



Service user peer buddy scheme: guidance for colleagues

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In this role, service users are responsible for welcoming new service users to the home and supporting them during their first few weeks.

The role often involves:

- being a good role model
- showing the person around the unit
- making them feel welcome
- introducing them to other service users and colleagues
- showing them the facilities and services available
- explaining how updates and meetings work.

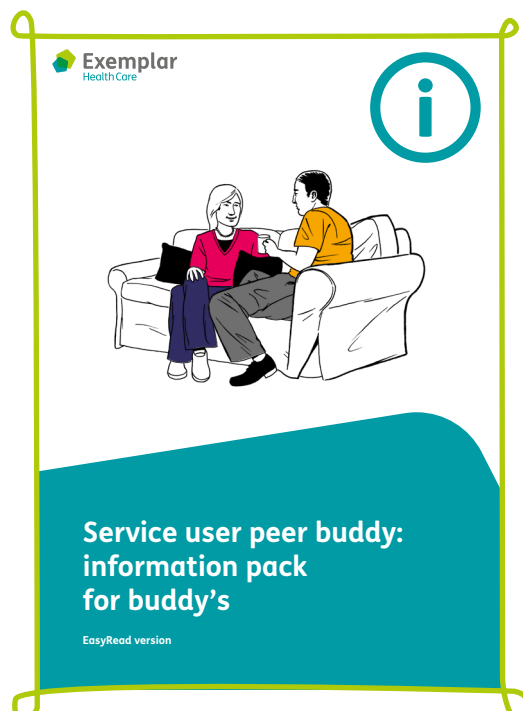
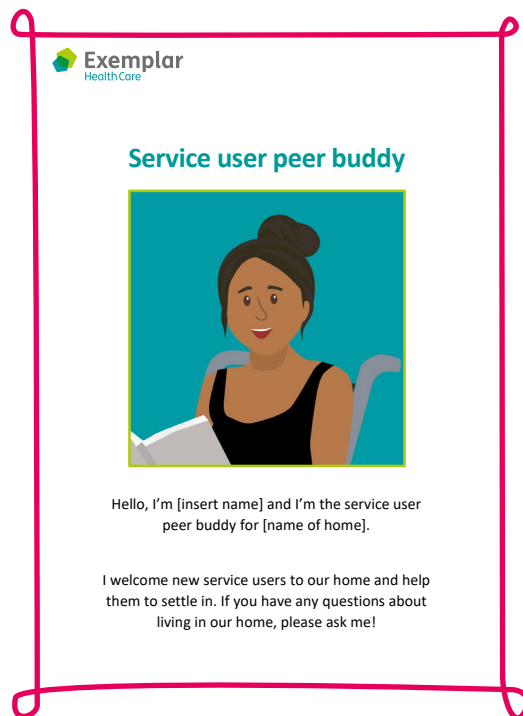


As well as providing a meaningful experience for the buddy, this will also support us to improve people's experience of moving into their new home.



To help you to implement the role in your home, we've created the following documents.

- Service user peer buddy poster to display in your home
- Leaflet for colleagues about the buddy role (this leaflet)
- Leaflet for new residents to tell them about the buddy scheme
- Information pack for buddies which includes a **role description**, '**Being a buddy**' **agreement** and a **checklist** for buddies
- Evaluation form for buddies and service users



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Service user peer buddy: service user feedback form

After the buddy period, please fill in this form to tell us about your experience of having a buddy.

This will help us to improve the buddy scheme.

Name:	
Name of unit:	
Name of home:	
Date completed:	
Name of buddy:	

Did you find having a buddy helpful when moving into the home?	Yes No Not sure
Did your buddy make you feel welcome when you first moved in?	Yes No Not sure
Did you get on well with your buddy?	Yes No Not sure

Safety and wellbeing

This scheme recognises the need to balance the risks and opportunities of buddying. For example, the role description highlights when a buddy may need support from the Care Team on the unit, and the agreement requires the buddy to recognise the boundaries and rules that help to keep everyone safe.

It's important that the Life Skills Team ensure that buddies understand this.

Identifying buddies in your home

Buddies can be selected on each unit by their peers and colleagues, based on their willingness to do the role and their suitability.

The best buddies are usually people who have lived in the home for some time and have a good knowledge of how things work, and are friendly and welcoming.

Unit teams can manage how buddies are selected, for example, you could use a resident meeting to choose or vote for the buddies for your home.

Supporting buddies

All colleagues are responsible for supporting buddies in their role.

When they first start, the Life Skills Coordinator or Key Worker should go through the information pack with the buddy to prepare them for the role, and the 'Being a buddy' agreement.

You should discuss how to deal with difficult and sensitive situations, such as if someone discloses personal information or tells them that they intend to harm themselves or others, and how to cope with refusal, for example if a new service user wants to change their buddy.

The role description and agreement covers these topics to ensure that buddies are clear and confident about what is – and what is not – expected of them in their role.

Arrangements for new service users

The Clinical Nurse Manager has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that new service users can request a buddy before they move into the home or unit.

All new service users should be offered a buddy when they move in, and their response should be recorded in their care plan notes, along with any reasons given.

If someone requests a buddy, the unit should facilitate a supervised phone call between the buddy and service user due for admission, and support the buddy to make a plan for their first few days/weeks.

The buddy relationship

Wherever possible, the buddy will be introduced to the new service user on their first day in the home, and will be able to support them up for up to six weeks as a buddy.

At the new service user's request, if the buddy and unit team also agree, the buddy period may be extended up to a maximum of four more weeks.

If a buddy doesn't want to continue in the role, becomes unwell or continuously fails to respect the boundaries highlighted in the role description, the Life Skills Team, supported by the Unit Team, should select a replacement buddy in a sensitive way.

Evaluation

The Life Skills Coordinator should meet with the buddy at least weekly to discuss how the role is going and if they have any concerns.

At the end of the buddy period, you should ask the new service user and buddy to complete a feedback form about the experience.

Once completed, please save it in the home's Life Skills Team folder and send it to the Service User Engagement Manager.

The information collected in these feedback forms will be used to review the buddy scheme and make any improvements. It'll also provide evidence for your home's Care Quality Commission inspection, and other audits.

Succession planning

When Buddies move on, the home/unit will need to facilitate the election of replacements.

every day better



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