



A STAFF GUIDE

Developing an Integrated Housing & Support Assessment







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Introduction

TOPHOUSE **STAFF GUIDE** INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION TO TOPHOUSE

TOPHOUSE is a project that aims to define the competences of professionals in the assessment, housing and support/care sector to strenghten their ability to:

FOSTER INCLUSION AND RESPECT for human rights of persons at risk of exclusion, particularly persons with disabilities

WORK MORE EFFECTIVELY and **CONSRTUCTIVELY** with complex needs of service users.

Partners participated from 5 European countries:

- Austria Jugend am Werk
- Eire National Council for Social Housing
- Finland ASPA Foundation
- Spain Support (formerly known as Fundacio)
- United Kingdom Homeless Link.

The project was managed by partners in Austria (Essl Foundation) and Belgium (EASPD)

TOPHOUSE'S specific aim is to ensure that everyone who applies for housing, who has additional support needs receives an assessment that takes into account not only their housing needs, but also their support needs and also their individual rights as citizens

TOPHOUSE adopts a person centred and rights-based approach throughout; it has as its underpinning principle the equal engagement of the person requiring housing and support and the recognition of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). These principles are embedded throughout **TOPHOUSE** materials.

Experts by Experience made significant contributions to this work, especially IO6 – the Universal Training. It is essential that Experts by Experience continue to play a key role in the roll out of the products and all staff are encouraged throughout to develop meaningful ways to achieve this



INTRODUCTION TOPHOUSE STAFF GUIDE

BACKGROUND

UN-Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The UN-Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) states, "people with disabilities should have the same choices as everyone else regarding how they live and being part of a community. They should be able to choose where they live, with whom they live with, and not have to live in a home or hostel if they do not want to. They should also have support services made available to them, such as personal assistance as well as taking advantage of support services that are available for people without disabilities".

Integrated Housing and support

TOPHOUSE is a continuation of the ELOSH (European Core Learning Outcomes for Integration of Support and Housing) project which in 2013 started out to fight against social exclusion of people with support needs by improving cooperation between social support services and the housing sector. ELOSH aimed at transferring innovative learning outcomes and specific training material on housing and integrated support to seven European Union member states. ELOSH used co-production principles to train staff members in the housing and support sector by integrating users in the development and delivery of services.

TOPHOUSE **STAFF GUIDE** INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE STAFF GUIDE

This staff guide is a simple introduction to the **TOPHOUSE** products and how to use them.

- Introduces TOPHOUSE and its aims
- Provides staff with background knowledge of TOPHOUSE products
- Introduces the Intellectual Outputs (IOs) their key concepts and ethos and how to best benefit from them
- Describes the range of materials and tools offered throughout TOPHOUSE
- Describes the Learning Outcomes identified as essential to deliver a quality integrated housing and support assessment and which underpin all TOPHOUSE products
- Explains the training modules and how to use them
- Introduces the concept of Expert by Experience and the value of this role
- More detailed information on each IO and further materials is contained within the full report.



INTRODUCTION TOPHOUSE **STAFF GUIDE**

TOPHOUSE RESOURCES

The **TOPHOUSE** resources support staff in undertaking person centred, integrated housing and support assessments that can best reflect the aspirations and needs of people with disabilities and support needs.

The resources comprise:

I01

Study on Promising Practices in Integrated Housing & Support

IO2

Pack on Assessment of individual needs and rights (THINA)

IO3

Pack on Individual needs and allocation of housing (THSUNA)

IO4

Pack on Support Needs Assessment

IO5

Pack on Cross sectoral co-operation

I06

TOPHOUSE
Training Course
TH Guide

9

IO7

Country specific TOPHOUSE products

(nb* IO=Intellectual Output)

TOPHOUSE **STAFF GUIDE** INTRODUCTION

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- The learning outcomes (LOs) underpin the TOPHOUSE approach and are reflected throughout all the products
- They were jointly identified by the project Team at an early stage.
- The Learning Outcomes in particular defined the learning materials and have been adjusted appropriately to establish a universal training pack to be contextualised by delivery partners.
- Each training module identifies the learning outcomes achieved within that module

The Learning Outcomes

- LO1 Work in a person-centred way
- **LO2** Treat service users with dignity and respect
- LO3 Support choice and control by users of services
- LO4 Practice co-production with service users who are "experts by experience"
- **LO5** Build trusting relationship with service users
- LO6 Communicate effectively and openly
- **LO7** Enable service users to keep themselves and others safe
- LO8 Enable clients to take positive risks
- LO9 Safeguard service users
- LO10 Work in a multi-disciplinary way
- **LO11** Develop networks and collaborate with other service providers



INTRODUCTION TOPHOUSE **STAFF GUIDE**

INVOLVING EXPERTS BY EXPERIENCE – ADDING VALUE

Experts by Experience / People with Lived Experience / Service Users

- Involving EbEs creates a multi-dimensional approach to you work and your services
- They bring lived experience of what it feels like to receive services
- They bring insight into the impact of professionals actions and words
- Without their input your work is one-dimensional
- They bring new ideas of how to deliver support
- They make us think differently, they make us more creative
- If your work is successful they will participate in the future
- It is respectful

It makes sense!

TOPHOUSE **STAFF GUIDE** INTRODUCTION

HOW TO ENGAGE EXPERTS BY EXPERIENCE (EBES)

- Recruit from people in your services or people who have left your services.
 Ask colleagues including those from other services
- Don't worry if you only have a small group—small groups can be very productive
- Make sure your "Experts" are "ready" that they understand what is required
 of them
- Support them all the way-people are unused to be asked they need encouragement. People may need support- a support worker in the room
- It will take several meetings to achieve your goal-don't rush it
- Make the experience pleasant- be friendly, provide refreshments
- But always remain professional this is "work"
- Recognise that they have given up their time freely for you they are doing this
 for your benefit as well as for other service users in the future
- Always thank them perhaps a thank you shopping voucher? If not then a personal thank you letter
- Always feed back what difference it made for example what came out of the meetings or what did you change in your service



INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 2

Pack on Assessment of Individual Needs and Rights – "THINA"

WHAT IS "THINA"

THINA is an assessment tool that

- enables us to effectively implement the principles and commitments of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD)
- and enables us to effectively assess the personal identity needs for persons with disabilities

The THINA assessment tool focuses on three main issues:

- 1. To assess the support needs around personal IDENTITY
- 2. To assess the implementation of UNCRPD*
- 3. To assess the improvement of the quality of support
- * United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities

What THINA doesn't do:

- 1. Does not assess the persons functional level (for ex. based on diagnosis)
- 2. Does not assess practical support (washing, preparing food, hygiene etc.)
- 3. Is not based on "ready made" questions (for example "tick boxes")





The framework for the THINA assessment tool has five identity aspects:

- 1. ME about me as me and who I am 4. ME and citizenship
- 2. ME and my close relationships 5. ME and my future
- 3. ME and my services

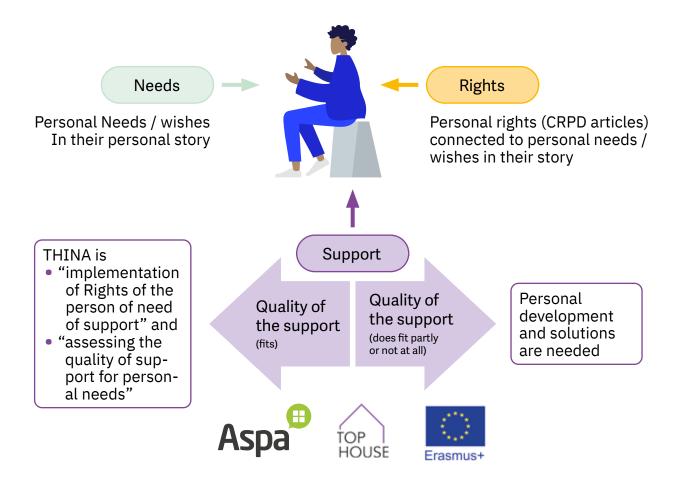
How to use THINA:

- The person starts to choose one identity aspect and tells their own story on this issue.
- The person uses this personal story as a base for the information.
- We can pick up the personal needs and wishes from the story
- We can pick up the personal rights from the story
- Assess the level of support of the personal needs and rights = fully supported, partly supported and not supported at all.
- Find solutions to reach better support to personal needs and rights.

Identity is at risk of being forgotten / sitting in the shadow because of:

- 1. lack of knowledge of UNCRPD and how how to implement person's rights.
- 2. the influence of institutional culture, which still exists
- 3. categorizising people with disabilities, making assumptions based on diagnose etc.
- 4. attitudes and prejudices
- 5. lack of inclusive approaches and active participation





THINA-Process

- THINA should be used as a work tool in everyday life.
- Assessment should be done regularly, systematically and several times a year (e.g. 4 times).
- The process results in wellbeing through the support of identity and implementation of rights.

Ouantitative The assessand qualitative ment gives an-Start: The Pick up Connect the assessment of swers to issues person choosfrom the the level of imneeds/wishes which should es one of the story the to the personal plementation of focus on how aspects and personal rights (articles rights and qualto achieve betcreate their needs/ of UNCRPD) ity of support ter support and personal story wishes for implemento the personal needs. (2,1 or 0) tation of rights



INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 3

Pack on Individual Needs and Allocation of Housing

Housing Allocation System - HAS

AIMS + OBJECTIVES

THE AIM OF the Pack on Individual Needs and Allocation of Housing is to put in place a system of housing and support allocation for any housing applicant who requires additional supports – this may be a person with a disability, a homeless person, an elderly person or someone vulnerable/in need of additional supports.

THE HOUSING AND SUPPORT ALLOCATION (HAS) helps staff identify when extra support needs exist that are relevant to their housing application

HAS IS DESIGNED TO BE USED BY FRONT LINE HOUSING STAFF in all types or organisations, recognising that housing allocations are made by different authorities in different jurisdictions. HAS can be used as a tool in addition to your existing housing allocations procedures. It cannot replace the legal and / or contractual obligations of housing allocation agencies / authorities.

IT IS DESIGNED TO AMPLIFY THE VOICE OF THE HOUSING APPLICANT; to ensure their wishes, preferences and their own knowledge is heard and expertise of their own experience is acknowledged and valued in the assessment and allocations process, creating an allocations system that is fair, transparent and inclusive.





METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS

HAS INCORPORATES PERSON-CENTRED PLANNING and is underpinned by the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

IT AIMS TO DEVELOP CO-PRODUCTION in the housing allocation process. The European Network on Independent Living (ENIL) defines co-production as "inclusive working practices between Experts by Experience and organisations ... very person involved in the process of co-production is valued, respected and listened to, with everyone involved in designing, developing and delivering".

HOUSING POLICY ACROSS EUROPE has become more person-centred in recent years, however support for front-line staff to enable them to work in a more person-centred way has not always been available. HAS is a tool to enable housing practitioners work in a more person-centred way that is still within their existing legal and administrative frameworks.

HAS INCLUDES A DETAILED QUESTIONNAIRE that a housing allocations officer and / or support worker can conduct with a housing applicant. The questionnaire is wide-ranging and is designed to cover many areas that may affect a person's housing preferences/ needs. It also contains open-ended questions that allow the applicant give as much additional information as they like on their experience and preferences; it is important that they "tell their story".

THE QUESTIONNAIRE IS FOLLOWED BY A NUMBER OF SUMMARIES that allow for the answers given by the applicant to be condensed into a number of short paragraphs, ideally ensuring that the applicant does not have to tell their story repeatedly – their wishes and preferences are recorded clearly.

HAS SHOULD BE USED IN CONJUNCTION with the other TOPHOUSE intellectual outputs (IOs). HAS contains a flowchart which outlines how it fits in with the other outputs. In particular, it is closely linked with IO4, which is the Pack on Support Needs Assessment, as a person's housing and support needs are so inter-linked.

THERE FOLLOWS AN EXAMPLE of how a housing allocation could be made using HAS through a scoring system and how housing authorities and support services could work together to make a suitable allocation happen.

TOPHOUSE **STAFF GUIDE**

HOW TO USE THE PACK ON INDIVIDUAL NEEDS AND ALLOCATION OF HOUSING

HAS, IO3, is one element of a suite of tools and resources available to housing and support practitioners through **TOPHOUSE**. It works best when you are familiar with all intellectual outputs on individual needs and rights, support needs assessments and cross-sectoral co-operation. They can be used individually, but all are complementary and all help practitioners work in a more person-centred and co-produced way.

"The Pack on Individual Needs and Allocation of Housing" IO3 can be used separately from other TH Packs, but can also be complemented with the Pack on Support Needs Assessment, as both packs share similarities, but especially because when assessing housing needs a need for assessing support needs can emerge, and vice versa. The **TOPHOUSE** Training Course also offers a complementary training on tools for effective assessment with practical exercises that can be practiced before being implemented in real-case scenarios.

The range of training modules are an invaluable resource to enable housing and support practitioners explore key issues around working in a person-centred way, communication, safeguarding, dignity and respect, developing trust, promoting choice and enabling networking and co-operation. Completing at least some of the training modules is recommended before using the intellectual output tools.





INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 4

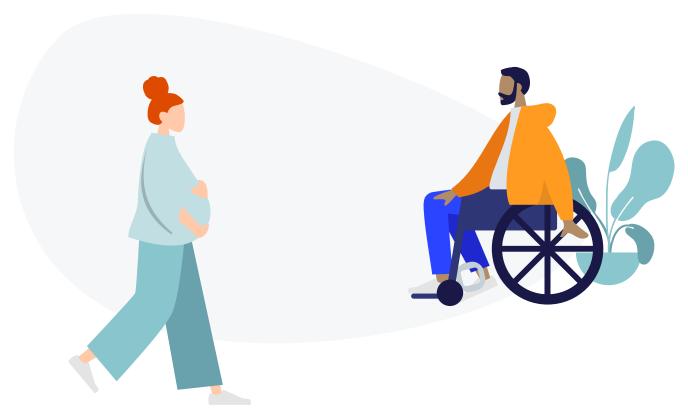
TOPHOUSE Support Needs Assessment – THSUNA

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The **TOPHOUSE** Pack on Support Needs Assessment has been developed to provide a framework of intervention for professionals working with persons with complex needs who are experiencing some type of disability, vulnerability or social exclusion. The Pack on Support Needs Assessment comprises both methodology (to understand the approach) and tools (to support implementation). The ultimate goal is to produce an individualised assessment that enables the professional to direct or redirect existing services or resources to improve the situation of the person.

The **TOPHOUSE** Pack on Support Needs Assessment has been developed as a universal tool to be used by professionals to support and underpin the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), as its principles are embedded throughout the whole process.

A fundamental aspect of this pack and the **TOPHOUSE** Project is that Individuals should, at all times, be supported to exercise choice and control over the support they receive and want to receive and is an approach embedded through all elements of the **TOP-HOUSE** products.





METHODOLOGY & PROCESS

THE PACK ON SUPPORT NEEDS ASSESSMENT has been developed based on the principles of person-centred planning, coproduction and taking into consideration UNCRPD principles and on the guidelines and standards provided by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on the design of support services.

THE PACK ON SUPPORT NEEDS ASSESSMENT is a universal product – it is designed to be flexible and adjustable so that it can be used by different types of services and by a range of professionals, but it is especially relevant to those providing (or assessing) social services, housing services or support services, and is for use in both the public or private sector.

THE PACK ON SUPPORT NEEDS ASSESSMENT recognises that the lifecycle of social intervention is a circular process, and defines the stages of the process, and suggests actions looking at all the assessment that will enable the professional to coproduce an Individualised Support Plan considering all the options available for that person.

THE PACK ON SUPPORT NEEDS ASSESSMENT that social intervention and support can not be delivered exclusively by a single service and relies on the Welfare State network of services and resources.

TOOLS

What is THSUNA? = TOPHOUSE Support Needs Assessment

The Support Needs Assessment includes a description of the process you need to tailor the assessment and social intervention to an individual's needs. It consists of two tools – the THSUNA Scale and the THSUNA Data Gathering Tool – that can should be used to increase the effectiveness of the process and produce better results

- The THSUNA Scale is the main tool to be used by professionals across a number of sessions with the person with support needs. It is useful to identify the current context of the person from their lived experience and also to consider their wishes and preferences alongside observations and inputs from the professionals.
- The THSUNA Data Gathering Tool is included in IO4 Pack on Supports Needs Assessment as Annex II. It is a complementary tool to be used across the whole process and it offers a list of potential items or documents that might be needed to put into place the support that the person needs. It helps professionals highlight administrative requirements and can be provided to the person in order to remind the need to provide that type of information to the professional.

How to use The Pack on Support Needs Assessment

- The Pack on Support Needs Assessment can be used separately from other TH Packs, but can also be complemented with the Pack on Assessment of Individual Needs and Rights, as both packs share similarities, but especially because when assessing support needs a need for assessing housing needs can emerge, and vice versa. The TOPHOUSE Training Course also offers also offers a complementary training on tools for effective assessment with practical exercises that can be practiced before being implemented in real-case scenarios.
- The THSUNA Scale is intended to be used co-jointly by the professional and the person who will receive the support and it requires that the professional has good interpersonal skills. The TOPHOUSE Training Course also offers offers a pack on effective interviewing skills that can be used for the professional to increase this set of skills, where required or where a consistent approach across staff teams is important.
- For a more comprehensive description on the methodology and the tools, refer to the Pack on Support Needs Assessment, where you will find more detail.



INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 5

Pack on Developing Cross-Sectoral Cooperation

CONCEPT

Aims of Pack on Developing Cross-Sectoral Cooperation

The aim of Pack on Developing Cross-Sectoral Cooperation is to give the target groups (users) a tool for making better use of their social space and community resources. Networking also takes place at employee and organisational level and should make these networks more usable for the users too.

The content of the Pack on Developing Cross-Sectoral Cooperation guide focuses on the **community based social work** approach; it contains person-centred, social-space/community work based methods and therefore aims to **change the mind-set** of employees and organisations.

In the foreground of community based work is **the person, their volition,** and **their resources.** Employees recognize these resources and help create a network by actively working with the person in the local community, in which the person can implement their volition in the best possible way. In the process of building and maintaining networks, employees have the role of supporter, coordinator/broker and the person who opens "doors" to the user when needed.

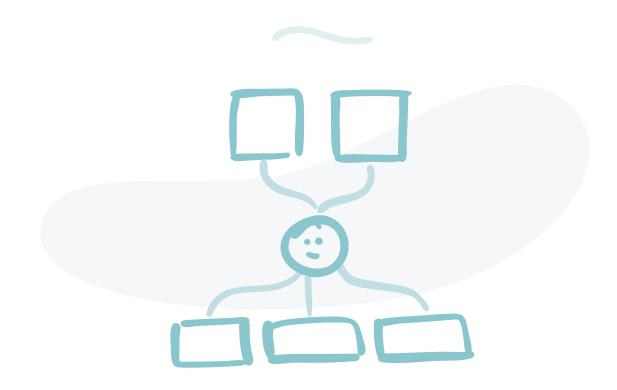




Background

In order to bridge gaps between government, public and private sectors, **partnerships** and **networks** are necessary

- Networks are generally informal social forms in which the most diverse groups, organisations, institutions and individuals can relate to each other without having to give up their respective independence. They are therefore particularly suitable for forms of cross-sectoral cooperation that go beyond traditional bureaucratic, political or cultural borders. They are based upon the willingness of their members to make their respective skills and knowledge available to each other when necessary.
- Networks differ specifically from groups, families or organisations as we only partially become aware of them, when we update them on a case-related basis.



METHODOLOGY

Person-centred methods help to identify user interests, strengths and undiscovered resources. Staff support the users through use of these methods and **non-case-specific work** and can thus strengthen and increase the **social capital** in the social space of the person.

The users are "active participants" in the design of their support, who use both their own abilities and those of the people around them as well as external resources to expand their possibilities both by strengthening existing relationships and by building new ones in order to achieve the greatest possible degree of independence.

Users take an active role in relation to their goals and their volition. **They are their own experts.** In cooperation with the support staff, this requires communicative situations in which the participants respect each other and reflect repeatedly on their roles.

Through dialogues, users can recognise via their network which resources and/or people in their environment are burdensome and perhaps are kept at a distance for a while. In addition, what relationships were broken for what reason? In this way, users can protect themselves and others.

A partnership between organisations can fill gaps to provide a person-centred service, while at the same time increasing or extending the capacity and reach of the carrier, team or department. It also promotes innovation, is the best use of expertise and strengthens relationships with other partners.

Examples of the resources to be found in the Pack on Developing Cross-Sectoral Cooperation

ECO- AND SOCIAL NETWORK MAPS: Identifying resources and potentials in the network in order to build solutions to problems.

ONE-TO-ONES/ACTIVATING ADVICE through non-case related questions.

VILLAGE STORMING: The task of the resource finder is to build up a relationship system in a few days in a previously unknown area that can be worked with.



INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 6

The TOPHOUSE Training Course

AIMS

It is hoped that the **TOPHOUSE** products will set a standard of integrated housing and support assessment across Europe

This training enables staff to be competent at delivering quality assessment.

It comprises a suite of training modules covering 11 different learning outcomes.

The training has been designed to be co-delivered by a lead trainer and a client facilitator (an "expert by experience") it is important for those attending the training to achieve the learning outcomes from the perspective of those who use services to achieve their aspirations.

The aim of the **TOPHOUSE** training is that it can be used in a modular way, taking those aspects that are important to your country or organisation

- Organisations can choose the ones that they require
- Different lengths some are a day and a half and others half a day
- Longer training can be divided into shorter sessions
- Materials include a range of training tools
- Skills based- designed to develop staff interviewing and assessment skills not to "learn" any particular application form

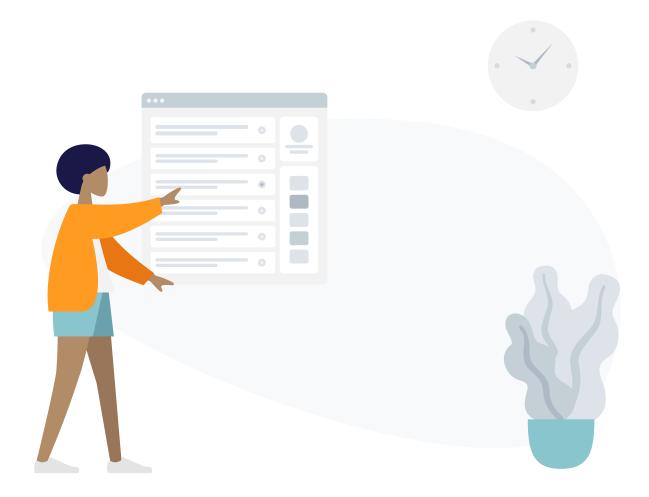


TOPHOUSE PRODUCTS

TOPHOUSE Training Course (THTC)

The THTC is a training programme composed of 8 modules reflecting the separate elements of assessment, allocation, support and collaborative working. The modules can all be done together or separately but the THTC coheres as a single area of knowledge. Different modules contribute to more or one of the learning outcomes, in order to gain the full set of competencies required to deliver a person-centred integrated housing and support assessment, all modules must be undertaken.

It is up to individual organisations/staff to identify which modules are required to complement their existing competency set and are the most useful for the services delivered by the organisation. The aim is that with this training programme any staff member can conduct an effective, meaningful, respectful assessment of housing and support needs.



8 Training Modules that reflect the different Packs, Expert by Experience input and the Learning Outcomes

Duration: 50 Guided Learning Hours over all the modules (approximate)

Module 1

Personalisation, Choice and Control and Co-production Duration: 360 min

Module 3

Professional Boundaries Duration: 285 min

Module 5

Tools for Effective Assessment Duration: 515 min

Module 7

Safety Planning Duration: 235 min

Module 2

Human Rights Equality and Diversity Duration: 370 min

Module 4

Effective Interviewing Skills Duration: 455 min

Module 6

Safeguarding and Protection from Abuse Duration: 320 min

Module 8

Building Networks and Partnership Working Duration: 435 min

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

- 1. Assertiveness Profile
- 2. Knowledge, skills and behaviours audit
- 3. Action Learning Log

Training materials: each module is composed of a course outline and a presentation. Some modules have handouts or recommended readings.



OTHER COMPONENTS

TH Statement of all the relevant Learning Outcomes

Train The Trainer Course (TTTC). This is directed at trainers who wish to train others in the use of the THTC. It is a one day course covering the technical aspects of delivering the THTC, highlighting potential issues for trainers to be prepared for, possible difficulties, misunderstandings and/ or reactions. This meets the objective of IO6 which is to equip **TOPHOUSE** partners with the skills to train relevant staff back in their own countries and for that training to be cascaded beyond their immediate organisations and more widely across the sector.

Materials:

- A presentation covering all TOPHOUSE products and THTC
- From the module's outlines, the comprehensive notes addressed to support the trainers through each step of each course to enable them to deliver any of the courses.

The TH curriculum

This formal document supports the development and delivery of the TH Learning Outcomes (Los) by local educational providers. It takes in turn each element of the TH LOs and explains what the key underlying knowledge is required to cover it.

TH Staff Guide for professionals

This is a document compiling all TH tools (IO2 THINA, IO3 HAS, IO4 THSUNA and IO5 Pack on Developing Cross-Sectoral Cooperation), including introductory chapters for each one that explains be how to use the TH specialist tools. This can also be used by those who have not had the benefit any direct TH training but who might still be asked to use these tools (or at least understand their output.

LEARNER AGREEMENT

- Respect others and their experience, knowledge and skills
- Contribute and allow others to contribute
- One voice at a time
- Ask questions seeks clarification
- Confidentiality
- Time-keeping
- Mobiles off silent and out of sight please

We hope you have found this staff guide useful

We hope staff feel confident in conducting a high quality housing and support assessment with these tools

Please do look at all the **TOPHOUSE** products for more detail or contact the **TOPHOUSE** team on the email addresses provided on the website: https://zeroproject.org/tophouse/



CONCLUSION

TOPHOUSE is a project born from the need to create new systemic and professional approaches to the assessment of housing and support needs in light of the new paradigm of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). The aim of the project is to ultimately enable the social inclusion of all persons with disabilities through appropriate support and housing schemes, with a particular focus on people with psychosocial disabilities or those at risk of homelessness.

The UNCRPD sets new standards on how services must be, overcoming the omnipresent medical paradigm entrenched in most services, and moving to a Human Rights model. These new standards urge governments, service providers, professionals and all members of society to think about disability in a new light, and reorient services supporting persons with disabilities as community-based services. New services require new and innovative forms of assessing housing or support needs. They also need cross-sector cooperation to make formal and informal support networks between different sectors emerge and cooperate together towards a common goal.

Over the lifespan of the project, the **TOPHOUSE** partners have been developing concrete tools aimed at service providers and professionals who are willing to embrace this new paradigm and work towards the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in society. Each **TOPHOUSE** product serves a concrete purpose, but the combination of all the **TOPHOUSE** products together is a ready-to-implement package to guide support service providers on how to practically achieve these new standards. The materials are modular and flexible in their delivery, but also comprehensive about each topic and purpose.

We are convinced that the **TOPHOUSE** materials can serve as a foundation for services looking to align with the UNCRPD, as they are not only conceptualised and designed by professionals but also created by Experts by Experience themselves. Co-production is a strong element of the whole **TOPHOUSE** package, so we encourage managers, technicians and frontline professionals to read the **TOPHOUSE** staff guide as its vision may prove particularly enriching to those who share similar objectives.



















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