evaluation. If the school does not have an evaluation, ask if one can be introduced.

10. Evaluation and Outcome Reporting

- 10.1. Evaluation methodology will be agreed in conjunction with management whom will ensure that this contains required information for broader project reporting and reviews.
- 10.2. Evaluations should be completed for all sessions or courses. The level of evaluation should be commensurate with the level of the programme.
- 10.3. All programmes should have a full evaluation to assess effectiveness in: engaging participants, addressing participant needs, and enhancing participant skills, knowledge and development.
- 10.4. For more involved sessions, and where possible, efforts will also be made to review the effect of the education or training on individuals after a period of time (for example 2/3 months), this would seek to measure changes in behaviour and any remaining knowledge deficits.