

Using the Quality Assessment Framework and Meeting Essential Standards of Quality and Safety

February 2011

Introduction

An increasing emphasis on more joined up, flexible housing support and care means that there is a need to ensure that regulatory frameworks such as the Essential Care Standards and contract monitoring requirements for care and support contracts can be aligned in a way makes the process of regulation and contract compliance simpler.

This briefing sets out in broad terms the overlapping areas of the Essential Standards for Quality and Safety and the Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework (QAF). Its purpose is to support CQC inspectors and commissioners to recognise that compliance with the QAF contributes to meeting the requirements of the Essential Standards. For providers, it may help them develop a single quality framework for a range of services that will meet the requirements of different partners and service users. For example, the development of a single plan that addresses the care **and** housing support needs of service users rather than separate plans. It is particularly relevant where services are jointly commissioned or funded to provide regulated personal care or treatment alongside housing support services.

The Essential Standards and QAF

Services providing regulated activities and registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) are subject to a legally enforceable framework backed up by guidance in the form of Essential Standards to help them comply with regulations within the Health and Social Care Act 2008. Where housing support is also commissioned, providers comply with contract monitoring requirements which are likely to include the standards outlined in the Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework (QAF). Where care and housing support is provided, providers will have to comply with standards in both frameworks.

A more joined up and informed approach to regulating care, treatment and housing support services can help CQC inspectors, commissioners and providers to ensure the delivery of high quality housing support and care services and reduce the burden of administration. Alongside this, information sharing agreements between CQC inspectors and commissioners of housing care and support services about the quality of provision will assist in the assessment of a service potentially reducing duplication and overlap.

We recognise that the Essential Standard and the QAF have been developed in different ways, using different language to describe similar things but nonetheless, the two frameworks are compatible in terms of aims and values:

- Client/service user involvement is key
- Focus on personalised support and care plans
- Choices and rights as individuals are respected by staff
- Skilled, trained and supported staff

- Safeguarding the welfare of adults and children
- Working in partnership
- Managing risk and safety
- Respecting diversity

The QAF

There are five Core Objectives in the QAF focussed on service delivery and on continuous improvement. Services can be graded from level C to A. Level C is a set of minimum standards while Levels B and A are not prescriptive and aim to allow providers the flexibility to demonstrate innovation and develop practice. All of the QAF objectives are linked to the Supporting People Outcomes Framework. Housing related support services are encouraged to demonstrate how their services are achieving outcomes for clients (at level C), the service (at level B) and the wider community (at level A).

A further three optional, supplementary objectives cover organisational and staffing matters but are not widely used. All housing support services commissioned by local authorities will also have contracts and service specifications which cover matters such as volume of service, staffing requirements, charges and performance reporting.

The Essential Standards

For the Essential Standards, six outcome areas with a total of 28 outcomes cover a broad spectrum of health and social care. Prompts under each outcome area are intended to be a guide for providers to ensure compliance rather than a checklist. There are 28 service types and it is likely that this guidance will only be relevant to five services:

- Residential substance misuse treatment/rehabilitation services - (RSM)
- Extra Care housing services - (EXH)
- Domiciliary Care Services – (DCC)
- Shared Lives (formerly known as Adult Placement) – (SHL)
- Supported living services – (SLS)

In many areas there will be overlaps between the QAF objectives as well as with and between the CQC standards. For example, demonstrating that clients are consulted and involved, links with assessment and support planning and risk management as well as with involvement and engagement. In other areas there are gaps and it appears that the Essential Standards go beyond the requirements of the QAF. This could be for two reasons:

- Some areas such as organisational issues like management and staffing are covered explicitly in the Essential Standards but not the QAF Objectives. Where this is the case these issues will be covered in the housing support contract and accompanying service specification.
- In other cases CQC standards will go beyond the QAF because of the nature of the service. For example, requirements for registered managers, meeting nutritional needs, or payment of fees.

In the tables below we outline where the QAF and CQC cover similar territory, first reading from the QAF across to the Essential Standards and then from the Essential Standards to the QAF. Working from this headline comparison, practitioners must then refer to the source documents for the detailed text of the standards and prompts to develop a unified approach.

The QAF can be found at: <http://www.sitra.org/1281/>. or [http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100210162740/http://www.spkweb.org.uk/Subjects/Quality and monitoring/](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100210162740/http://www.spkweb.org.uk/Subjects/Quality%20and%20monitoring/)

The Essential Standards at: [http://www.cqc.org.uk/db/documents/Essential standards of quality and safety March 2010 FINAL.pdf](http://www.cqc.org.uk/db/documents/Essential%20standards%20of%20quality%20and%20safety%20March%202010%20FINAL.pdf)

QAF to CQC Essential Standards read-across summary

| QAF CORE OBJECTIVE | CQC STANDARD PROMPT |
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| <p>C 1.1 Assessment and Support Planning All clients receive an assessment of their support needs and any associated risks. All clients have an up-to-date support and risk management plan. Assessment and support planning procedures place clients' views at the centre, are managed by skilled staff and involve other professional and/or carers as appropriate</p> | <p>Outcome 1: Respecting and involving people who use services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure personalised care, treatment and support through involvement • Manage risk through effective procedures about involvement • Promote rights and choices <p>Prompts: 1A 1B 1C 1E 1F 1G 1H</p> <p>Outcome 2: Consent to care and treatment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage risk through effective consent procedures <p>Prompts: 2A 2B</p> <p>Outcome 4: Care and welfare of people who use services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure effective, safe and appropriate, personalised care, treatment and support through coordinated assessment, planning and delivery • Manage risk through effective procedures • Promote rights and choices <p>Prompts: 4A 4B 4C</p> <p>Outcome 6: Co-operating with other providers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure personalised care through adequate co-ordination of services <p>Prompt: 6A</p> <p>Outcome 14: Supporting workers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead effectively to support staff <p>Prompts: 14A 14C</p> <p>Outcome 16: Assessing and monitoring the quality of service provision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead effectively to manage risk <p>Prompt: 16A</p> <p>Outcome 21: Records</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage risk through effective procedures about records <p>Prompt: 21A</p> |

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| <p>C 1.2 Security, Health and Safety The security, health and safety of all individual clients, staff and the wider community are protected</p> | <p>Outcome 4: Care and welfare of people who use services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage risk through effective procedures <p>Prompt: 4B</p> <p>Outcome 10: Safety and suitability of premises</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the premises are adequate • Lead effectively to manage risk about the premises <p>Prompts: 10A 10B 10C 10D 10E</p> <p>Outcome 14: Supporting workers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Lead effectively to support staff <p>Prompts: 14A 14D</p> |
| <p>C 1.3 Safeguarding and Protection from Abuse There is a commitment to safeguarding the welfare of adults and children using or visiting the service and to working in partnership to protect vulnerable groups from abuse.</p> | <p>Outcome 7: Safeguarding people who use services from abuse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead effectively to reduce the potential of abuse • Ensure personalised care • Promote rights and choices <p>Prompts: 7A 7B 7C 7E 7I 7K 7M 7N</p> <p>Outcome 12: Requirements relating to workers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage quality by employing the right people <p>Prompt: 12A</p> <p>Outcome 14: Supporting workers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead effectively to support staff <p>Prompt: 14A</p> |
| <p>C 1.4 Fair Access, Diversity and Inclusion There is a demonstrable commitment to fair access, fair exit, diversity and inclusion. The service acts within the law and ensures clients are well-informed about</p> | <p>Outcome 1: Respecting and involving people who use services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure personalised care, treatment and support through involvement <input type="checkbox"/> Manage risk through effective procedures about involvement <input type="checkbox"/> Promote rights and choices <p>Prompts: 1A 1E 1G 1H 1I 1M</p> <p>Outcome 4: Care and welfare of people who use services</p> |

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| <p>their rights and responsibilities.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure effective, safe and appropriate, personalised care, treatment and support through coordinated assessment, planning and delivery • Manage risk through effective procedures • Promote rights and choices <p>Prompts: 4A 4B 4O</p> <p>Outcome 12: Requirements relating to workers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Manage quality by employing the right people <p>Prompt: 12A</p> <p>Outcome 14: Supporting workers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Lead effectively to support staff <p>Prompt: 14A 14D</p> <p>Outcome 15: Statement of purpose</p> |
| <p>C 1.5 Client Involvement and Empowerment</p> <p>There is a commitment to empowering clients and supporting their independence. Clients are well informed so that they can communicate their needs and views and make informed choices. Clients are consulted about the services provided and are offered opportunities to be involved in their running. Clients are empowered in their engagement in the wider community and the development of social networks.</p> | <p>Outcome 1: Respecting and involving people who use services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure personalised care, treatment and support through involvement <input type="checkbox"/> Manage risk through effective procedures about involvement <input type="checkbox"/> Promote rights and choices <p>Prompts: 1A 1E 1F 1G 1H 1J 1L 1M</p> <p>Outcome 2: Consent to care and treatment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Manage risk through effective consent procedures <p>Prompt: 2A</p> <p>Outcome 4: Care and welfare of people who use services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure effective, safe and appropriate, personalised care, treatment and support through coordinated assessment, planning and delivery • Manage risk through effective procedures • Promote rights and choices <p>Prompts: 4A 4E 4W</p> <p>Outcome 6: Co-operating with other providers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote rights and choices <p>Prompt: 6I</p> <p>Outcome 14: Supporting workers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead effectively to support staff |

Prompt: 14A

Outcome 17: Complaints

- Lead effectively to manage complaints
- Promote rights and choices

Prompts: 17A 17B 17E

Outcome 21: Records

- Manage risk through effective procedures about records

Prompt: 21A

CQC Essential Standards to QAF Read-across summary

| CQC Standard | QAF Core Objective |
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| Involvement and information | |
| Outcome 1: Respecting and involving people who use services | C 1.1 Assessment & Support Planning C 1.4 Fair Access, Diversity & Exclusion C 1.5 Client Involvement & Empowerment |
| Outcome 2: Consent to care and treatment | C 1.1 Assessment & Support Planning C 1.5 Client Involvement & Empowerment |
| Outcome 3: Fees | No reference in QAF Core Objectives – contract issue |
| Personalised care, treatment and support | |
| Outcome 4: Care and welfare of people who use services | C 1.1 Assessment & Support Planning C.1.2 Security, Health and Safety C 1.4 Fair Access, Diversity & Exclusion C 1.5 Client Involvement & Empowerment |
| Outcome 5: Meeting nutritional needs | No reference in QAF Core Objectives |
| Outcome 6: Cooperating with other providers | C 1.1 Assessment & Support Planning C 1.5 Client Involvement & Empowerment |
| Safeguarding and safety | |
| Outcome 7: Safeguarding people who use services from abuse | C 1.3 Safeguarding and Protection from Abuse |
| Outcome 8: Cleanliness and infection control | No reference in QAF Core Objectives |
| Outcome 9: Management of medicines | No reference in QAF Core Objectives |
| Outcome 10: Safety and suitability of premises | C.1.2 Security, Health and Safety |
| Outcome 11: Safety, availability and suitability of equipment | No reference in QAF Core Objectives |
| Suitability of staffing | |
| Outcome 12: Requirements relating to workers | C 1.3 Safeguarding and Protection from Abuse C 1.4 Fair Access, diversity & exclusion |
| Outcome 13: Staffing | No reference in QAF Core Objectives – contract issue |
| Outcome 14: Supporting workers | C 1.1 Assessment & Support Planning C.1.2 Security, Health and Safety C 1.3 Safeguarding and Protection from Abuse C 1.4 Fair Access, Diversity & Exclusion |

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| | C 1.5 Client Involvement & Empowerment |
| Quality and management | |
| Outcome 15: Statement of purpose | C 1.4 Fair Access, Diversity & Exclusion |
| Outcome 16: Assessing and monitoring the quality of service provision | C 1.1 Assessment & Support Planning And contract issue |
| Outcome 17: Complaints | C 1.5 Client Involvement & Empowerment |
| Outcome 18: Notification of death of a person who uses services | No reference in QAF Core Objectives – contract issue |
| Outcome 19: Notification of death or unauthorised absence of a person who is detained or liable to be detained under the Mental Health Act 1983 | No reference in QAF Core Objectives – contract issue |
| Outcome 20: Notification of other incidents | No reference in QAF Core Objectives – contract issue |
| Outcome 21: Records | C 1.1 Assessment & Support Planning C 1.5 Client Involvement & Empowerment And contract issue |
| Suitability of management | |
| Outcome 22: Requirements where the service provider is an individual or partnership | No reference in QAF Core Objectives – contract issue |
| Outcome 23: Requirement where the service provider is a body other than a partnership | No reference in QAF Core Objectives – contract issue |
| Outcome 24: Requirements relating to registered managers | No reference in QAF Core Objectives |
| Outcome 25: Registered person: training | No reference in QAF Core Objectives |
| Outcome 26: Financial position | No reference in QAF Core Objectives – contract issue |
| Outcome 27: Notifications – notice of absence | No reference in QAF Core Objectives |
| Outcome 28: Notifications – notice of changes | No reference in QAF Core Objectives |