

# HOW TO...

## Complete the Outcomes Star™ with a service user remotely

The Outcomes Stars are designed to support a conversation between a worker and someone receiving ongoing, one to one support. This works best face to face, with time and a conducive environment, as an integral part of assessment, planning and review. However, it is still possible to use the Star effectively when it is necessary to provide support remotely.

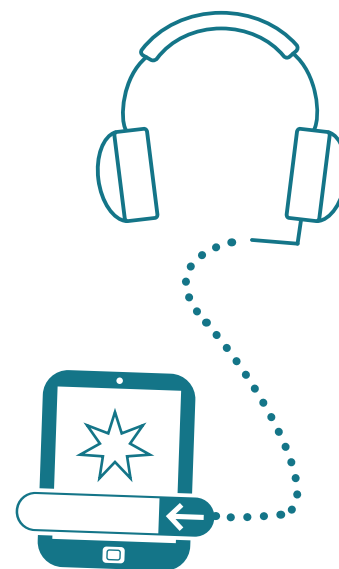
This guidance is to enable services to get the most from using the Star if they are supporting people by phone, video link and other ways. The first part outlines different scenarios and options for the practicalities. The second part presents 5 good practice tips.

### Part 1: How it works in practice – technology, scenarios and options

In order to complete the Star remotely with service users, all workers will need a phone plus a laptop/ tablet and good WiFi connection. Beyond that, how it works will depend on the technology that workers and service users have and, to some extent, how comfortable they are with it. Most important is that during the call or video link:

1. The worker has access to the scale descriptions, including any detailed scales, and can record the Star reading
2. The service user can see the visual of the Star, as a minimum, and preferably also the stages of the Journey of Change and short scale descriptions.

There are a number of ways this can be achieved:



Much of the good practice in using the Outcomes Star remotely is identical to when completing the Star in person.

### 1 (a) The worker uses the Star Online web application or other software system

If the organisation has the Star Online then the worker can easily access the brief and detailed scale descriptions, record the reading on the Star image and generate a visual image of the completed Star by 'joining the dots' when all areas have been discussed. This is probably the best option for remote use of the Star. The worker will get the same benefits if the organisation is using another software system which includes the facility to complete the Star on screen and display the Star

### 1 (b) The worker accesses the Star PDFs on their screen or on paper

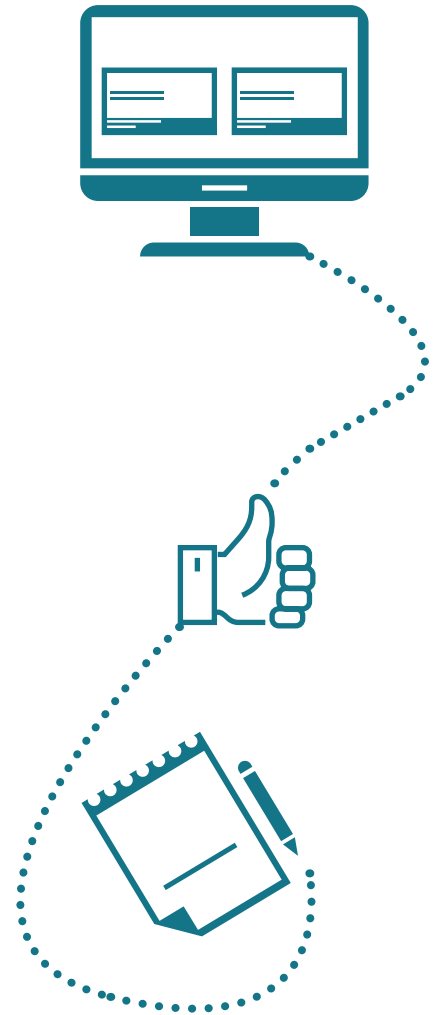
If the organisation is not using the Star Online or similar system, the worker can open the Star PDFs on their laptop or tablet; mostly they will need to reference the scales in the User Guide while discussing and completing the Star remotely with a service user. Some may prefer to have a printed copy of the User Guide for reference<sup>1</sup>.

The worker will need to record the Star reading. This may be in their software system or may require the development of a simple system that avoids having confidential papers stored inappropriately. Note: The User Guide is reference material and not specific to a service user, so having a printed User Guide out of the office does not raise data protection issues.

### 2 (a) The service user has a phone and a laptop/tablet

If there is a decent WiFi connection and both worker and service user are sufficiently comfortable with the technology, this opens the possibility of connecting over a video link using Zoom, WhatsApp, Skype, Facetime or other platforms. This may support a good conversation. If they have a laptop/ tablet but the WiFi does not support video usage, they can view the Star materials on screen during a phone call, including the short scales or the User Guide (if they want the detail).

If the video platform has an option for the worker to share their screen with the service user, the worker can either display the Star image and scales or, if they use the Star Online<sup>2</sup>, they can complete the Star together, both viewing the process on the workers screen. This has the added advantage of being able to generate a completed Star at the end of the conversation, which can then be shared with the service user.



1 Printed materials can be purchased from Triangle if these can't be printed by workers or posted to them.

2 Or another system with live onscreen completion of the Star

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## 2 (b) The service user has a smart phone but no laptop/tablet

Where possible, the service user will have access to printed copies of the Star materials, which can be post to them before the conversation. This has the advantage that the service user will be able to 'join the dots' on paper to create their own Star.

If that isn't possible, the worker can send the Star Chart<sup>3</sup> to the service user by email, text, WhatsApp or other means and encourage them to look at that visual on their phone screen before and maybe during the call. That gives them access to the Star areas, Journey of Change and visual as reference points. It would probably not be possible for the service user to read the short scales or the ladders in the User Guide on a phone. They would need headphones (or to put their phone on speaker) to both talk and look at their phone screen.

## Part 2: Five top tips for workers - completing the Star remotely

Here are our top tips on supporting people remotely. Much of this learning is from use of the Star in Australia, where the large distances and less dense populations mean that remote support is more common than in the UK. This includes a successful national pilot of the Carers Star by the Australian government Carer Gateway with nearly 200 carers, with diverse backgrounds:

- 70% of Stars were completed by phone
- 92% of Stars were collaborative
- 95% of carers were satisfied with the process



### 1. Be prepared and check the technology works

- Make sure you are familiar with the technology you are using, including the video platform, and know what it does e.g. how to share your screen
- Check your WiFi connection is robust enough and make changes if needed
- Make sure you are reasonably confident – perhaps practice with a colleague before starting to complete the Star remotely with your clients

<sup>3</sup> If any Star materials are sent by email, post, WhatsApp or other means, these should be stamped from your organisation as a licensed Star Organisation.

## 2. It is essential to prepare someone for the Star conversation

- Make an appointment, as you would for face-to-face completion. Some people have found that completing the Star remotely is quicker than face to face, but ask people to allow an hour if possible
- Consider sending them a brief service user information leaflet about the Star you use. These should be accessible on the Star Online but contact Triangle or your Licensed Trainer if needed. You can send it to service users by email or print and post it
- Set their expectations, so they know that you will be discussing and completing the Outcomes Star during the phone call or video conference
- Make sure they understand why the conversation is happening, in terms of the benefits of the Star for them and reasons why your organisation uses it
- Before the appointment, send them the Outcomes Star resources they need, as above.

## 3. Check you both have what you need at the start

- Check that the person is somewhere comfortable – with time and possibly a cup of tea
- Check that the phone or wifi connection is good enough. If using video link, check that the service user is comfortable with the technology
- Ensure that they – and you– have enough time to complete the Star, with no interruptions for you or them
- Check that you and they can see the Star materials, on a laptop or tablet, or paper, as above.
- Check they are alone and able to speak freely about sensitive issues, including not having their children in the room; in the pilot of the Carers Star, it was important to make sure that the person they cared for wasn't in the room

## 4. Follow the usual good practice completing the Star– with a few adjustments

- Provide a thorough explanation of the Star before completion (if it's the first time they have completed it), including a brief explanation of the Journey of Change
- It helps if the worker knows what materials the service user has so that they can reference them accurately. Ideally both service user and worker have the same materials
- Follow the service user's lead – the conversation will go better if you build from what you already know about them. For example, if they have started the conversation talking about their emotional or mental well-being, start the Star conversation at the relevant scale. Throughout, anchor the conversation around what they mention



Prepare yourself and the service user for the conversation



Leave enough time to work through the Star



Make sure you have the privacy, time and resources to have the conversation



Follow the standard good practice guidelines



Follow up with the completed Star and in conversation

- Listen to more than their words – be aware of what is happening around them – is there a lot of noise around? What is around them if they are on video? Are there demands on their attention? What's their tone? (If they are driving, stop the conversation)
- Be aware of service user fatigue – some conversations can take an emotional, even physical toll. Keep it brief if you can and remember that, as with face to face completion, it is fine to complete the Star over more than one session
- Building trust is a process – some people will progressively disclose as you build trust and rapport – be prepared to learn more in later conversations
- Some people won't be able to have this conversation remotely, for a variety of reasons. Know when you need to delay until face to face is possible, or it simply isn't possible to complete a Star collaboratively

#### **5. Following the conversation, ensure that the service user has sight of the completed Star and review as usual**

- This is important in order to use the completed Star as a basis for discussing and agreeing a support plan and also for their reference
- In most cases, the worker will need to share the completed Star. If using the Star Online, the completed Star can be downloaded and sent by email. Or the worker can take a photograph on their phone and send it by email, text, WhatsApp or another message service. It may also be possible to printing and post it. If the service user has the Star on paper at home, either because they have a printer or were sent it by post, they can fill it in themselves and join the dots.
- Follow up with service users at review points. Again, prepare for the conversation, refresh any notes, check actions, set up and have the conversation as above.



## We are here to help

The feasibility of completing the Star remotely is likely to depend on which Star you are using. It is likely to be easier with the Stars with fewer areas (say 6-8) and a 1-5 scale. However, services are free to try remote completion for themselves with any version and to contact Triangle as needed (or to contact Unique Outcomes in Australia or New Zealand). We will do our best to support you in any way we can. We are also keen to hear your experiences of remote completion of the Star.

If you would like to discuss any of the suggestions set out in the document or if you would like to get more support from Triangle with your Star pilot, please get in touch with us by either contacting the account manager supporting your organisation or contact Triangle through our website: [www.outcomesstar.org.uk](http://www.outcomesstar.org.uk) or emailing, [info@triangleconsulting.co.uk](mailto:info@triangleconsulting.co.uk) or calling us 0207 272 8765.



### The social enterprise behind the Star

Triangle Consulting Social Enterprise is an innovative, mission-led organisation that exists to help people reach their highest potential and live meaningful and fulfilling lives, often in the context of social disadvantage, trauma, disability or illness.

We do this by creating and supporting the Outcomes Star and other tools to unlock the potential of both individuals and the workers and organisations who support them. We believe that by balancing clear thinking, human connection and action – using the head, heart and hands – we can make a real difference in the world.

### Find out more

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If you are not in the UK, contact the licensed Outcomes Star service provider in your country. Contact details can be found on the Outcomes Star website.



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