



HAFAL EXPERT LEADERSHIP PANEL (HELP)

Aims, Objectives and Terms of Reference

May 2015

1. INTRODUCTION

Hafal has considerable recent involvement in activities and projects that have sought to use the experience of service users and carers positively, whether to influence public perceptions of mental illness, to change strategies and mental health law, or to improve services. Some examples are:

- campaigns around the revision of the Mental Health Act and Code of Practice, and around the Mental Health Measure
- the Expert Patient/Making A Difference Projects
- the Time to Change Wales Programme
- encouraging service users and carers to lead/take part in mental health research through the Mental Health Research Network Cymru.

The Hafal Expert Leadership Panel (HELP) takes forward the learning and experience from these initiatives, and seeks to provide further opportunities for people who have direct experience of mental health services, and who share Hafal's mission and ambitions, to positively harness that experience in speaking on behalf of Hafal.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The **overall aim** of HELP is to build the capacity within Hafal to further the "patient" leadership agenda through a panel of talented, knowledgeable and credible service users and carers, ready to use their direct experience to help with Hafal campaigning to improve understanding of mental health issues and the delivery of mental health services.

Key objectives of HELP and Panel Members will be to:

- comment on and seek to influence national mental health issues
- contribute to the development of training materials, and deliver training sessions, talks and presentations
- offer consultancy to managers within organisations who are grappling with how to respond to mental health issues
- undertake work with the media, whether through providing copy or speaking directly to the media
- act as lay reviewers of services
- contribute to mental health research and service evaluations.

3. KEY PRINCIPLES

We will build and develop HELP on the following principles:

- **Supporting Hafal** HELP is a Hafal Panel, and Panel Members when taking part in HELP activities will be supporting the work of Hafal. HELP welcomes service user and carer representation at all levels and is not seeking to compete with any other service user or carer representation in Wales.
- **Involvement** Hafal believes that the active involvement of service users and carers will both improve services and help the recovery of those who get involved. It is important therefore that HELP members are able to contribute in a way that empowers them and supports their recovery.

- **Empowerment** HELP will seek to ensure that service users and carers are able to access appropriate training and support, and as a result feel empowered as Panel Members. At the same time, no pressure will be put on Panel members to contribute when they are not in a position to do so, and we will fully respect the decision of Panel Members who decline an invitation to contribute for whatever reason.
- **Transparency** HELP is committed to an open and inclusive approach, so that all those involved in HELP can contribute to its development and share in its success.

4. THE PANEL

4.1 HAFAL Learning Centre and HELP Advisory Group

Hafal's Learning Centre will be responsible for managing and developing HELP, and will be supported by the HELP Advisory Group. The role of the Advisory Group will be to monitor the progress of the Panel and steer/offer advice about its activities and development. It will meet around 4 times a year and its membership may include Hafal managers, representatives from the Panel, and other interested professionals.

4.2 Membership

The panel will have no more than 20 core members, with membership from across Wales. It is important, both for Hafal and Panel Members, that there is clarity around membership of the Panel, and that members are happy to abide by the key principles. There will be no time limit for members to serve, but membership will be reviewed regularly to ensure current members want to continue to contribute. Obviously members may resign their membership at any time.

4.3 Member's Information

Members will be asked to complete a Personal Profile Form with their contact details and with some background details about a member's experience and interests, and about which Panel activities they are interested in being involved in.

Individual information about HELP Members will be kept in a single file and will not be photocopied. Key information will be transferred to a single computerised database, and this database will be regularly updated. Hafal will carefully safeguard any information they hold about members and any information will only be passed on:

- in accordance with these Terms of Reference
- with the person's explicit agreement.

When a Panel member leaves the Panel, any information will be carefully removed/shredded.

4.4 Payment

Hafal will reimburse expenses to Panel members for attending meetings and events in an efficient and timely way. Currently Hafal is not in a position to pay honorariums, but this will be kept under review.

4.5 Hot Desk and Equipment

Hafal will have a “hot desk” for Panel Members to use in their new HQ in the proposed Recovery Centre at the old Gellinudd Hospital, Pontardawe. Access to and the usefulness of this “hot desk” needs to be further discussed.

5. PANEL ACTIVITIES

5.1 Key Activities

The range of key activities that HELP Members will undertake will include:

- as **Expert Trainers** to offer internal or external training from a service user/carer perspective, so increasing Hafal’s capacity and marketability;
- as **Expert Consultants** with a network of well informed and skilled “expert patients” able to respond to requests for consultancy from organisations within the statutory, voluntary or private sectors;
- **Involvement in Campaigns**, making use of “expert patient” input in a range of ways to enhance campaigning;
- **Involvement in Service Reviews**, as lay reviewers used by organisations as the Care Council for Wales and Health Inspectorate Wales;
- **Involvement in Evaluations and Research**, with “expert patients” working alongside other evaluators/researchers to complete evaluations and research projects.

5.2 Training, Information and Support

To undertake these activities successfully, it is important that Panel Members know what training, information, support and contact with Hafal they can expect to receive. This package of meetings and support will need to be reviewed and revised over time, but will include the following items:

- a minimum number of meetings a year to include both informal discussion and training input, together with formal meetings of the Panel
- regular contact with Panel Members, including circulation of information by Hafal and feedback from Panel Members
- contributing to/receiving Hafal’s quarterly newsletter
- website information and regular emails.

For 2015, and beyond, it is proposed that HELP activities will be developed and guided on the following basis.

- **Panel Meetings** – Panel Members will be invited to 4 meetings a year. Two of these will be invitations to attend Hafal’s staff conferences in June and December, and two will be formal meetings of the Panel in March and September.
- **Web Presence** – Work is currently being undertaken to set up dedicated HELP web pages on the Hafal website. This will include information for Panel Members about future events and will also provide opportunities to publicise the work HELP is undertaking and the impact Panel Members are achieving.
- **Regular communication with Panel Members** – Hafal will email each Panel Member on a bi-monthly basis to “touch base” with them, so that Panel Members are regularly updated with information about opportunities for involvement, and Hafal receives good information about the activities Panel Members are involved in and what they are achieving.

6. OUTCOMES

HELP will seek to achieve the following outcomes:

- for **panel members**, to offer encouragement, training and support to help members to be even more effective mental health champions;
- for **Hafal**, to use service user/carer experience and talent to good effective to promote its key messages around the rights of service users and carers to a full life and quality services;
- **more widely**, to harness peoples' experience, both service users and carers, to positively influence mental health policy and practice in Wales.

7. VARIATION OF THESE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The HELP Advisory Group, in consultation with HELP Members, may vary these Terms of Reference at any time, and will review and update them as HELP develops.