

Surrey County Council Full Equality Impact Assessment



1. Context of the Service or Policy

Service or Policy being assessed__ Family Group Conference Procedure _____

Assessor:_ Sarah Jane Bullock _____ Date _24th February 2008 _____

What are the aims of the service or policy?

(NB this should set out the aims and objectives of the policy or service)

The aim is to continually strive to ensure that both employees and service users needs are met by, co-ordinating suitable venues with access for all (E&D). We ensure that all information is explained to the services users and that clarity is given, either by reading information for illiterate service users or incorporating interpreters to ensure the understanding of the service, process and objectives are clear (E&D). Family group conference offers a Variety of communication techniques from sign language to venues with adapted hearing loop systems to meet both employees and our service users needs. This is to minimise the impact that it could have on a specific group of people / employees. (E&D)

Who are the beneficiaries /users of this service or policy?

(NB this should address needs of client groups and a review of barriers to policy or services)

Both employees and service users benefit from the procedures in which it is set out how a family group conference is held.

Family Group Conference employees are trained to recognise the importance of meeting individual needs and co-ordinating the process to enable all service users to have equality at the conference (E&D)

Flexibility within the workforce enables out of office home visits and meetings to take place around the availability of the service user. Family Group Conferences can be held in the evenings or at weekends to prevent any barriers to service users. This enables all service users equal access to Family Group Conference regardless of other commitments that the service user may have.

What is the existing situation in relation to minority and excluded groups in which this service/policy operates? (NB this will require declaring what information is currently captured with respect to E&D Monitoring (all seven strands) of this service or policy. It is also important to show the relevance of capturing this data.)

We continually strive to meet the needs of all service users.

Initial contact is made by phone to enable service users to speak with a co-ordinator and have an introduction made in an informal manner. If there are communication difficulties, the co-ordinator at this point will address the needs of the service user (E&D)

Appointments for home visits are made with the service user at a time and place that is convenient for them. Information booklets are given to service users with all contact details including email address.

Questions and bottom-lines (jargon free E&D) are taken to the service users and a co-ordinator reads through the information with the service user to ensure clarity. If a translator is needed this would be arranged with the Co-ordinator and the service user to meet the service users needs (E&D)

If a service user struggles to recognise correspondences from Family Group Conference, an agreed coloured paper will be used to ensure equality to the service user (E&D)

All venues booked for family Group Conferences are checked in advance and disabled access ensured prior to the conference commencing. (E&D)

All family Group Conference Co-ordinators are trained to empower service users and meet individual needs.

Family Group Conference procedure ensures a positive impact to service users in tackling discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and promoting good community relations, for minority and excluded groups.

Is there potential for this service/policy to have a negative or differential impact on minority and excluded groups or on race relations and community cohesion?

Please complete the summary of negative impact identified by equality and diversity strand:

Age	Ensuring that appropriate language and use of information is used to enable people of all ages to access and understand the information we provide.
Belief / Faith	Ensuring access to FGC for all people regardless of their backgrounds, faiths and beliefs. Ensuring that the FGC information is in a format that they are able to understand, if this information were not accessible.
Disability	Ensuring that there is clear information, on supporting people to participate in the FGC process regardless of disability. For example hearing loops available, access to buildings etc. If this were not provided it would be discrimination and could exclude participants from the process.
Gender	Within FGC we endeavour to ensure that everyone is able to participate in FGC process regardless of gender, and that policies around equality are followed. For example always using appropriate buildings, not a women's refuge where men are unable to attend.
Sexual Orientation	FGC endeavour to ensure that regardless of someone's sexual orientation that they are empowered to either participate within FGC, feel part of the team and are supported if they feel that they are not given equal opportunity.
Race	Increase the diversity within the Service where possible.
Trans Gender/ Sexual	Employees or family members could be subject to bigotry.
HR issues only:	

Please continue and attach a separate sheet if necessary

2. Is there potential for this service/policy to have a positive impact, such as tackling discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and / or promoting good community relations, for minority and excluded groups?

Please complete the summary of positive impact identified by equality and diversity strand, NB this would include positive initiatives delivery by the service or through the policy for the equality strands listed below:

Age	FGC ensure that appropriate language and use of information is used to enable people of all ages to access and understand the information we provide.
Belief / Faith	FGC ensure access for all people regardless of their backgrounds, faiths and beliefs. Ensuring that the FGC information is in a format that they are able to understand and enabling them to participate fully in the process.
Disability	FGC ensure that there is clear information, on supporting people to participate in the FGC process regardless of disability. For example hearing loops available, access to buildings etc.
Gender	Within FGC we endeavour to ensure that everyone is able to participate in FGC process regardless of gender, and that policies around equality are followed. For example always using appropriate buildings, not a women's refuge where men are unable to attend.
Sexual Orientation	FGC endeavour to ensure that regardless of someone's sexual orientation that they are empowered to either participate within FGC, feel part of the team and are given equal opportunity.
Race	Increase the diversity within the Service where possible.
Trans Gender/ Sexual	We have an equal opportunity policies and would employ Trans Gender / sexual people within the FGC Service.
HR issues only:	

Please continue and attach a separate sheet if necessary

4. Give details of involvement, consultation and or research undertaken for each relevant equality and diversity strand, upon which this policy/service has had an impact either internally or externally:



Age	Children's and adults feedback forms are in place to enable FGC to continuously improve our service delivery
Belief / Faith	We ensure that families are given the opportunity to feedback on our service regardless of their faith or beliefs.
Disability	Feedback can be given in verbal, hand written or electronically to enable everyone to have equal opportunity in commenting on and shaping the service.
Gender	Feedback forms are given to all who participate within the FGC process to enable any concerns to be raised and addressed immediately within the service.
Sexual Orientation	Feedback forms are given to all who participate within the FGC process to enable any concerns to be raised and addressed immediately within the service.
Race	Discussions with regard to the lack of diversity in respect of Family Group Conference.
HR issues only:	

Please continue and attach a separate sheet if necessary

**5. Given your answers to the previous questions, how will your service or policy be revised to mitigate, reduce or eliminate negative impacts and enhance positive impacts?
(NB this is in effect the Recommendations to improve this policy)**

Increase the diversity within the Service where possible.
Family Group Conference endeavour to include, empower and enable all to participate in the FGC Service regardless of age, belief, Faith, disability, gender, sexual orientation, or race.
Family Group Conference use feedback information forms from users of the FGC Service to continually improve our service, policies and procedures.

Please continue and attach a separate sheet if necessary

6. Actions required to implement the EIA recommendations:

Action Plan:	Target	Responsibility:	Date to be completed:
Through team meetings, supervision and Anti Discriminatory Practice.	Consultation with employees set on monthly agenda	Manager in consultation of employees	Ongoing monthly
Plans to use bank staff within Family Group Conference Service. Use this opportunity where possible to employ more diverse staff.	April 2008 Ongoing with new staff	Manager in consultation of new employees	April 2008 Ongoing with new staff
Training E&D and the importance of flexible working to meet needs of service users. Cultural awareness – Do employees have an understanding of Muslims, Christians, and Catholic etc?	Ongoing with all staff to continually improve knowledge and gain further understanding	Manager in consultation of new employees	Ongoing with all staff to continually improve knowledge and awareness.

NB these actions should have SMART Targets

Please continue and attach a separate sheet if necessary

NB these actions should be reported to the DIG and where relevant incorporated into the Equality and Diversity Action Plan, Service Plans and or personal objectives of key staff.

7. If no actions are to be taken with respect to the recommendations please give reasons below:



Action plan review date: ___October 2008__ Name of person responsible for review: ___FGC Manager__

EIA Assessor(s): _____

Name Head of Service: _____ Signed: _____

Date Completed: _____

- 1. Signed hard copy and electronic version to be kept in your team for audit purposes**
- 2. Send an electronic copy to the SCC 'Web Operations Team' for publication on the SCC website**
- 3. Send Action Plan to DIG for review at its next meeting.**

Date sent to Web Operations Team: _____