

Appendix 6 - Quality Assurance Audits

Quarter 4 – Audit Overview Report

Quality Assurance Audits

Quality Assurance Audits take place on a monthly basis within Children and Young People Services and Adult Services. This report gives an overview of the thematic audits reported on in quarter 4 of the 2018-2019 period, what is working well, what we will improve and by what methods. This report collates audit activity from across Social Services: Children and Young People Services, Adult Services and Hillside Secure Children's Home.

Each audit tool devised is circulated to relevant stakeholders in Children's Services, Adults Services and Hillside prior to audits being completed. Audit days usually take place once a month in the Quays IT room with team managers collectively auditing and analysing the themes arising.

Audits Completed

During this quarter we have reported on three thematic audits:

Audit Theme	Cases Audited	Service
Supervision Audit		Hillside Secure Children's Home
Care and Support Cases		Children's Services
Re-referrals within 3-6 months of closure		Children's Services

What are we doing well?

We've identified through the audit process what is working well and have highlighted many good working practices evident across the Social Services IT System.

In the Hillside Supervision Audit:

- 80% of the supervisions were completed within 28 working days
- There was a current signed supervision agreement in place for 70% of the cases audited, although we will look to improve on this in future audits
- In all of the cases audit we were securely storing the supervision notes, however contingencies need to be put in place to ensure access to supervision records can happen by senior management when required
- In 89% of the cases audited the agreed actions from previous supervisions were recorded and reviewed at subsequent supervisions
- The areas on wellbeing and roles, responsibilities, professional and practice were completed in 90% of the cases audited, and training and development and other issues were completed in 100% of the cases audited
- In 90% of the cases audited the wellbeing section takes into account and fully explores any physical, emotional and relationship difficulties and positive achievements in that area
- In 80% of the cases audited discussions were evident in the supervision around relationships with their own team and/or wider team
- In 75% of the cases audited it was evident that the supervisee could relate training undertaken into practice

- It was evident in 80% of the cases audited that supervisors had discussed with the supervisee their role in relation to completing paperwork and their overall quality assurance role
- In 90% of the cases audited the supervision records were signed by both the supervisor and the supervisee

In the Care and Support Cases audit:

- In the preceding six months there have been at least two care and support meetings held in 78% of the cases audited
- In 81% of the cases audited the plan reflects the outcomes of the child/young person
- In 83% of the cases audited it is evident that the case is being actively worked between visits
- In 83% of the cases audited the voice of the child/young person was heard throughout the preceding six months
- Supervisions were being held regularly in 86% of the cases audited evidencing manager oversight

In the Re-referrals within 3-6 months of closure audit we found that:

- Almost three quarters of the case audited that did have a care and support plan in place during the first referral, the tasks on the plan were completed, those not completed were mostly transferred down to Team Around the Family to complete on stepdown
- In 81% of the cases audited the case manager's closure statement provided sufficient information on why the case could be closed at that juncture
- In 85% of the cases, the auditor agreed that the issues were sufficiently resolved from the initial referral

What will we improve?

1. In Hillside, staff files to be kept in a locked area that can be accessed by the supervisor and the unit leader/senior management when required
2. Hillside supervisors to assist the supervisee in reflecting on their own practice
3. Auditors highlighted that there was limited discussions for identified key-workers and the young person they worked with. Although guidance and direction around key-working is completed through centre briefings and team meetings, supervisions still need to address and provide guidance around their key working and young people on the unit in general
4. Overall auditors felt that the quality of supervisions could be improved further by not being too prescriptive but still providing the depth and level of detail of the conversation held with clear action points
5. Auditors felt that two of the questions on the Hillside supervision audit tool needed to be removed (questions 13 & 18) an additional question to be added that ensure that the supervisor had reflected on the practice of the supervisee, and the order of questions to be revised slightly
6. In the Care and Support Cases audit it was highlighted in 31% of the cases audited visits could have been held more frequently
7. Although evident that care and support meetings were happening in the Care and Support Cases audit, workers need to ensure the plan reflects these discussions
8. In the Care and Support Cases audit, workers to endeavour where possible that all agencies have the opportunity to attend the care and support meetings
9. In over a third of the cases audited in the Care and Support Cases audit it was indicated that the case had remained open for monitoring/facilitating as opposed to safeguarding reasons

10. The care and support plan to be used more effectively as a working document to progress the cases.
11. Where possible cases should be stepped down to universal services/Team Around the Family for continued support when cases fall below statutory thresholds
12. In the Re-referrals audit, all care and support cases will have a completed care and support plan following the assessment being completed
13. All agencies to be made aware of plans to close a case, this will also highlight the requirement for agencies to monitor and support families following closure and re-refer if necessary
14. Where cases have been agreed to close, these should be completed promptly following that decision being made

How will we do this?

- Through developing the IT system to reflect and record the information we want to evidence
- By changing, communicating and reinforcing to staff processes and procedures to follow
- By holding training sessions for staff on specific areas of the system where new processes have been introduced
- By direct feedback on individual cases to the responsible team manager and case worker
- By looking at the way we encourage engagement and participation of children, young people and their parents/carers
- Through circulation of audit tools to all practitioners to enable them to have an understanding of the areas auditors are looking at which will become evident in future audits on the same topic
- By discussing and ratifying proposed changes and improvements through the Outcome Focussed, Quality Assurance and the Practice Improvement Groups
- By circulating the thematic audit reports to all staff for their information
- By having a transparent quality assurance audit process in place which is responsive to suggestion and change

What have we learnt?

In the last quarter we undertook an audit of supervisions in Hillside Secure Children's Home, this audit was the first supervision audit undertaken on staff files in Hillside as previously supervision audits were limited to Children and Adult Services only. The supervision audit has provided a baseline on what is working well, what we want to improve and the methods we will use to do this. Supervision audits within Hillside will be scheduled in every three to four months to ensure the quality of supervision maintains the standards set and improves in areas identified.

The Care and Support Audit and the Re-referrals audit were similar audits in the type of cases audited, with similar themes arising highlighting areas that are working well and areas for improvement. Both audits highlighted that an effective care and support plan with regular meetings that use the plan as a working document is fundamental to progression of the case. Manager oversight in the Care and Support Audit was high with the voice of the child being reflected throughout the cases audited. Within the Re-referrals audit, the reasoning for closing the case initially was robust and the auditors agreed that concerns had been adequately resolved to close the case.

To promote reflective learning within the service, the good practice and areas for improvement identified within each audit and the individual case file audit forms will be shared with the appropriate Team Managers and the workers involved in the case, this is done either on a 1:1 basis or through group sessions.

Next Steps?

Our effective auditing process is identifying key themes on good practice and areas we will improve. Post audit we have mechanisms in place for following through on actions identified. Any actions identified from each audit are transferred to an audit action register whereby individual actions are discussed and agreed, this allows us to monitor desired outcomes and progress. This gives a transparent view what we recognise is working well, what we will improve, how we will do it and when it will be in place. All audit tools and reports are disseminated to the appropriate teams within Social Services, this provides staff with information on good practice and areas for improvement and it also provides a visual tool for staff that can be referenced in the everyday tasks completed.

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