



## Mapping on pedagogical actions regarding service users' participation carried out at JU

This report is based on analysis of two types of data – a survey and focus groups carried out among lecturers in social work at Jönköping University (JU). The presentation of the results is organized under the following headings: Results of the survey and Results of the focus groups. Together the two sections provide information of how service users are included in social work education at JU. Challenges and possibilities are highlighted.

### Resultus of servey

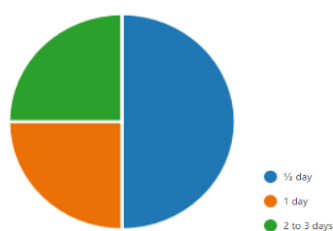
The servey called *social workers edication and service users' participation* was sent to 20 colleges at the department of social work, Jönköping University. In total 12 respondents filled in the survey. All of them were lecturers in the department social work and teach within the 'bachelor in social work' program.

### Involment of service users in social work education

4 out of 12 respondent reported that they involve service uses in their teaching on becholar level. The number of praticating stundets who came in contect with service users varied depening on course. Student groups were reported to be between 20-40 students. Respondents answers indicate that service users are mainly involved in the third year of year of training.

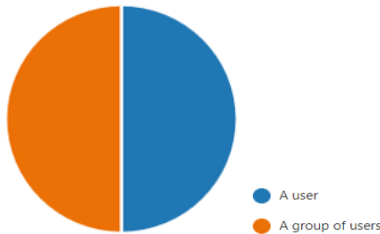
All reported projects involving service users where included within the social work programe and the duration of these projects lasted from ½ day to 2 days in duration. Project that the participants described was where called: The elderly project - study circle, substance use, course lecture, and social work participation and inclusion.

Fig. 1 Duration of the project



All respondents included service users in their education report that the service users spoke for themselves. Service users were involved as a group or as single user.

Fig. 2 Who are involved?



Service user are not paid as lecturers when involved in the courses at JU. Most common is that service users received no compensation at all but compensation in terms paid traveling expenses was reported.

Respondents reported that service uses participation in social work education was mainly characterized by interaction and dialogue between students and service uses as well as service uses giving testimony of their experiences.

### **How to involve service users in social work education**

Respondents exemplified how service users can give their testimony or get their voices heard when included as lecturers, seminar leaders and researchers. Below are some quotes from the survey exemplifying testimony and voice as one possibility to involve service users:

#### Testimony /voice

“Service user is a wide group to involve, I try to make some service users voices heard in each of my courses, recorded talks, study visits or reading and discussing fiction books.”

“I’m the course coordinator of the course "Social Work, Participation and Inclusion" and has for the last years had a service user lecturer in the course with cerebral palsy talking about his everyday life to the students.”

“By sharing stories about their perception of different situations in mental illness”

“An involvement could take place in several ways. For example, through theme days where representatives from user organizations are invited.”

“If ethics is not an issue they could be invited and talk about their experience.”

“In one of the psychology courses, the students carry out an observation of children. In another course on neuropsychiatric disabilities, a representative of one of these groups could come and give the lecture.”

"It is not simply in the courses that I myself hold in the program. One possibility right now is only to let students take part in research based on users' own experiences. Beyond own courses I see several opportunities in our program. Partly as a separate voice where users can participate and share their experiences."

#### Course development

Including service users in course development was another possibility that the respondent addressed.

"...above all that we teachers involve users or groups of users when we develop course elements that affect users in our courses."

"We can include them as lecturers, as part of our upcoming program council and as experts in assessments of examinations based on their experience and expertise."

#### **Reasons for not involving service users in teaching**

Respondents who answered that they do not involve service users in their teaching were asked to explain in writing why they do not involve service users in their teaching. The main reason described was that service user's involvement is *not appropriate in the courses/modules*. *Lack of contact with service users* was also described as a reason for not involving service users in education.

#### **Obstacles to involve service users in teaching**

The following obstacles was reported by the respondents.

##### Not appropriate in the courses

"If users are to be invited to the course, the element must fit into the course in a natural way."

"The courses I have is not suitable, theoretical Courses, and my research don't have that focus."

"It has to do with the subject of scientific method."

##### Lack of contact with service users

"I also need to have contact with suitable people."

"Finding the right people for the tasks."

##### Lack of time and resources

Lack of "time for the moment"

"it also requires work to frame and discuss with the students about user participation."

Fig 3. What to achieve be involving service uses in education



### Motivators to involve service users in education

Respondent communicated the following motivators for involving service users in social work education.

#### Importance of service user perspectives

“it is an important perspective for the students to take part in and it is important to include users in our education.”

“Their experiences are central to the knowledge our students should share Students often ask for stories from reality.”

“To let students, get a broader picture of the working field.”

“Testimonials make the content clearer and more engaging; It gives lecturers new insights and access to new sources of knowledge.”

“Experience-based knowledge is important in co-creation of projects and students should be aware of this.”

“It is only with both theoretical understanding and personal experiences that you can really begin to understand something.”

“If an arrangement with users is implemented that gives students the opportunity to reflect and apply their new experience with theoretical knowledge, it would add many aspects such as increased understanding of the

importance of treatment but also hopefully an increased motivation to learn more to meet different people in their future careers.”

### Reducing gaps

“Reduces the distance between (future) professionals and service users.”

“Lessen the hierarchy in research, the research will gain form their direct involvement,”

## Results from Focus Groups

In order to provide a more in depth understanding of service users participation in social work education focus groups were collected. Two focus groups including five teachers each was conducted. The duration of the focus groups was 1.5 hours each and gave participants the possibility to sharing experiences around service user's participation.

The focus groups aimed to exploring benefits, difficulties, and ways of improving/developing service users' participation to the training of future social workers. The focus groups started by paying attention to the concept service user as well as what problems teachers in social work wish to target by involving service users in their education. The content of the focus group discussions has ben thematized and are presented in this section.

### Used concepts

The participants were asked to discuss the term service user. Service user was defined as a person in need of help or in need of services. It got event that there term service user or in Swedish “brukare” (user) is the most common but not the only used concept within social work education or in social work practice. What concepts are user depends on context and who is defining who. The following terms were discussed in the focus groups.

- Service user - as the most used term officially and in education.
- Client - between professionals when talking about a person or a case.
- In practical work –Pupil, Youth, Elderly ect.
- Service user's preference: Guests, Fellow human beings ect.

### Problems in social work education

The participants were asked to discuss what they found to be problematic concerning how service users are depicted in education and/or in social work practice. The following problems were discussed:

- Stereotypes and labeling of service users.
- Reducing them to their stigma

- Service users become representant of a group.
- Focus is pays on problems.
- Teachers become filters for service users' participation.

### **Involving service users in education- Difficulties and Challenges**

The fooling types of challenges when including service in social work education was discussed:

- Ethical problems
- Students as exposed (ongoing trauma, unqualified)
- Users as exposed (ongoing trauma, unqualified)
- Requires a lot of the teachers when students meet service users.
- Linking experiences with service users to theories and concepts.
- Top down, on service users` terms.

### **Possibilities for improvements**

Discussions in the focus groups paid attention to possibilities to involve service users in different ways. Some things discussed are already in use while others were discussed as future possibilities. du used and others.

In use:

- Documentaries, literature about or by service users for discussions and reflection
- Study visits
- Contact with Service users' organizations
- Service users share experiences
- Professionals share experiences

Future possibilities:

- Lectures in the field by service users, teachers and professionals
- Students can develop own learning possibilities
- Selectable service user course
- Service user's perspective in course -addiction, elderly, disability (in use but can be added more)
- Add contact with service users to student's seminar card
- Add service users contact to field tasks (students contact with municipality)
- Add to Personal professional development –PPU
- Credits for merits with Service user
- Add to learning goals and examination
- Service user in reference group concerning education. (in process)
- Service user included in course planning
- Voluntary work (NGOs)