

Are you under-reporting your social value?

How to identify social value in your contracts & services

A free guide by BSSEC

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Are you under-reporting your social value?

- Evidence from our work indicates that some social enterprises are struggling to identify the full social value of their work.
- Others are under-reporting the social value they are already achieving.
 - This is the case generally, but it also applies to specific contracts – and especially health contracts.
 - It is happening partly because many health contracts still ask nothing about social value...
 - And partly because this lack of interest amongst some commissioners makes it hard to motivate yourself to do more about reporting social value.

Report on social value – proactively

- But there is something you can do – you can report **proactively** on the social value you create.
- ‘Finding’ your social value is half the battle...
- So here are some ideas about how to identify the social value you may not be reporting...

Identifying social value

- You can interrogate any given contract (or service or activity) to help identify social value you may not previously have considered.
- The questions you use should focus on:
 - ✓ The contract/service.
 - ✓ The client and client outcomes.
 - ✓ Your methods of delivery.
 - ✓ Your organisational and social mission.
- On the next slide are some questions to help you do this.

Identifying social value: Questions to ask

1. What does the contract currently require us to report against?
2. Does this capture all of the outcomes — or are some client outcomes unaccounted for? If so, these represent social value.
3. What about how we **deliver** this contract/service? Is any additional social value being created because of the way we deliver?
4. Does our **social mission** — our way of working, our fundamental purpose and aims — contribute to this contract (and vice versa)?
5. If so, how? What social value outcomes do we create as a consequence?
6. Are these outcomes we are identifying in addition to the core requirements of the contract? If so, they represent social value!

Action creates social value

- Social value doesn't just mysteriously appear – our actions create it.
- On the next slide are some activities that may be creating social value in your organisation...

Examples of activities that generate social value

1. You may encourage the participation of volunteers.
2. Your volunteers may come predominantly from excluded or disadvantaged groups – you may reach greater numbers of women who want to re-enter the labour market, or those from BME groups, for example.
3. Your style of delivery may promote peer support and mutual aid.
4. You may enable greater independence.
5. Participants may gain skills, confidence, or overall improvements in wellbeing that mean they can better manage a condition, or feel their employment prospects are increased.
6. Your service may integrate support with a wider range of issues than is usual in its mainstream equivalent.

Examples of activities that generate social value

7. Referral, joint delivery or partnership arrangements with other organisations offer the potential for better outcomes and increased social value.
8. Your services may reach greater numbers of those who are least likely to engage with or 'complete' a service.
9. You may focus on inter-generational approaches or help reduce social isolation.
10. You may focus delivery in excluded or marginalised communities.
11. Your approach helps reduce health inequalities.
12. You engage entire families and not just the single client referred to you.
13. You may have a wider community impact.
14. You may buy local, buy ethically, promote inter-trading in the sector or be part of a bigger supply-chain.

Check what you find...and report it!

- Check the outcomes, benefits and impacts these factors may be helping you achieve...
- If they are beyond the contract or funder's specifications, **then they represent additional social value.**
 - Are you capturing and reporting these additional outcomes?
 - Are you reporting this social value to your funders, contractors, users and stakeholders?
 - Are you making sure to use this information in your marketing, key messages and promotional materials?

Reporting social value – don't over-complicate it

- Because of financial pressures and reduced capacity, commissioners and policy-makers are scaling back their ambitions regarding the 'measurement' of social value...
 - A more pragmatic, commonsense approach seems to be emerging...
 - They don't want information they can't understand or realistically use.
- So keep it simple:
 - Don't over-complicate – see Medway Community Healthcare's social value report (link over-page).
 - In some cases you may be able to find established financial proxies — such as savings to other services — and use these.
 - In other instances this won't be possible and you'll have to use a narrative case study/explanation.
 - A mix-and-match approach is perfectly OK – unless you are being asked for something much more specific.

Other sources of information

For a simple, no-nonsense approach to social value reporting see Medway Community Healthcare's approach:

<https://www.medwaycommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/about-us/how-we-are-doing/social-value-report/>

For more information on this and other issues to do with social value see the BSSEC website and blog:

<http://bssec.org.uk/identifying-social-value-perhaps-this-approach-can-help-your-enterprise/>

<http://bssec.org.uk/category/public-services-social-value/>

<http://bssec.org.uk/policy-issues/public-services-and-social-value/>

<http://bssec.org.uk/policy-issues/public-services-and-social-value/social-value-health/>