



**OP.16**  
**Staff and Service User Consultation Policy**  
**V2.0**

**APPROVED**

**December 2023**

Ver	Purpose/ Change Summary	Approved by Board	Effective Date	Next Revision
1.0	Original Policy	21/11/2016	22/11/2016	
2.0	Review of policy to reflect current practices incl. reference to social media/communication channels & Service User Consultation Group. Layout revised. Plain English / language edits. Poster in appendix updated.	12/12/2023	13/12/2023	Q4/2026

## **Introduction:**

Epilepsy Ireland recognises and values the experiences and views of its stakeholders including service users and workers and will seek their views in the development and delivery of our services, to best meet service user needs.

The organisation will actively seek to include service user and workers' views relating to their satisfaction with the service as well as in the development of future services.

## **Table of Contents:**

1. Purpose
2. Scope
3. Legislation
4. Procedures
  - 4.1 Consultation with Service Users
  - 4.2 Consultation with Workers
5. Review
6. Appendices

### **1. Purpose**

This policy aims to ensure that appropriate systems are in place to consult with and receive feedback from service users and workers in order to inform the development and delivery of Epilepsy Ireland's services and activities.

### **2. Scope**

This policy covers all workers in Epilepsy Ireland. The term 'worker' refers to staff and long-term volunteers, as defined in our Volunteer Policy.

The term 'service user' refers to all individuals, both Epilepsy Ireland members and non-members, who are engaged with our services and activities.

The term 'Services and Activities' is used broadly in this policy to refer to all our charitable activities including support & education services; training; awareness-raising; advocacy; and research.

Epilepsy Ireland recognises that not all organisational decisions are consultative and that working within organisational constraints, management and the Board of Directors have a responsibility to discharge their responsibilities in a timely and effective manner.

Other aspects of the organisation's work, such as financial operations, governance and human resources are outside the scope of this policy as these are subject to legislative, compliance and best-practice requirements. In certain cases, these requirements may involve a separate consultation process.

This policy is therefore a framework to gather inputs, feedback and satisfaction data regarding our services and activities to ensure our work continues to support our mission, vision and values.

### **3. Legislation**

Employees are entitled by law to be consulted if any changes to their contracted terms and conditions are being considered. This is covered under legislation relating to employment protection and relate to basic employment rights of all employees as per the [Protection of Employment Acts 1977-2014](#).

The requirements to consult on collective redundancies are set out in the [Employees \(Provision of Information and Consultation\) Act 2006](#). This applies to organisations of more than 50 employees. However, it is best practice for all organisations, regardless of size, to have appropriate consultation and feedback mechanisms in place.

As an organisation that receives funding from the HSE, our policy aligns where relevant to the 2017 [HSE Policy 'Your Service, Your Say'](#) which is underpinned by the [2004 Health Act](#).

### **4. Procedures**

#### **4.1 Consultation with Service Users**

The following mechanisms will be used, as appropriate, to gather input and feedback from service users:

- Satisfaction Surveys – the organisation will invite service users to participate in an annual satisfaction survey which will be advertised and circulated on social media, on the website, in the quarterly newsletter and monthly e-zines. Results are collated to inform future service planning and improve the service offerings.
- Service User Consultation Group – a consultative group has been established to *“to provide input, feedback and new ideas into the operational activities of Epilepsy Ireland”*. The Group operates under the Terms of Reference approved by the Board in February 2023.
- Strategic Planning consultations – as a key stakeholder group, service users will be consulted on the development of our strategic plans. The specific nature of the consultation will be agreed by the Board at the outset of each planning process and a range of approaches including surveys, focus groups (online/ face-to-face) will be used, as appropriate.
- Feedback and Evaluations – evaluation forms/ surveys are used to gain feedback from participants who attend events and activities including conferences, seminars, Buccal Midazolam training, group work and self-management programmes. Evaluations are monitored and results collated to inform changes and development within the relevant service/ activity.
- Informal Consultation – we encourage a culture whereby service users’ opinions can be offered informally through discussions with our workers, through our social media platforms, email communications and e-zines. This form of consultation is especially valuable in ensuring the organisation meets the needs of our local communities.
- Complaints - a *Complaints Policy (2023)* is in place for service users which is visible in each Epilepsy Ireland office and on the [epilepsy.ie](#) website.

- Compliments and Suggestions – the organisation encourages service users to let us know if they are happy with the service provided. See also our document, *Procedure for Queries and Feedback from the Public (2021)*.
- A poster 'Have your Say' to encourage service users to voice their opinions within the organisation is visible in each office.

#### **4.1 Consultation with Workers**

The following mechanisms will be used, as appropriate, to gather input and feedback from workers:

- Working Group and Project Groups – staff can self-select and participate in occasional working/ project groups to ensure that their ideas, skills and experiences are utilised in the planning and implementation of services/ activities and in the day-to-day operations of the organisation.
- Strategic Planning – all staff are consulted in the development and planning of services and activities through a consultative strategic planning process. The specific nature of the consultation will be agreed by the Board at the outset of each planning process.
- Team Meetings – ongoing engagement on development, planning and delivery of the organisations' services and activities will be facilitated at departmental team meetings.
- Supervision and Appraisal – the organisation will invite staff to engage their views and opinions relating to their own performance and the operations of their own role through utilising a consultative approach in supervision and appraisal processes.
- Satisfaction Survey – the organisation will invite staff to participate in an anonymous satisfaction survey at least once within each strategic planning cycle.
- Email consultations – staff may be invited to provide formal/ informal feedback on relevant matters to management by email.
- The culture of EI means that informal feedback and discussion is welcomed.

#### **5. Review**

This policy will be reviewed at least once every three years as part of the cycle of reviewing Epilepsy Ireland's policies and procedures.

#### **6. Appendices**

Appendix 1: 'Have your Say' Poster (below)



**Epilepsy Ireland welcomes the views and opinions of our service users.**

**Here are some of the ways we will listen to you and consult with you with you about our work:**

- **Satisfaction Surveys**

We run an annual satisfaction survey which is advertised in our newsletters / e-zines, our website and on our social media channels and through our staff team. We encourage you to participate.

- **Evaluation forms**

If you have attended an event or course run by us, we will circulate an evaluation form / survey that we ask you to complete. Your views will help us to improve our services.

- **Development of services**

During our strategic planning process, we seek our stakeholders' views on the future development of our work. We facilitate this through online consultation and focus group meetings which are advertised via our communication channels.

- **Complaints procedures**

We have a complaints policy and procedure - if you are not happy with anything about us you can let us know informally or by using our complaints procedure.

- **Compliments and suggestions**

Have you received a good service from us? Did we go the extra mile for you? If you want to comment on our work, please email [info@epilepsy.ie](mailto:info@epilepsy.ie) or write to us at head office and your compliment or suggestion will be fed back to the team.

- **Consultation Group**

We facilitate a service user consultation group to seek the views of service users on specific aspects of our work.

**Everyone is welcome to have their say!**

