

Driving Up Quality Self-Assessment 2016

Support is focussed on the person

What proportion of the people you support is receiving a service that demonstrates the description of 'good' or above? What are you going to do about the rest?

All managers consider that we provide a service to all clients which is "good" or better than good most of the time. This is outlined in the person centred support plans and we actively encourage clients to take part in more tasks and activities. We involve the client in the design of their own support and when a situation arises where our support may not be considered "good" for a client we will ensure that all those engaged in that clients support are involved to reshape the service provided.

What has your organisation done to make people's lives better?

We shape our support individually to ensure that we do make their lives better. We create new services if required, provide specially trained staff to support clients particular needs and have encouraged the development of social skills, both inside and outside Glebe House. We listen to the clients parents/ carers and provide support for them, whilst working as a team with the carers to ensure continuity of support. We aim to make all of our clients' part of the wider community and to be given the same opportunities as those around them.

How do you measure outcomes for the person and their family?

We encourage feedback both informal and formal. We talk to our clients and parents/carers and ask for comments on a regular basis and we attend and contribute to external reviews. We send out annual evaluation sheets to carers/clients and take action based on the response. Each client has their own set of outcomes based on their person centred plan and we review these every six to twelve months. Each client has their own key worker and this person will communicate with carers via a daily communication book. We also assess outcomes against requirements in individual contractual agreements with the Council or with colleges.

What has changed as a result of what families have said?

We have altered service days/times, staff ratios, created new activities and supported families with transport issues. We have created new services, extended opening times of services and improved our financial services to help carers/clients manage their budget more easily.

How are people supported in your organisation to discuss their lives on a daily basis, i.e. to make those daily choices and changes with flexibility and control?

The key worker will communicate to the client using their preferred communication method to talk about their lives, what they want to take part in on that day and what they wish to eat and drink. We then encourage the client to actively control their day. The clients are always given time to talk to staff and other clients about their lives away from Glebe House and to tell us what makes them happy and what they enjoy and what they don't enjoy. Most decisions about what a client does at

Glebe House will be made by the client themselves and they are encouraged to make decisions for themselves, at all times.

How are people you support and families involved in checking quality?

The families check quality in different ways, depending on the service. For our community life choices, carers can drop in to our services at any time to see how we provide support. Many of these clients' are also supported in the community and can interact with family and friends whilst out and about. Many of our AHCS clients live with family and we provide feedback immediately after the support is provided. Our clients have communication books for daily feedback and we involve our childrens parents in events with their children in the summer and at Christmas. We have a Client Representative Group, chaired by a client that meets regularly throughout the year to provide the SMT with feedback on current services, discuss what improvements can be made and to make suggestions for future services. We attend reviews with families and clients wherever possible and listen to their concerns and act upon them.

What has changed as a result of what people you support have said?

We have made individual changes to timetables, including altering days and activities as well as making organisational changes to services provided. We have provided preferred staff to support client's, provided emergency support in the home as well as provided additional emergency respite. We have developed better communication between ourselves and families and made it easier for children to transition to adult services. We have created new services at flexible times and provided new facilities where requested.

How are people and their families involved in training for staff?

Families/carers provide specific information that enables us to support clients effectively. This could involve communication, medication, eating or behaviours and we will tailor our training for those staff. On occasions, this will take place in the home. We offer in house training to parents/carers if they wish to take part.

What does your organisation do if it's difficult to support someone? Who do you seek advice and input from? How do you learn what works for them?

We always seek outside professional support and liaise with social services, the family/carers, education providers and involve specialist outreach support and medical staff where appropriate. All of our staff who support those with challenging behaviours attend annual RESPECT training with external trainers to ensure that we are using the correct approach to all of our clients. We use ABC charts to track behaviours to ensure that we are doing everything we can to reduce challenging behaviour and we will regularly review the situation internally with all staff who are engaged in the support. We will arrange reviews and aim to seek a solution from all those involved. We recognise that each client is an individual and must be supported in a person centred way.

What do you do when poor commissioning practice means that it is very hard to be 'good'?

We aim to keep communication open with social services and families to try and secure more financial support, via a review, to benefit the clients, whilst maintaining a high quality service. We

will aim to find funding from other sources to augment the existing funding. We will not continue to provide a below par service in perpetuity and if all efforts fail to provide levels of funding to support an individual safely and to a good standard, we could ask the carers/social workers to find an alternative provider for the client.

The client is supported to have an ordinary and meaningful life

Is your organisation ambitious for the people it supports? How is this demonstrated through your standards, involvement in national initiatives in government, staff training and messages to staff, and information sharing?

The organisation is always looking to develop its services and create new ones to assist the individuals to achieve their goals in life although there will always be constraints either physical or financial. The company has clear policies on expectations and policies to ensure that a high level of support is achieved. The staff receive regular in house training and training from outside professionals and news letters and emails keep staff informed of new initiatives be it local or national. The services have team meetings and staff have supervisions to ensure that information is shared. The staff are made aware of the national initiatives. These are filtered down through senior management. The policies of care we have are updated regularly and incorporate the most recent guidelines including Driving Up Quality and The Care Act and the Children and Families Act. The organisation shares information at staff/team meetings and minutes are taken and shared, a copy is sent to senior management. The organisation has a good supervision process which is monitored to ensure all staff receive supervision regularly; this provides a good opportunity for discussions around this area.

How does your organisation encourage friends and relationships that are nonpaid and don't live with the person being supported?

We try to encourage social activities and role model how to make friends if a person is struggling with that area. If we notice that a friendship is developing we try to ensure time is given for the individuals to see each other to socialise within the day care setting. We offer evening social clubs for individuals to attend if they wish too. Anyone wanting a relationship would be supported in a way best for them and advice and guidance sought from appropriate sources if required. We encourage people to interact in the sessions they have with us. This includes the other clients in the service, employees of other partner companies and the general public. We offer inclusive sessions which are open to people who do not use Glebe House services but are welcome to join in. We have a café which is open to the public at our Woodgate base. Here new friendships can be made and existing ones maintained. We often invite people along to fundraising activities and coffee mornings, inclusive activity sessions both here and in the community venues we use.

How do the lives of the people you support compare to yours, and what are you doing to raise their ambitions?

This inevitably varies for the individuals depending on where /who they live with. Their lives could be less fulfilling than the mainstream, due to older parents, lack of transport, financial constraints, lack of knowing what's out there and services not being available at a suitable time. As a company we try to display what's on and inform parent's carer's individuals what is out there. We have

suggested that some times of the year we could amend the service start times to include the opportunity for those wishing to experience so, an evening social life like everyone else . Most of the individuals have to rely too heavily on carers taking them to events, and don't have the freedom to choose. Those who do not rely on social care support do not have risk assessments, support plans, people managing their money and have total freedom of choice and do not have to rely upon anyone to live a full and meaningful life.

Some clients need support to help make a choice or for that to be heard. We have` appropriate` support in place to encourage and enable clients to try new things and be part of their community. The client always remains at the centre of anything that they may do and the support worker is often chosen by the client and the client is supported to be in control, make their own decisions and have control over their own life. We also communicate regularly with parents, carers and other services to ensure we all work together. If a client expresses a wish to try something new or make a change with their care, this is then shared and a target or aim is put into place to support these to happen. Our mission is **“providing high quality, person-centred services and information for adults and children with learning disabilities and /or autism and for those that support them”** The clients are made aware of their own rights and we aim to ensure that the clients are treated with the same respect and nothing less than what we would expect.

How does your organisation work with local communities to better involve people? How do you measure how people are connected with communities?

We have good links with local companies, where clients take part in work experience. We have companies who fund raise for us, and we use our local community facilities regularly and all this helps to inform and educate the public about what learning disabilities is about and break down myths and barriers. We would review people's time tables to ensure they are not isolated and encourage involvement within our working day. We have community links with local groups. These include mainstream colleges, the local University, Schools and local businesses. Our clients have work based opportunities within the community and access local events. We have made links with our Local Area Coordinator who circulates any of our inclusive activities and events we hold plus he has links with other organisations. Together, we have email communication and an online diary of local events, workshops, support group meeting's. We also use the community room at Tesco which is used by other local community's. We ensure that the opportunities we offer our clients always include a community based activity and incorporate this into our daily plans. The clients can therefore connect with others as part of the services we provide. When we hold our reviews, we go through what the client chooses to do, that way we can measure what community activities they take part in/have access too.

What is your organisation's approach to positive risk taking? How do you balance individual dreams vs. organisational risk

We encourage clients to experience new tasks and activities that they would not do if they did not attend our services. The company approach is realistic with positive risk taking encouraged, providing it has been assessed and agreed with all parties and is documented, and the individual knows and understands the risks to them of a new activity.

Each client has a support plan, this may identify that the individual does not have capacity to make their own decision or has a carer appointed to help them do this. This would always be at the

forefront of the care we provide. We do take into account, the clients own choice and offer support if identified as appropriate in their support plan, for decision making however, support should be in line with the principles of the Mental Capacity Act and we would always ensure that these guidelines are followed and if in doubt, we would involve other external agency's to help. An informed choice is necessary, so the client themselves can weigh up the risks or potential for risks.

We have regular reviews of any risk assessments and these are updated accordingly. The risk assessments highlight any potential or immediate risks of any tasks, but they also identify how these can be reduced so the client can take a measured risk enabling a task/ activity to be carried out safely.

Care and support focuses on people being happy and having a good quality of life

How does recruitment link to what someone being supported says that they want?

When recruiting we choose those with experience of care and wherever possible, relevant qualification and experience of supporting those with learning disabilities. We aim to have a staff profile that reflects the community that we support although in the sector there exists a majority of female staff-which reflects the ratio of applicants.

Where we are recruiting for a particular client, who is either 1:1 in a group or requires a personal assistant, we take into account the activities, age and sex of the client and any other reasonable personal preferences before appointing a staff member. We aim to match the client with an employee who will provide them with an appropriate high quality level of care and support.

How does rota planning link to what people say they want?

By using a weekly rota, we can provide a more bespoke service for those we support, as we can plan staff time to match the activities that the clients wish to take part in and change those activities on a regular basis. Glebe House offers a wide variety of activities in the day, from college support, to art and drama sessions, yoga, leisure centre activities as well as support to volunteer, shop and cook and work and living skills. These are planned in advance, giving clients choices and staff a firm work plan.

How are people involved in the probation and appraisal processes for their support staff?

Clients are not involved in the probation or appraisal process for their support staff.

How do staff know what the organisation wants them to achieve ?

There is a flow of information from SMT to team leaders and staff and regular team meetings take place for each service and for team leaders. All contracted staff have appraisals and supervisions and many staff and managers work across services to gain experience and knowledge of all aspects of the organisation. Staff turnover is low and there is a solid core of staff who have developed with the organisation and understand the ethos, mission and values. There are external standards set by

Ofsted and CQC which are communicated through the organisation as well as quality programmes such as Driving up Quality and the Dignity Champions structure.

Do you trust staff to make decisions? What happens if they get them wrong?

After the induction process, staff can take on more responsibility. During the induction, new staff work alongside a mentor and use this time to learn how to provide quality support in all situations. It is only after a staff member is felt to be confident and competent and they have shown a good understanding within their role that they would be put into a lone working environment where they may need to make decisions without support of another team member being present. A staff member would be trusted and expected to make a decision if required. The staff member is always given a contact number should they need to verify a decision. We have a 'No Blame' policy which allows for a degree of human error, where an error has been made although the staff felt that they were doing the best thing for the client. However, all incidents which have been mishandled would be recorded and followed through by a line manager or senior manager. The staff may be required to have some duties suspended until further training is given. We have a Capability procedure which would involve monitoring and evaluation and working together to resolve the issue. With the persons concerned.

How does the organisation at all levels keep in touch with people to ensure they are happy beyond the annual user satisfaction survey

At all levels, staff are given opportunities to communicate any concerns either on a working basis or a personal one which may have an impact upon their day. All line managers operate an 'Open Door' attitude and staff are encouraged to share their views individually or as part of a team. Supervisions, team meetings and informal supervisions help maintain good and frequent contact between staff on a regular basis. In general, there are few "all staff" meetings.

How does your organisation support people through times of distress?

In general, the organisation is very considerate when staff are distressed either by something that has happened at Glebe House, or in their personal life. Compassionate leave can be offered, along with extended leave of absence without pay giving the employee time to overcome what distress they are experiencing. There is also a process where staff can have a phased return to work. At times it may be necessary to keep in touch with a staff member, but management would identify this if it was felt appropriate along with the staff member. If work related, a staff member's workload may need to be reviewed as part of their stress management.

How do we accurately gauge values quality and attitude when recruiting?

We select appropriate questions which help to draw out experience to enable us to gauge the interviewee's knowledge base, understanding and qualities. We short list and an experienced interview panel is put in place. We use a variety of questions within interview and once a place has been offered we check references. A large amount of the interview process relies heavily on the interviewing staffs perceptions of the individual and asking the correct questions to gain the relevant information.

How do you manage staff sickness/leave to ensure minimum impact for the individual being supported?

We have an attendance policy which all staff is aware of. This indicates how absences and periods of leave can impact upon services. Staff are also spoken to regarding leaves of absence at supervisions and any problems or issues relating to this can be addressed.

We have a contingency plan within the team which can be incorporated into the rota so individuals are not directly affected. Staff can and do work across different services and can therefore cover in different departments should the need arise. We also employ regular bank staff who know the clients and we try to call upon bank staff but there are times we have to run short staffed and amend the timetable for the day. Care is taken to recognise when a staff member is struggling within their job role and reassessment of their working week or redeployment may happen to minimise their sickness or absence.

A good culture is important to the organisation

How does your organisation discuss its culture and reflect on what's working/what's not working?

During regular staff meetings, team leaders meetings and smt meetings, the approach to certain situations are at times questioned and areas for improvement discussed. For example, if an activity isn't working or an area for improvement is identified, it can be raised, discussed and looked into during this time. Our Management team and Quality Care manager often raise topics for discussion, sometimes related to features in the media or updates to government policies. We have consultation with clients/parents/carers and we carry out evaluation of services.

How can your organisation evidence that change has happened as a result of feedback from staff, people being supported and their families?

The evidence is shown in the minutes of team and management meetings and within supervisions where service improvements have been discussed. There is evidence of new services, extra days and times available for clients and growth of existing services due to changes in delivery. We have listened to views and wherever possible will be flexible to respond to the needs of the client group.

Through our staff supervision's, PDRs, team meetings and client reviews, feedback is noted and all changes are recorded. The feedback from parents/carers or clients is mentioned in the client's personal reports and staff feedback is kept with their line manager and recorded on supervision records. Any organisational changes are shared via the Senior Managers. We have news letters sent out to everyone using our services and all staff has access to these. When management have sent out questionnaires, the evaluation is shared within the teams

What does your organisation do to contribute to society and speak out about bad practice beyond organisational boundaries?

Whilst we support individual clients to contribute to society we only occasionally speak out about bad practice and usually only in particular situations where a client has been involved. This is an area we could improve on and we have recently employed a Development Officer to represent Glebe House in the wider community.

When you allocate your budget, how do you make sure you minimise expenditure that doesn't relate to the quality of the lives of people you support?

The budget is scrutinised by the Board and administered by the SMT. We aim to reduce our overheads, management and administration costs to the lowest level so that remaining resources can be spent on the support and activities of the clients. Our activities centre on how meaningful they are for the clients as well as considering their budgets as well as our own. Where there is a cost, most of our activities, are charged to the client directly. Craft items, cooking sessions, trips out are all covered by the clients themselves. Public transport is costly for staff and Glebe House covers this- however, we are always mindful of this when planning and aim to minimise expenditure. It is a very difficult balancing act as it does reduce what we can afford to do and what the client can afford to do.

What proportion of resources are spent on investment in getting and retaining the right staff, as opposed to staff discipline resulting from poor practice?

There are very few resources spent on disciplining staff and the money spent on recruitment, induction and training far exceeds this amount many times over.

We are very fortunate that we have an excellent team of staff whom have been with Glebe House for many years. We have a high staff retention who are dedicated and work to a very high standard.

How do we guard against tokenism when involving the people we support in feedback discussions in meetings and planning at any level

We ensure that any discussions or meetings attended by those with learning disabilities allows the time and resources to promote the opportunity for the client to express their views. We aim to prepare the client in advance for the meeting and we ensure that the suitable method of communication is available. We have many ways in which we use communicate with our clients such as PECS, Easy Read, Makaton, verbal and iPad communication system. We ensure that everyone attending the meeting is given a fair chance to communicate and that a client's opinion is given at least equal weighting to everyone else. Our client representative group reflects this as it is a meeting with mixed ability attendees, run by clients for clients but with the professional light touch support from staff at Glebe House.

The Board of Trustees has responded to the Driving Up Quality assessment by creating a Quality Group subcommittee to ensure that quality systems are in place, are reviewed and that they are improved.

Peter Warlow
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