

Homeless Link

Homeless Link is the national membership charity for organisations working with people experiencing or at risk of homelessness in England. We aim to develop, inspire, support, and sustain a movement of organisations working together to achieve positive futures for people who are homeless or vulnerably housed.

Representing over 900 organisations across England, we are in a unique position to see both the scale and nature of the tragedy of homelessness. We see the data gaps; the national policy barriers; the constraints of both funding and expertise; the system blocks and attitudinal obstacles. But crucially, we also see – and are instrumental in developing – the positive practice and ‘what works’ solutions. As an organisation we believe that things can and should be better: not because we are naïve or cut off from reality, but because we have seen and experienced radical positive change in the way systems and services are delivered – and that gives us hope for a different future.

Trauma-Informed Care

This training and consultancy package aims to support services to deliver a Trauma-Informed approach throughout – through upskilling staff, embedding good practice, and reassessing organisational policies and procedures.

What Does it Mean to be Trauma-Informed?

A programme, organisation, or system that is Trauma-Informed:

REALISES the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery.

RECOGNISES the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved within the system.

RESPONDS by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices.

Seeks to actively resist **RE-TRAUMATISATION**.

Why Become Trauma-Informed?

According to the Hard Edges Report (Lankelly Chase, 2015), 85% of people with complex needs (such as experiences of homelessness, substance misuse, and those involved in the criminal justice system) have experienced complex trauma in their

childhood and beyond. Services have found that working in a Trauma-Informed way benefits the people they support and their staff. Becoming Trauma-Informed can increase service user outcomes, create a more resilient and empowered workforce, and reduce incidents.

How Can My Service Become Trauma-Informed?

When working with any service to become Trauma-Informed we adhere to the six Trauma-Informed principles:

1. Safety
2. Trustworthiness and transparency
3. Peer Support
4. Collaboration and Mutuality
5. Empowerment, voice and choice
6. Culture, history and diversity

Stages to Becoming Trauma-Informed

Organisations that make a commitment to become trauma-informed will differ in terms of their choice of implementation, strategy or approach. We recognise that the process is not linear and that each organisation will be at a different stage and for this reason, we are offering a multi-stage, flexible approach.

Stage 1: Review

We will begin by completing an **organisational diagnostic** review, to understand your ambitions for becoming trauma-informed and what stage of implementation your organisation is at. We will then advise on which aspects of the various learn, embed, and reflect stages below would be most beneficial to best suit the needs of your service.

Stage 2: Learn

Based on the outcome of the diagnostic, we may suggest a number of different options to suit the needs of your organisation. These could include things such as; a tailored presentation to senior management, your board of trustees or other relevant stakeholders; staff training sessions which will allow your staff to increase their knowledge and confidence in a wide range of different topics.

Stage 3: Embed

In the third stage of the process, we will work with you to embed your learning within your organisation this can take the form of a policy review and update; workshops with relevant staff, trustees, stakeholders and service users to understand what steps needs to be made to embed this way of working; focus groups and champions sessions can be delivered and bespoke frameworks can be created. Throughout the project there

will be a dedicated member of staff responsible for managing and supporting your organisation and your journey.

Stage 4: Reflect

Three to six months after the project we may re-visit your organisation to offer support and advice as well as a reflective space to report on strengths and challenges of implementing trauma-informed care. We can also complete a survey to determine the progress made within your organisation, which may allow you to demonstrate to funders the growth you are making.

How Do I Know If This Is Right For My Organisation?

Charities have found that working in a trauma-informed way benefits the people they support and their staff. Becoming trauma-informed will enable you to:

- Ensure the support you are providing is empowering for your service users, building their trust and creating safety and control for them to increase positive outcomes.
- Better understand why your service users are behaving and relating to you and each other in certain ways.
- Be better placed to manage challenging behaviour and offer appropriate support to reduce incidents.
- Create a more resilient and empowered workforce and reduce the risk of secondary trauma and staff stress levels
- Develop understanding and resilience, and to minimize the chance of retraumatisation.
- An increasing number of commissioners now require services to work in a trauma-informed way in order to secure funding.

Input Needed From You

Following the initial review, and what is agreed with regards to which aspects of the various learn, embed, and reflect stages that would be most beneficial to you, we will work collaboratively with you to determine a work plan. This will outline the time input from us and yourselves and timescales. It is important that you have someone who has the capacity to drive this work forward.