

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL STANDARDS (NOS)

02

FACTSHEET

What is community development practice?

Community development is a long-term value based process which aims to address imbalances in power and bring about change founded on social justice, equality and inclusion.

It is a process which enables people to organise and work together to:

- identify their own needs and aspirations
- take action to exert influence on the decisions which affect their lives
- improve the quality of their own lives, the communities in which they live, and societies of which they are a part.

What are the 5 Key Values of community development?

The community development process is underpinned by a set of values on which all practice is based. Community development practitioners need to relate these values to their roles and actions.

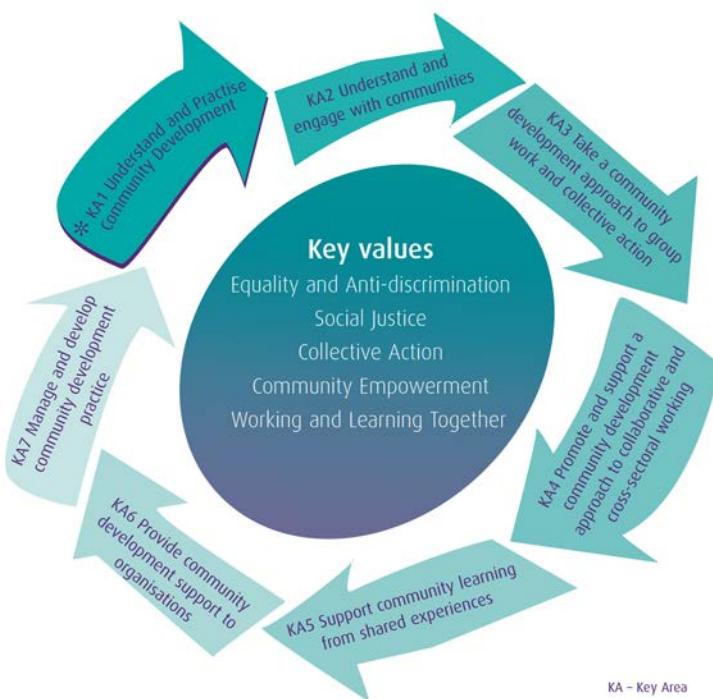
There are five key values that underpin all community development practice:

1. Equality and Anti-discrimination
2. Social justice
3. Collective action
4. Community empowerment
5. Working and learning together

The Reflective Community Development Practitioner

In community development practice the **HOW** and **WHY**, the **PRACTICE** and **PROCESS** are key to the work. Central to this is the reflective practitioner.

The reflective practitioner regularly reviews how the values underpin, inform and are present within their community development practice.



Key Area 1 is core and underpins all CD practice

This sheet has been produced using the Summary Document of the CD NOS produced by the Federation for Community Development Learning. A full version of the standards are available at www.fcdl.org.uk



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What are the Standards?

The National Occupational Standards (NOS) outline clearly the skills, values and processes required for **effective** and appropriate community development practice.

We need to use these Standards with confidence to argue for values and processes to be integral to the work. The Standards applied to practice will ensure that community development impacts on poverty, racism and social exclusion in a way that empowers, enables and encourages participation. It is hoped the NOS will provide a cornerstone and guiding framework for all community development.

A quick guide to the Standards?

- National Occupational Standards give clear and concise definition of Community Development and include a glossary of terms.
- Highlight the importance of the **5 values** of CD.
- The standards identify **7 Key Areas (KA)** which Community Development Practitioners should adhere to in order to carryout their role in a consistent and competent way.

Key Area 1 (KA1) Understand and practise community development, this is the known as the **core** emphasising the need to have an in depth knowledge and understanding of the process and values of community development.

The other Key Areas (KA) are:

Key Area (KA2) - Understand and engage with communities

Key Area (KA3) - Take a community development **approach** to group work and collective action

Key Area (KA4) - Promote and support a community development approach to collaborative and cross-sectoral working

Key Area (KA5) - Support community learning from shared experiences

Key Area (KA6) - Provide community development support to organisations

Key Area (KA7) - Manage and develop community development practice

The Key Areas are further broken down into **25 standards** which provide a framework for practitioners to base their practice and this is all underpinned by the values base.

How can we use the Standards? A CDHN Example...

CDHN has used the National Occupational Standards as a resource when developing the Pathways to Health Training Programme. Pathways to Health Training is delivered at 3 levels to match varying needs within the Sector. Level 1 aims to increase individual knowledge of CD and health inequalities. Level 2 explores how CD can be better embedded in organisational practice and Level 3 challenges those who work at a more strategic level to increase the profile of CD within the policy and governmental arena as a way to address health inequalities. The NOS are referenced at all levels of the training but in most detail in Level 2.

Level 2 focuses on the values and principles of community development and challenges participants to examine their values and practice from 3 perspectives: as an individual practitioner; from an organisational perspective and at a community level. Each of the Key Areas demonstrates to participants the relevance of the Standards to their work and shows how a better understanding of them will improve their practice.

CDHN believes that communities know their health needs and that they are best placed to design and implement radical solutions. Our training is designed to help CD workers and activists develop their skills and knowledge to be able to do this. We believe that a comprehensive understanding of the values and principles of community development will improve their practice and that this will result in better health outcomes for the communities they support. CDHN also believes the standards provide much needed clarity around the definition of community development and the role of the community development worker which can be used by all sectors. We believe that using the standards in this way and as a benchmark for best practice will improve the impact of community development work across the sector and bring recognition and credibility to the effectiveness of this as an approach to tackling inequalities in health. FCDL (2009) National Occupational Standards Updated January 2012

Who do the Standards support?

- CD workers and community activists
- Individuals and organisations adopting a CD approach in their work
- Employers of CD practitioners
- CD education and training providers of accredited and non-accredited courses
- Funders of programmes and projects
- Development and delivery of strategic plans
- Evaluation of CD practice
- Supporting and guiding good practice