

## What is Northcott's policy?

- ✓ We recognise that customers are at the centre of the supports that Northcott provide.
- ✓ Customers can have a major role in helping Northcott plan and shape our services in these ways:
  - Particular issues that affect customers
  - How existing and new types of supports are delivered to customers
  - Wider social issues and disability specific issues.
- ✓ Customer engagement can range from an informal chat with a customer to more formal research panels, to attending customer gatherings and events. However the engagement happens we will always do these three things:
  1. **Make it inclusive:** Understand how each customer prefers to communicate and make sure that each customer is able to participate using their preferred communication method.
  2. **Provide supports (Compensation):** Make sure that a customer can participate by providing supports.
  3. **Provide feedback:** Give feedback to customers.

## Inclusive consultation process

- When we design our customer engagements we do it knowing that our customers use many different communication methods.
- What ever forum or format (including email or online surveys) we make sure that each person has the opportunity to participate in a way that they choose.
- This could include providing documents or surveys in alternative formats, collecting the information in different ways and ensuring that feedback is in forms that are acceptable to the customer.

## Providing supports to customers so they can engage in any process

- We will provide supports and compensation depending on these key factors of engagement process and method:
  - **Is the consultation a specifically arranged process asking specific customers to attend in their own time or to set aside time for consultation with them?**

Location: NIGEL\ Customer Service Enquiry, Sales, Sign up, Service Delivery and Review \ General Policies, Procedures and Forms about Customers \ Polices and Procedures		Version: 0.2	Page 1 of 4
Subject Matter Expert: Customer Experience	Issue Date: 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2017	Next Review Date: 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2020	

- For example, Northcott wishes to do a face-to-face consultation at a Northcott office with a group of therapy customers to seek their feedback on new approaches and techniques that Northcott is trialling in an area. This would lead to the customers being compensated for both attendance and any travel expenses (or travel provided).
- **Is the consultation voluntary and not a major impact on a customer's time?**
  - For example, Northcott wants feedback about the quality of its customer electronic newsletter by inviting them to respond to a short electronic questionnaire. In this case the consultation is voluntary, can be conducted by customers in their own homes and takes up little time. In this case there would not be any compensation expected.
- **Is the consultation occurring as part of an existing gathering of customers?**
  - For example, a Northcott staff member attends a meeting of customers and their carers to get some feedback about some proposed new services. In this situation there would be no compensation for travel as it is an existing customer meeting. The issue of compensation for time and involvement would be dependent on the extent of the consultation and time taken. A short casual conversation would not be expected to include compensation, whereas if a meeting was used as a substitute for gathering people at a Northcott office and the consultation took up a substantive part of the meeting, then compensation may be appropriate.

## Types of compensation

- There are three types of compensation that may be payable or provided in-kind:
  - Compensation covering expenses for engaging in the consultation.
    - This would include: attendance time, time spent preparing (e.g. reading briefing notes or thinking about issues that are going to be raised) and travelling time. The amount of compensation should be determined by reviewing the likely time needed for each element of consultation and agreed and communicated to the customer beforehand.
  - Compensation for travel to and from a venue for the consultation.
    - This could be provided in the form of a Cab charge, transport fares or an allocated parking spot.
  - Compensation in the form of providing or arranging personal care support during the travel time and attendance as part of the consultation.

Location: NIGEL\ Customer Service Enquiry, Sales, Sign up, Service Delivery and Review \ General Policies, Procedures and Forms about Customers \ Policies and Procedures		Version: 0.2	Page 2 of 4
Subject Matter Expert: Customer Experience	Issue Date: 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2017	Next Review Date: 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2020	

## Feedback

- A key part of any consultation process is the provision of feedback to any customers that have participated in the process. In providing feedback a number of issues should be considered:
  - It should be timely. This will vary depending on the nature of the consultation. A formal, wide-ranging research study may take months to analyse and interpret the results, whereas the initial response to a discussion about ideas for new services could be reported in days or weeks. It is important to both ensure that the participating customers are told of the likely timeframe for feedback and that they receive the feedback before, or at the same time as any other customers or the public.
  - It should be in a form that is appropriate for that customer, taking into account accessibility and communication preferences of the customer.
  - It should be honest and accurate in conveying the results of the consultation.
  - There should be an opportunity or mechanism for further questions or clarification if the customer wants to do so and in a form that is preferred by that customer.

## Who needs to know about this Policy?

- All Staff
- All Customers

## What other Northcott documents are related?

**You may need to refer to these documents for more information:**

[Feedback and Complaints Policy](#)  
[Feedback and Complaints Procedure](#)  
[Service Access Policy](#)

Location: NIGEL\ Customer Service Enquiry, Sales, Sign up, Service Delivery and Review \ General Policies, Procedures and Forms about Customers \ Polices and Procedures		Version: 0.2	Page 3 of 4
Subject Matter Expert: Customer Experience	Issue Date: 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2017	Next Review Date: 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2020	

Who is responsible?	What are they Responsible for?
<b>Chief Executive</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final review and approval of this policy.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 2 Manager</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain this policy, its related procedures and documents.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 3 and 4 Manager</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the policy is effectively implemented in their services.</li> <li>Ensure staff follow the policy.</li> </ul>
<b>Supervisor</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure staff have read and understand the policy and have sufficient skills, knowledge and ability to meet the requirements.</li> </ul>
<b>All Employees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow the requirements of the policy.</li> </ul>

## Definitions, Legislation & Standards Compliance

For other Definitions, please refer to Northcott Policy Dictionary.  
For Legislation and Standards Compliance, refer to the Participation and Inclusion Policy.



**Authorised by:** .....

**Kerry Stubbs, Chief Executive Officer**