

DRAFT



Bristol City Council

People Directorate

Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) Adult Services & Bristol Youth Links Services

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1. Introduction

Bristol City Council is committed to ensuring that the services people receive are of the high standard that we, our partners and the citizens of Bristol, expect. All providers that we commission, both independent and in house, are expected to deliver services that meet or exceed quality standards and the way that we measure those standards is outlined in this document.

In 2013 we held a public consultation on the proposed future approach to quality assurance. As a result of the feedback received, we have redesigned our internal quality and contract monitoring functions and developed a Quality Assurance Framework (QAF). The QAF outlines the key quality standards we expect from

services, the methods we will use to assess quality and the steps we will take when services do not meet the required standards.

The QAF will apply to all social care services that are commissioned for adults in Bristol, including services provided by Bristol City Council. It will also cover services commissioned by Bristol Youth Links.

Services commissioned for children in Bristol are subject to separate, robust monitoring arrangements including Ofsted regulation and inspection.

2. Quality is Everybody's Business



We believe the best way to ensure that high quality services are delivered is to involve all stakeholders in assessing how well those services are performing.

Stakeholders include, but are not limited to, people who use the service, relatives, carers, providers, staff delivering the service, social care staff, health practitioners, Safeguarding professionals, regulatory bodies e.g. Care Quality Commission (CQC), volunteer lay assessors and Healthwatch

By including all stakeholders in our approach, we will improve the way we:

- hear about service quality
- judge its standard
- share our findings

We will involve stakeholders at all three stages of our process:

- intelligence gathering
- quality monitoring visits
- response and reporting.

3. Quality Standards for Services in Bristol

All social care and support services provided by Bristol City Council will be assessed on how they deliver quality standards. Quality standards will be measured against the following outcomes:

1. The service is always delivered in the best interests of the service user
2. People are treated with dignity and respect
3. The service is person centred
4. The provider has a clear method of measuring quality and acts upon any underperformance
5. There is a clear pathway of access and move on from the service
6. There is management of the service users health and wellbeing needs
7. The service works with the local community and the service user's support network
8. The provider operates effectively and there is clear leadership and management of the organisation
9. The provider works from an equalities perspective
10. The provider has an understanding of the service users mental capacity and any deprivation of their liberty is lawful

4. Scope

Quality Assurance Standards for the following services, commissioned from external providers, will be measured under this QAF:

- Domiciliary care (adults)*
- Care Homes (adults)*
- Community Outreach Services (adults)
- Accommodation Based Support (adults)*
- Housing Related Support Services (adults)*
- Day Services (adults)
- Voluntary Sector Services that provide direct support (adults)
- Extra Care Housing (adults)*
- Bristol Youth Links (children)

The following in house services, provided by Bristol City Council:

- Bristol Community Links (adults)
- Redfield Lodge Care Home (adults)*
- Bristol North & South Rehabilitation Centres (adults)*
- Intermediate Care Services (adults)*
- Concorde Lodge Residential Assessment Unit (adults)*
- Drop In Services for People with Learning Difficulties (adults)
- Shared Lives (adults)
- Housing Related Support Services (adults)*
- Sheltered Housing (adults)*

* services regulated by CQC

5. The Role of the QAF in the Contractual Relationship

Services commissioned by BCC are underpinned by a contract and specification detailing terms and conditions, including how the service should be provided and how quality and performance will be monitored. The QAF will be the method used to monitor quality and will replace existing quality monitoring arrangements.

When a service is assessed as failing to meet standards under the QAF process, this will be considered in the context of contractual performance. Consideration will be given to whether the terms and conditions of the contract have been breached and appropriate action will be taken.

6. The Role of the QAF in the Context of Care Quality Commission (CQC) Regulation and Healthwatch

CQC is the independent regulator of health and social care in England. They inspect many of the services that are commissioned by Bristol City Council. In addition to CQC, Healthwatch have the power to 'Enter and View' providers so that their authorised representatives can observe matters relating to health and social care services.

The Council's relationship with the provider is **separate** to the role of the regulator, whereby the Council is responsible for monitoring how the provider is performing under its specific contract. However, where a commissioned service is regulated by the CQC, the QAF aims to ensure a proportionate approach to performance monitoring by:

- complimenting the inspection process used by the CQC
- using intelligence gathered from CQC inspections to inform areas for further monitoring under the QAF
- avoiding duplication with CQC inspections & Healthwatch 'Enter & View' by making an informed judgement where their independent evidence is sufficient to satisfy outcomes under the QAF.

7. Quality Assurance Framework

The QAF is underpinned by a cyclical, 3 stage process and will be:

- **Proportionate** to the size of the service/value of contracts held
- **Intelligent** – making full use of a wide range of information sources & methodology
- **Collaborative** – involving stakeholders at all stages of the process
- **Meaningful** – improved and sustainable high quality outcomes will be achieved
- **Responsive** – provides timely interventions, outside of the QAF cycle, to respond to issues that cause concern as they arise



Stage 1: Intelligence gathering

In this stage, Quality Assurance Officers from the People Directorate will gather information about the quality of services from a wide range of sources. This enables quality assurance to be an ongoing process, rather than one which is limited to an annual service visit. Furthermore, this will enable earlier identification of potential issues with quality and offer an opportunity to address these before they escalate into wider concerns.

Key Stakeholders Involved	Methodology	Standard Frequency	Purpose & Response
Providers	Quality Self Assessment Survey Internal QA Process Complaints Log & Evidence of Action Taken	Annual	Intelligence will be analysed by the QA team. Areas for improvement will be identified and discussed with the Provider.
BCC QAOs	Service Monitoring Information Forms	Ongoing	Decision taken to proceed with standard QAF cycle or escalation process.
BCC Contracts Officers	Contract Reviews	Annual	
Social Care Staff	Support Plan Reviews	Ongoing	
Service Users & Carers	Telephone Surveys Online surveys.	Annual	
	Comments, compliments and complaints	As they arise	
Safeguarding Team	Individual/institutional safeguarding investigations	As they arise	
Other Local Authorities	Inform QA about issues or concerns	As they arise	

Stage 2: Face to face visits

A face to face visit is essential to establish and maintain effective provider relationships, as well as offering the opportunity to assess services whilst they are being provided and speak with staff, service users and carers. This visit will be undertaken by the QAO. Frequency of visits will be proportionate to the size of the service, the nature of service provided, the assessment of intelligence available and the involvement of other teams/agencies e.g. Safeguarding, CQC

Stakeholders Involved	Assessment Criteria	Standard Frequency	Role in the QAF
BCC QAOs	Performance of service in line with service specification. Focussed quality assessment determined by findings of intelligence gathered. QAF Report will be produced.	Bi-annual	Primary assessment method, supported by intelligence gathering.
Lay Assessors	Quality of Life Outcomes	Bi-annual	Supplementary assessment method.
Young Assessors	Wellbeing and achievement outcomes	Visits with QAOs	Supplementary assessment method.
Mystery Shoppers*	Dependent on service type. Simple assessments made through visits to care homes, day services or youth services.	TBC	Supplementary assessment method.
Healthwatch	Enter & View Visits		Separate assessment method. May be used to inform specific areas for primary assessment.

CQC	Regulatory Framework		Separate assessment method. May be used to inform specific areas for primary assessment.
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Stage 3: Response and Reporting

Bristol City Council intends to develop a **Provider Quality Profile (PQP)**, which will indicate the stage of the QAF cycle for each service. This profile will include all relevant information relating to the quality of the service, including the most recent **QAF Report** which will summarise all the intelligence gathered and make an informed judgement on the quality of the service.

The QAF process will be rolled out to all providers during 2015, commencing with intelligence gathering for new providers. The full reporting process, to be agreed with providers, will be developed. Bristol City Council intends for this process to be fair, transparent and meaningful, recognising both the need for the publication of accurate and measured information and the commercial sensitivities of individual providers.

Response & Reporting Methods

Methodology	Information Published on Provider Profile	Published in Full/Part/Not Published
Quality Self Assessment Survey*	Date received	TBC
Internal QA Process	Date received	TBC
Complaints Log & Evidence of Action Taken	Number of complaints	Part
Service Monitoring Information Forms	Number & type of SMIF	Part
Contract Reviews	Date received	Not published (commercial sensitivity)
Service user Support Plan Reviews	N/A	Not published (confidentiality)

Telephone Surveys Online surveys	Survey in development; summary information to be published	TBC
BCC QAO Visit Report	Proposal for this to appear on profile in full	TBC
Lay Assessor Visit Report	Appears on profile in full	Full – As above
Mystery Shopper	In development; proposals for publication to be developed following a pilot	TBC
Healthwatch Visit	Link to website	Independent
CQC Visit	Link to website	Independent
Quality Rating Scheme (Quality mark)	Appears on profile in full	Displayed by provider

8. Improvement Plans & Escalation Process

Recognition of high quality services and ongoing quality improvement will underpin the QAF process.

When a provider is meeting or exceeding quality standards, this will be clearly shown on their PQP.

From time to time, the intelligence gathered may raise concerns about the quality of a service. These concerns will be judged as low, medium or high level and the provider will be asked to respond to these concerns accordingly.

For example:

Low level concerns – SMIF received/stakeholder reports quality concerns that indicate an isolated issue impacting on an individual service user. Issue is drawn to the attention of the provider, who responds appropriately to resolve the situation and puts necessary steps in place to reduce likelihood of future occurrence.

Medium level concerns – Several SMIFs received/stakeholders reporting repeated quality concerns; issues impacting on a number of service users. Provider will receive a formal notification that quality standards are not being met and asked to put an improvement plan in place. QAO may implement spot checks to ascertain the extent of the concerns and whether improvement plans are being followed

High level concerns – Repeated and unresolved quality concerns; safeguarding reports; potential contractual breaches; service continuity affected; concerns raised by regulatory bodies. QAO may bring forward face to face visits and undertake more intense and frequent quality monitoring until the matter is resolved.

9. Roles, Responsibilities & Resources

The People Directorate Quality Assurance Team sits in the Strategic Commissioning Division and consists of:

- Service Manager for Contracts & Quality
- Quality Assurance Manager
- 5.5 Quality Assurance Officers

Working in conjunction with:

- Bristol City Council's Safeguarding Adults Team
- People Directorate's Care & Support Division
- RSVP Lay Assessors
- Business Relationship & Contracts Officers – Strategic Commissioning Service

Quality Assurance Officer – responsible for analysing the information gathered under the QAF, undertaking face to face visits and preparing a summary report and actions for improvement.

Quality Assurance Manager – responsible for ensuring that the QAF is implemented across all services; decides when to escalate quality assurance process; reports status of QAF implementation and management to Service Manager

Service Manager – Contracts & Quality – overall responsibility for QAF implementation across the People Directorate; reports QAF status to Senior Management Team on a quarterly basis

Lay Assessors – trained volunteers, currently provided by RSVP, who assess quality of life outcomes for service users; responsible for reporting back to the QAO (future proposal for the Lay Assessor report to be published separately)

Providers – responsible for delivering a high quality service; works in partnership with the QAO and regulatory bodies to improve quality where necessary

Social Care & Health Professionals – inform the QAF intelligence gathering process by sharing relevant information about quality standards with the QAO

Safeguarding Team – works in partnership with QAOs when quality issues lead to safeguarding concerns and vice versa.

Mystery Shoppers – this area is under development; wide range of stakeholders including carers, relatives, volunteers

10. QAF Implementation Timetable

Date	Action
November 2014	Draft QAF presented to BCC Scrutiny Committee
December 2014	Consultation with Providers
January 2015	Final QAF Published
February 2015	QAF Process Implemented

11. QAF Development & Review

Prior to publishing a final version and implementing the QAF, further detailed work will be undertaken in the following areas:

11.1 Developing a Comprehensive QAF for the People Directorate

A scoping exercise is currently underway to analyse how quality is monitored for all services commissioned by the People Directorate. Synergies have already been identified with housing and drug treatment services. The aim of this exercise is to produce an overarching QAF covering as many services as possible, ensuring service quality is measured consistently across the whole Directorate.

11.2 Aligning the QAF with revised CQC Inspection Ratings and Fundamental Standards (2015)

The CQC has introduced new inspection ratings and judge the quality and safety of the care provided based on the following criteria:

- safe
- effective
- caring
- responsive to people's needs
- well-led

The QAF process will respond accordingly to intelligence provided through the implementation of this new regulatory framework.

11.3 Further Developments in response to the 'Quality is Everybody's Business Consultation

The 2013 consultation 'Quality is Everybody's Business' identified several new measures for assessing quality standards, which the Quality Assurance Team intends to develop and/or pilot during 2015. These include:

Activity	Purpose	Timescale
Self-Assessment	To develop a self-assessment questionnaire to inform the QAF process.	February 2015
Lay assessors	Embed the outcomes of the Lay Assessor Pilot Evaluation, and expand its scope to include other service areas.	March 2015
Service Improvement and Recognising Excellence	Investigate the development of a wider quality/ ratings scheme, e.g. Quality Mark, Satisfaction & Quality Assurance scheme.	September 2015
Transparent Processes	Development of a Quality Assurance website to include publishing quality standards and all reporting templates.	June 2015
Publication of Quality Assurance Information & Development of E-Markets	Further investigation of the implications of publication of reports for providers and BCC. Consider pilot scheme of publication of reports in partnership with providers. Scope the role of the QAF in the e-marketplace.	Initial Provider Profile to be agreed by January 2015
Complaints & Comments	Ensure that all providers facilitate their service users and their support networks, where appropriate to share feedback, or lodge a complaint on the service received. This includes making people aware of other avenues to escalate such issues, e.g. BCC, the LGO, CQC.	Implemented through the QAF
Mystery shoppers	Further investigation of methods of mystery shopping	June 2015

Online surveys for service users and carers	Simple quality measures similar to Ofsted surveys for schools	March 2015
Sharing good practise	Develop focus groups & use provider forums	April 2015

Review

The QAF will be reviewed and updated in November 2015.