

## **Transcript**

### **Module 4 – How organisations can achieve inclusive communication good practice**

#### **Slide 1 - Title**

Welcome to module four of the Foundation Inclusive Communication Toolkit.

This module is especially for leaders and managers.

If you have done modules 1, 2 and 3 you will know why inclusive communication is important. You will also have learned about the nine inclusive communication good practice standards.

This module sets out a step-by-step approach which organisations could take to implement inclusive communication good practice standards 1 to 5. You will get a reminder of what these standards are in the next slide.

You can also find the information in this presentation and associated practical resources in a downloadable and printable guide on the Toolkit Module 4 webpage.

You can read the presentation and guide using a screen reader. You might want to have the printed guide to hand as you watch this presentation.

#### **Slide 2 – Step by step guide**

This step-by-step guide describes how leaders and managers in organisations can implement inclusive communication good practice standards 1 to 5 – as highlighted in the flow diagram.

These standards focus on the infrastructure organisations are encouraged to provide to enable individual staff at all levels to implement good inclusive communication practice.

The standards refer to -

- Leadership and ownership of inclusive communication throughout the organisation.
- Involvement of people who communicate in different ways in service design, development and delivery.
- Inclusive communication policy and quality standards.
- Staff knowledge, skills and confidence to communicate in inclusive ways.
- And the practical resources staff need to implement good practice.
- Now, let us look at what this module covers in more detail.

### **Slide 3 - Content**

In this presentation, we will cover the following topics.

First, we will look at some key points it is helpful for leaders and managers to understand before they start to implement inclusive communication developments.

Next, we will talk through an eight-step approach to implementing good practice standards for organisational infrastructure. While we do this, we will touch on costs and how organisations can make decisions about proportionate expenditure.

Finally, we will look at actions leaders and managers can take at the end of the module.

Remember, if you cannot watch all the presentation at once, you can watch it over a few sessions.

Before we look at the key points, here is a reminder of the sorts of actions service users want organisations to take.

Lisa and Emma will remind us that they want organisations to take systemic action, to be open minded, to learn, and to share and spread

learning. They both want organisations to involve people who use services in developments, to help staff develop knowledge and skills and to provide practical resources.

#### **Slide 4 – Service users 'perspective**

(Lisa)

You need to be able to sort of where possible tweak it to someone's particular needs and not because you've spent nine months pleading and asking. It should be maybe a 1 ask possibly 2 if it takes several departments to do it which it has for me. But then it should just be automatically. And if someone said oh I have that communication that one that one and that one then they should learn from that individual who's complained and asked for the adjustment and then be able to expand it right across the service and not just make an exception for one person who's complained because I think that's the biggest barrier is that it takes all these campaigns, these interviews, chats etcetera.

Local authorities and government should then learn if an area's trialling it and it's working well then there should be no debate .... let's just put it across the board and actually practice it.

And also, then if you've got like corporate partners businesses that you work alongside then update them. Highlight to them and say I think we've started to do this I think you should really incorporate that. And advertise it and pass on the word and try and get as many connections. To be open to the ideas and to work with the individual or the group of individuals who have said this is going to work better for me or for us. I would say to organisations as well as individuals but particularly to organisations. We are all told that it is not easy to ask for help, but I would say to be more open for asking for help ask from the services that

do practice inclusive communication. And then be open to receiving it and to listen to the ideas and adjustments on how you can tweak it.

(Emma)

Something that I think that should be embedded into practice would be like a nice welcome video and that you could add to your website. And that you could send to maybe new patients or patients that have never been to your service before. And that maybe shows people around the office, that introduces people to members of staff, that tells people about the different procedures that's on offer. And these are really low-cost easy things to do. You can do it on a smartphone. And I think that these things would make such a huge difference to our life and you know my child knowing in advance what something looks like and where she's going, what procedure she's going to get done. And I think it would make a difference to a lot of people. I think it would ease a lot of anxieties. And yeah, these things work for everybody.

It's so important to co-produce your services with people. And use the resources that's available to you. Make sure that the people who are accessing your service are included in what that service design looks like because that's where you'll find the sweet spot of you know of getting it right for everybody.

I think it's really important that people do have ... an understanding of what good communication practices look like. Having ...access to even you know people learning about sign language about ...what picture communication is ...and how to implement that. It would be super helpful ...and just to build probably more so just to even build confidence.

## **Slide 5 – Key points 1 to 3 of 7**

Here are some key points leaders and managers need to be aware of before they start development work.

1. It is recommended that inclusive communication is considered an integral part of everything organisations do. Ideally, all communication should be inclusive.
2. Inclusive communication good practice can save time, money and deliver better outcomes. Achieving these benefits takes ongoing, systemic action, staff time, and funds. But communication exclusion costs more as it reduces efficiency and increases the risk and costs of litigation, complaints, or errors. Later we will look at how to work out what proportionate action is.
3. Staff can work on their own to implement good practice at an individual level. However, if organisations provide supportive infrastructure, individuals will find good practice easier to do and therefore it becomes more likely.

## **Slide 6 – Key points 4 to 7 of 7**

4. Organisations should not be daunted. They are best placed, as experts in their own business, to work out development plans that fit with their organisation's objectives, priorities, and resources. Development involves a continuous improvement "Plan – Do – Review" cycle.
5. This step-by-step guide sets out one approach. It assumes organisations are just beginning their inclusive communication development work. Organisations might not need to do all the steps. Organisations should start at the step that best fits their current practice. And align steps with their own in house approach to organisational development.

6. All leaders, managers, frontline staff, and people who communicate in different ways ought to be involved in achieving good practice. Expert organisations may also be involved. Specialist teams, such as corporate communications teams, are likely to hold responsibility for some tasks. Multiple teams will share responsibility for other tasks.

7. Organisations can start these steps at any time. Some may only take a few weeks. Others will take longer. Ideally development should align with the organisations business planning cycle.

### **Slide 7 – Step 1 - Establish leaders support**

Inclusive communication development involves people's time and, sometimes, funding. So, it needs ongoing, widespread support from leaders and managers. This step will help to establish that support. It is anticipated that achieving this step will also, by default, help organisations to achieve good practice Standard 1: Leadership and ownership of inclusive communication.

Leaders and managers who are keen to implement inclusive communication in their organisation are responsible for the first step.

They could –

Firstly, list the leaders who will need to support developments in their organisation.

For example, the chief executive officer and directors in specialist teams. And strategic and operational managers in corporate communications, service design, and equality teams.

Next, they could produce a brief paper which explains why inclusive communication is important to their organisation. Answering the questions in Toolkit Module 2 will help with this.

Thirdly, supportive leaders or managers could ask other leaders for their support to develop good practice. For example, by presenting their paper to the senior management team and team leader 'groups.

They could also use the short Toolkit Module 1 presentations to highlight the national and free material available to help the organisation. And the fact sheet and presentation in Toolkit Module 2 to highlight the value of inclusive communication good practice.

Leaders will ask questions and may have their doubts about investing in developments. The step-by-step guide that goes with this module offers suggested answers to frequently asked questions.

Studies have shown that the way that leaders communicate can influence the communication style and tone of others in their team.

'Leaders who demonstrate inclusive communication good practice themselves are therefore likely to influence good practice by others. In the next slide we will look more closely at what this involves.

Finally, for this step it is important to recognise, that not every leader needs to support development before it starts. Leaders who are keen to implement inclusive communication can collaborate with other leaders with the same interest first. Then together, they can gradually build support by regularly providing persuasive information to their colleagues. For example, information on who supports inclusive communication action and case studies highlighting the value of communicating inclusively from other organisations.

### **Slide 8 – Demonstrate inclusive communication**

As we said a moment ago, a good way to raise awareness and support for inclusive communication, and influence colleagues, might simply be

to demonstrate it. Let people see what it is and experience how it makes communication easier.

As a supportive leader you could complete Module 5 to learn how to implement good practice. Then apply that good practice in your day-to-day work. For example, you might -

- Use inclusive speaking and writing in your own communications.
- Offer people multiple channels to communicate with you. Including email, phone, text, BSL contact and in person conversations.
- And tell people that you are working on making your communication inclusive. Share the guidelines in Module 5. And ask people for feedback.

## **Slide 9 – Step 2 - Set up a development group**

Once leaders agree to support action the next step is to set up a development group.

Established groups may be able to lead the work. For example, groups dedicated to equality, diversity, and inclusion.

The aim is that achieving this step will also help organisations to implement good practice Standard 2 which is about involving people who communicate in different ways.

Group membership might include -

- Managers or leaders from specialist teams such as corporate communications, digital accessibility, service design, and equality.
- People with lived experience of communication exclusion or who communicate in different ways. They will need financial support and fully funded communication support to participate. Some expert organisations can help to recruit people.

- The group might also include representatives from expert organisations, if these organisations have capacity to provide this. Public bodies should work with expert organisations to decide the best ways for them to participate.

The group's aim is to oversee roll out of good practice. Group members could decide the work plan together. It may be as simple as working through steps 3 to 8 in this guide.

After setting out a work plan, groups may choose to develop a work schedule. Development involves continuous improvement. It is not a short-term project. Group members are encouraged to agree a realistic schedule that aligns with other organisational priorities, the business planning cycle, managers expectations and the time and capacity they have available.

Lastly for this step, the group is encouraged to consider its way of working.

The group itself should ideally demonstrate inclusive communication good practice. This ought to give the group credibility. It also provides insight into the challenges other staff will face as they work to implement good practice.

Everyone in the group is encouraged to complete Module 5 to learn how to write and speak in an inclusive way.

The group can then demonstrate that good practice during meetings, presentations, and updates to colleagues.

The group could aim to update colleagues regularly across the organisation about progress and the impact of development. Success will help to inspire and grow "buy in" to inclusive communication.

## **Slide 10 – Step 3 – Understand service user and staff communication profiles**

Communication profiles can help organisations to better understand the communication characteristics of the communities they work for and their staff.

They provide insight into communication disadvantage, communication diversity and unmet need for communication supports. It also gives organisations a sense of how well they are currently reaching communication disadvantaged and diverse groups.

The insights which profiles provide can help to motivate staff to take action.

Achieving this step can help organisations to implement four of the nine different good practice standards including, for example, Standard 1 about leadership and ownership of inclusive communication, and Standard 7 which is about finding out about communication needs and preferences.

During this step development groups can take steps to identify the likely levels of demand for inclusive communication among groups the organisation aims to reach or employ.

The step-by-step guide that goes with this module provides a detailed list of groups which benefit from inclusive communication most.

Development groups could identify all the groups from this list that their service aims to reach or employ.

Groups can calculate what this means in numbers using, for example, Data on the number of people the organisations aim to reach.

And publicly available data from the Scotland Census or National Records of Scotland.

Groups may also be able to identify demand for communication support. They may be able to access anonymised in-house data. For example, demand for BSL interpreting, Braille or Easy Read. Or the number of staff who self-report conditions associated with communication difference. For example, neurodivergence, dyslexia, or hearing loss. Next, groups could look for evidence of unmet need for communication support. For example,

- Customer complaints relating to communication.
- And higher than average “did not attend” figures among communication disadvantaged groups.

Finally, groups could produce a “Communication Profile Report” to summarise communication profile data. This can be shared with leaders, managers, and staff across the organisation to raise awareness and inspire action.

Changes in the report over time can indicate the impact of inclusive communication development work and any changes to the communication characteristics of service user and staff communities.

## **Slide 11 – Step 4 – Assess infrastructure**

Once an organisation understands the demand for inclusive communication among its service users and staff, they can then assess their capacity to meet that demand.

This step enables organisations to assess their strengths and areas for improvement in relation to good practice Standards 1 to 5. These standards focus on the infrastructure organisations could aim to provide to enable inclusive communication good practice.

The aim is that achieving this step will help organisations to implement three of the nine good practice standards. Those are -

- Standard 1 about leadership and ownership of inclusive communication.
- Standard 3 which is about inclusive communication policy and quality standards.
- And standard 9 which is about checking and improving your communication.

During this step development groups are invited to download and complete a “Standards and indicators for organisation infrastructure - assessment checklist.” The checklist is on the Toolkit Module 4 webpage.

Groups may wish to assess the whole organisation or start with one service area then progress to other areas as practice develops.

Groups are encouraged also to look for data on impact or outcomes of current practice. They may have already gathered some data during step 4. Helpful outcomes data includes -

- Levels of engagement by communication disadvantaged groups.
- Communication diversity of service users. This data may be available on Customer Relations Management systems.
- And communication diversity of staff. This data may be available on Human Resource Management systems.

Finally in this step, groups may wish to summarise their findings in an “Inclusive communication practice progress report.” The report could list current good practice, areas for improvement and outcomes data.

Progress reports can help leaders, managers, and staff to

- Celebrate and report progress to colleagues.

- Share learning with each other, and as appropriate, with other organisations.
- And feel inspired to improve their own practice.

## **Slide 12 – Set strategic objective/s**

Organisations are encouraged to plan to develop their inclusive communication good practice.

Inclusive communication development cuts across several business areas and is likely to take years to deliver. Inclusive communication development plans are therefore likely to be a key part of the organisation's overall strategic development plan.

This step helps organisations to work out the best inclusive communication strategic objectives for them.

The aim is that achieving this step will help organisations to implement Standard 1: Leadership and ownership of inclusive communication, and the standards their objectives focus on.

Development groups could use the following approach to identify priority inclusive communication strategic objectives.

Firstly, groups can prioritise areas for improvement from the list of “areas for improvement” identified in their “Inclusive Communication Practice Progress Report.”

It is recommended that priority is given to actions associated with Standard 1: Leadership and ownership, then Standard 2: Involve people who communicate in different ways, then Standard 3 and so on.

They can further prioritise objectives that represent “easy wins.” That is, objectives that allow the organisation to build on current good practice, use resources that are freely available, or use resources shared by other public bodies.

The Toolkit webpages include documents that can help with this prioritisation – including -

- A list of resources available to help with each standard and indicator.
- And, in Module 2, case studies from a variety of public bodies.

Next, groups are encouraged to align inclusive communication objectives with other strategic objectives. This could involve identifying which strategic objectives inclusive communication could help to deliver. For example, objectives related to equality, diversity, and inclusion, service engagement, and cost effectiveness.

Inclusive communication objectives which contribute to the success of other strategic objectives are most likely to attract active support and funding from leaders.

Development groups next need to identify and estimate the likely costs associated with the inclusive communication objectives they prioritise. The step-by-step guide details the costs the group should consider including leaders, managers and staff time, provision of specialist communication supports and user involvement costs.

Groups are encouraged to note that not all costs are new costs. Many job roles and budgets are likely to already include activities related to equality, diversity, and inclusion. Managers may be able to assess if objectives are likely to incur extensive new costs.

It can be beneficial for organisations to decide what proportion of available funds they can spend on any strategic objective. Development groups and leaders might determine proportionate expenditure based on factors such as -

- Their views on the urgency of action on inclusive communication.
- And the funds available to the organisation.

The step-by-step guide offers more help on this decision making.

Development groups may wish to recommend inclusive communication strategic objectives to senior leaders and managers. A recommendations report can help senior leaders decide if and how they will support the recommendations.

The report might include

- A summary of the “Inclusive communication practice progress report” produced in Step 4.
- Recommended objective or objectives.
- Benefits to the organisation including alignment with other strategic objectives.
- Estimated costs to the organisation.
- Reasons why the proposed expenditure is proportionate.
- And the recommended strategic leader to oversee and report progress, the delivery team and governance arrangements.

The final part of this step is up to senior leaders, who are encouraged to agree to the recommended objectives and budget allocation.

Development groups might discuss the recommendations with senior leaders. Answers to “Frequently asked questions”, found in the step-by-step guide, may be helpful at this point.

### **Slide 13 – Step 6 – Annual development plans**

Step 6 assumes senior leaders have agreed an inclusive communication strategic objective and budget allocation. It focuses on how the organisation will achieve their strategic objective or objectives in practice.

The aim is that achieving this step will, again, help organisations to implement Standard 1: Leadership and ownership of inclusive communication, and the standards their objectives focus on.

Development groups are encouraged to develop annual plans. The step-by-step guide provides more details and an example of a plan. In summary, plans could include -

- Goals for each year the group estimates an objective will take to implement.
- Goals for each quarter of each year.
- Who will lead work on each goal.
- Stakeholders' roles including estimates of the time needed to do activities and costs.
- Practical resources and tools available.
- Budget lines.
- A communication plan to keep colleagues updated about the work.
- And how the development group will monitor progress and report it to senior leaders.

Development groups could helpfully discuss and agree annual plans with senior leaders and managers.

### **Slide 14 – Step 7 – Implement annual plan**

This step assumes senior leaders have agreed annual development plans.

Development groups are encouraged to firstly, discuss annual development plans with the teams involved in implementing the plans. This could involve asking these teams to describe how they will incorporate the action into their team or individual work plans.

Secondly development groups might seek to ensure teams have easy access to all the support they need including colleagues with specialist skills, help from expert organisations, practical resources and funding.

Regular progress monitoring by groups is encouraged. They might examine and reflect on

- Achievements of quarterly goals.
- Outcomes.
- And any barriers to progress and how to overcome them.

Finally for this step, groups could report progress at the end of each year to strategic leaders. These reports could include achievements and recommendations to overcome any persistent barriers.

### **Slide 15 – Step 8 – Strategic review and update**

Organisations are encouraged to review progress on inclusive communication good practice as part of their wider strategic reviews. Towards the end of one strategic planning cycle, development groups could -

- Update the communication profile of service users and staff.
- Assess organisational inclusive communication infrastructure.
- And set new strategic inclusive communication objectives.

At the beginning of the next cycle, they could -

- Produce new annual development plans.
- And start to implement the new plans.

### **Slide 16 - Actions**

Congratulations. You have now reached the end of the Foundation Inclusive Communication Toolkit Module 4.

As a leader or manager, please now consider taking these actions.

1. Implement the steps set out in this module, as appropriate to your organisation.

2. Celebrate and report progress to internal and external partner organisations.
3. Collaborate with other public bodies and expert organisations to innovate and share developments.

Your service users, you, your team, and organisation will reap the benefits of inclusive communication good practice.

END

## **Requesting alternative formats**

We are committed to providing adjustments. We will consider requests for alternative formats or translations for any materials from this publication.

Contact us at [mainstreamingstrategy@gov.scot](mailto:mainstreamingstrategy@gov.scot) if you would like to request an adjustment or alternative format.