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AN ROINN

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agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

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Quality Assurance and Performance Management

Guidance for Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Trusts

February 2008

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This document was written by members of a working group chaired by **Tom Cassidy**, as part of the reform of children's services and as a follow up to the Child Protection Inspection published by the Social Services Inspectorate in January 2007. The other members of the group were:

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FOREWORD

This document provides guidance to Health and Social Care Trusts on establishing robust systems for monitoring performance and quality assuring children's services. It may, however, have wider applicability and should be considered across the Trust and indeed may be useful to other agencies as they develop their own quality assurance arrangements.

This guidance is being issued at a time of significant change within children's services and for this reason a formal review of the document will be undertaken 12 months after the date of issue.

Equality

This report can be made available on request, on disk, in large print, via email, in Braille, on audiocassette or in minority languages for anyone not fluent in English.

CONTENTS

1. QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT	4
1.1 Summary	4
1.2 Introduction.....	4
1.3 The Context.....	5
1.4 What is Quality?	6
1.5 What is Performance Management?	6
1.6 Integrating Quality and Performance Management	6
2. FRAMEWORK FORMAT.....	8
Theme 1 – Strong Leadership, Accountable Staff and Organisations	9
(1) Strategic Requirements.....	9
(2) Operational Indicators	10
(3) Examples of Practice	11
Theme 2 – Children and Families are Safe. Services are Effective	12
(1) Strategic Requirements.....	12
(2) Operational Indicators	13
(3) Examples of Practice	14
Theme 3 – Services are Accessible and Timely	15
(1) Strategic Requirements.....	15
(2) Operational Indicators	16
(3) Examples of Practice	17
Theme 4 – Health and Social Wellbeing is Improved.....	18
(1) Strategic Requirements.....	18
(2) Operational Indicators	19
(3) Examples of Practice	20
Theme 5 – Information is Effectively Used and Communicated	21
(1) Strategic Requirements.....	21
(2) Operational Indicators	22
(3) Examples of Practice	23

1. QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

1.1 Summary

The inspection of Child Protection across five Trusts in Northern Ireland brought to light a variety of different approaches to the task of monitoring performance and quality in the childcare system. There were very different levels of priority placed on quality assurance throughout the region. As a consequence it was impossible to form a view of the health of the system. Often data was not available or to produce it would have required a great deal of manual effort. This reliance on the manual retrieval of data is a significant impediment to effective management and needs to be addressed. There is also a need to be able to comment on the health of the system as it operates in different localities and across the region as a whole. To do this it is essential to have a consistent approach to quality assurance and to quality management.

By adopting the proposals in this document Directors of Children's Services will be able to quickly and on an ongoing basis assess the health of the child care system within their Trust. In addition they will address some of the issues raised in the child protection inspection overview report ensuring effective leadership, a connection between the top of the organisation and the bottom, a strong focus on quality and performance management and an ability to learn from previous incidents.

1.2 Introduction

The Quality Assurance Performance Management framework has been developed to offer Directors of Children Services an organisational approach to measuring the quality of services. The framework outlines the requirements to support a quality service and it is anticipated that the application of this framework within an organisation will set the foundation for a strong and robust social care governance structure.

The framework has been developed to support social care governance throughout organisations. *'Social Care Governance A Practice Workbook'* (DHSPSS, June 2007) has been published at the request of the Association of Directors in Northern Ireland and is available to all social workers, offering learning opportunities to support the delivery of good quality and safe services. This booklet complements this framework and will help staff and managers to reflect on their responsibility and their contribution to deliver safe and effective care in partnership with service users and carers, other professionals and other agencies.

As the needs of service users are at the centre of this framework, it is applicable to all staff and providers delivering care.

1.3 The Context

In undertaking this task the group reviewed current strategic policies driving the quality movement and development of performance management within Health and Social Care Trusts. The group also considered the high level outcomes for children set by the Office of The First Minister and Deputy First Minister and also the more localised outcomes developed by Children's Service Planning.

The new organisational arrangements, together with existing regional children's service plans, policies and procedures for family support and child protection, will assist Health and Social Care Trusts in guiding the delivery of a localised service which will meet the high level outcomes.

The challenge for Health and Social Care Trusts is to ensure that there is a method of assessing how these services are delivered and an opportunity to review achievements focused on outcomes for children, families and the community.

The context of these developments is important as this work is taking place at a time of significant organisational change and also within the context of an evolving outcomes based approach to the measurement of service delivery.

Given the evolving changes it is appropriate to focus initial work on developing a regionally consistent framework for performance management and quality assurance, which should be integrated into the culture of all new Health and Social Care Trusts. This is based on the premise that in order for organisations to be responsive to the needs of children and families it is important that the system guiding service delivery is 'healthy' and in a position to provide a quality service.

It is proposed that the Quality Standards for Health and Social Care (DHSSPS, 2006) be used as a framework for monitoring whether Family and Childcare Services are fit for purpose and meet the requirements of their populations.

Adopting this approach consistently across Northern Ireland will ensure an opportunity for each Trust to promote best practice, review service delivery and offer opportunities for continuous improvement.

1.4 What is Quality?

Definitions of quality in health and social care vary but have core common themes, such as those described by *Mark Friedman 'Trying Hard is not good enough, First edition 2005* as:

- How much did we do (the number of customers and activities).
- How well did we do it (% measures, such as customer satisfaction, workload ratio, staff turnover rates, staff morale, % of staff fully trained, worker safety, unit cost etc).
- Is anyone better off (skills and knowledge, attitude and opinion, behaviours, circumstances, etc).

This definition highlights all the concepts of quality. Existing quality measurements focus on activity rather than service outcomes such as the results achieved by the organisation.

This guidance covers all areas to be considered when assessing the quality of service provided, but good a quality service will only be achieved by effective engagement with service users.

Best Practice, Best Care, DHSSPS 2002, defines quality for the service user quite simply as “*the provision of a high standard of care and treatment, provided by the right person at the right time, in the right place*”.

1.5 What is Performance Management?

Moullin (2003) highlights the aims of performance measurement

- To review historic performance answering questions about how well did we do and what we need to improve
- To encourage improvement in performance
- To bring about change

1.6 Integrating Quality and Performance Management

In order to measure performance and deliver quality services Health and Social Care Trusts need objective ways to assess how well they are doing and monitor changes over time.

Policies and processes must be integrated within organisations in order to ensure that information in relation to performance and the quality of service provided is readily available. The approach taken in the presentation of this document is similar to the developing governance approach which seeks to “*continuously improve the quality of the service and safeguard high standards of care by creating an environment in which excellence in care will flourish*” (NHS 1999A). This document has used the five quality themes from the quality standards for Health and Social Care – *Supporting Good Governance and Best Practice in the HPSS (DHSSPS, January 2006)* to develop a framework to ensure consistency

with strategic requirements and to offer a measurement of performance management and quality. These are detailed in the attached framework under the heading “Strategic Requirements”.

The overall objectives are supported by evidence indicators. These highlight key practices and processes which must be included in daily activities of management to ensure the integration of good governance and cultural development. These are listed under the heading “Operational Indicators.”

At the end of each theme examples of current good practice are reflected.

2. FRAMEWORK FORMAT

5 Themes – Reflecting Quality Standards (DHSSPS 2006)

Theme 1 - Strong Leadership, Accountable Staff and Organisations

Theme 2 - Children and Families are Safe. Services are Effective

Theme 3 - Services are Accessible and Timely

Theme 4 - Health and Social Wellbeing is Improved

Theme 5 – Information is Effectively Used and Communicated

Explanation of theme relating to the provision of family and childcare services, is detailed under the following headings:

(1) Strategic Requirements

Policies and processes which must be integrated within the organisational structure to ensure consistency with strategic requirements.

(2) Operational Indicators

Policies, processes and indicators which must be integrated into the daily activities of organisational management to ensure the integration of good governance and cultural development.

(3) Examples of Practice

Existing practice examples which support the development of the theme within family and childcare services. These are not 'perfect solutions' but reflect efforts to influence the quality of service provided. In quoting these examples, reference may be made to grades that are not common or used in the current structure. They are included for illustration purposes only.

Theme 1 – Strong Leadership, Accountable Staff and Organisations

Health and Social Care organisations and professionals must provide effective leadership and clear direction to make the most of their people, skills, time and money so as to deliver safe, sustainable and high quality services in health and social care.

Leaders must develop a culture that supports performance management and continuous improvement. All staff must be aware of the overall strategic aims and objectives of their work within family and childcare services and must understand the importance of multi-disciplinary working to achieve high quality outcomes for children and families.

Leaders must develop a culture of support and learning for all staff in their organisation and must ensure that all staff are knowledgeable and contribute to clinical and social care governance arrangements.

(1) Strategic Requirements

Policies and processes which must be integrated within the organisational structure to ensure consistency with strategic requirements.

- (i) Statement of core business, detailing outcomes to be achieved for children and families
- (ii) A list of indicators which are agreed to contribute to the common purpose
- (iii) Clarity about core business and priorities known to staff
- (iv) Social Care Governance Strategy and structure
- (v) Clear lines of accountability from frontline staff to Chief Executive, ensuring all staff are aware of roles and responsibilities
- (vi) Competent workforce and competent work places
- (vii) A training plan from frontline staff to Chief Executive to ensure the implementation of these policies and processes.
- (viii) Robust recording and reporting systems

Theme 1 – Strong Leadership, Accountable Staff and Organisations

(2) Operational Indicators

To ensure good governance and cultural development the following practice, processes and indicators must be integrated into the daily activities of management.

(i) & (ii) Statement of Common Purpose/Trust Delivery Plan

- Agreed vision for the organisation linked to well being outcomes with aims and objectives for each department, team or facility.
- Regular review of indicators to help determine future focus.

(iii) Clarity/Statement of core business

- All facilities and teams must have a statement of purpose and all staff members should have performance plans (Knowledge and Skills Framework) linked to team purpose and overall outcomes.
- All staff should understand how their job role contributes to the overall outcomes agreed by the organisation.

(iv) Social Care Governance Strategy and structure

- Overarching Clinical & Social Care Governance Strategy ensuring:-
 - Protocol for monitoring & reviewing risk.
 - Social Care Governance Practice work book (DHSSPS 2007) is completed by all staff.
 - Social Care Governance audit activity takes place.
 - Audit of supervision and performance appraisal throughout the organisation, to ensure full implementation and that it is supportive to staff.
- Culture of continuous improvement evidenced by:
 - Forums for Reflective Practice.
 - Learning from Experience Protocol (see examples of practice).
 - Training & Development Plans.
 - Investors in People Status/Implementation of EFQM and ISO 900.

(v) Clarity of Roles, Responsibilities/Accountability arrangements from frontline staff to CEO

- All Job Descriptions should detail lines of accountability from front line staff to Director and reflect individual professional responsibility for practice.
- Communications Strategy and systems in place to share information up and down organisation.
- Training for staff on roles and responsibilities linked to Trust Child Protection Panels and Area Child Protection Committees (to be replaced by Safeguarding Board and Panels).
- All staff are aware of how to raise practice issues of concern and influence others to promote change.
- Leaders should be visionary and use participative management.
- Leaders should have mechanisms to reward effort, skill development and innovation – promoting continuous improvement.
- Leaders should be focused on outcome measurements linked to population indicators and assist staff in understanding their role in this process.
- Workforce planning addresses leadership and management requirements for the future with particular emphasis on Senior Social Worker, Team Leader role.

(vi) Competent Workforce and Competent Work Places

- Northern Ireland Social Care Council Professional Codes of Conduct for social care workers and Code of Practice for Employers must be in place and adherence monitored.
- Occupational Standards implemented and monitored.
- Requirements for continued professional development and /or assessments should be integrated and monitored for all staff.
- Organised corporate and professional induction.
- Supervision and appraisal systems (support to staff).
- Active workforce planning consistent with Social Services Regional Training Strategy.

(vi) Robust recording and reporting systems

- Regionally approved recording policy to be implemented.
- Audit arrangements to measure quality of assessment, recording and report writing to be implemented.

Theme 1 – Strong Leadership, Accountable Staff and Organisations

(3) Examples of Practice

(i) Risk Recording

- A social care governance reporting system has been developed to facilitate staff to report on key areas across the organisation on a monthly basis.
- The reporting system demonstrates clear lines of accountability from frontline worker to Chief Executive and incorporates a continuous cycle of improvement.
- A Family and Childcare Directorate has developed Monthly 'Team Health Checks' completed electronically by all teams to monitor and report on areas of good practice and ensure that statutory functions are being adhered to.

(ii) Senior Manager Role

The Senior Manager meets all Service Managers individually on a monthly basis to discuss issues including risks and also holds a monthly meeting to review service delivery.

(iii) Social Care Governance Posts

- A Social Services Directorate has a Senior Manager responsible for development of social care governance. The directorate has developed its own social care governance strategy since 2002. The directorate also developed a Senior Social Worker Quality and Governance post. The role of this worker is to assist teams and staff understand social care governance and promote quality activities throughout all programmes of care. Within the family and childcare programme of care the Senior Social Worker has assisted in some key areas.
 - Developing process mapping for family placement team
 - promoting service improvement projects
 - Facilitating a monthly quality/governance meeting for senior social workers focused on supporting staff and implementing statutory standards, audits.

(iv) Quality Development and Information Posts

A Family and Childcare Directorate has implemented a Quality Development Manager Post and Information Officer Post. The Quality Development Manager and Information Officer meet with all teams to agree performance indicators of practice. The role of the Information Officer is invaluable in assisting teams to collate the required information and help them understand how the information is used, ensuring that timely relevant information is available. The Quality Development Manager identifies appropriate audits and monitors practice throughout the programme.

Theme 2 – Children and Families are Safe. Services are Effective

A quality service is one which is safe, effective and sustainable. Health and social care provision is complex and will never be completely error free. The provision of care will be influenced strongly by risk assessment and policy directives to undertake the least invasive approach when working with children and their families.

Arrangements must be in place to support multi-disciplinary working and all staff should be knowledgeable about policy and procedures in relation to the care they are expected to deliver.

Many service users within children services may be reluctant to be involved in decisions that effect them and their family; the organisation must actively promote their wishes and balance these against the needs of children at risk.

(1) Strategic Requirements

(i) Ensuring safe practice and appropriate management of risk

- (i.i) Policy & Procedures
- (i.ii) Explicit Standards
- (i.iii) Clear indicators related to compliance with standards
- (i.iv) Monitoring compliance with standards
- (i.v) Regular, timely checks to quality assure systems
- (i.vi) Multi-agency and multi-disciplinary working
- (i.vii) Consistent process for gathering information

(ii) Promoting Effective Care

- (ii.i) Information about services and reviews of their quality should be shared with the public
- (ii.ii) Service User involvement should be evident at all practice levels within the organisation
- (ii.iii) Processes must be in place to prevent, detect, communicate and learn from incidents of concern apparent in the delivery of service
- (ii.iv) Organisations must show that they are continually learning and improving practice based on experience

Theme 2 – Children and Families are Safe. Services are Effective

(2) Operational Indicators

(i) Ensuring safe practice and appropriate management of risk

(i.i) Policy & Procedures

- Training to all staff on Risk Assessment/Reporting & Implementation of Social Care Governance.
- Audit of reporting with reference to Untoward Events and Incident/Accident. Reports should be timely and comprehensive and should be of common format.
- A Programme of Audit of Implementation of Child Protection and LAC procedures ensuring consistent interpretation and implementation.

(i.ii) & (i.iii) & (i.iv) Explicit Standards

- All staff must have access to and knowledge of standards statements in accessible form.
- Training and guidance for staff on implementation of standards.
- Protocols and procedures for regular monitoring of adherence to standards.

(i.v) Regular, timely checks to quality assure systems

- Audit System and review of evidence based practice.

(i.vi) Multi-agency and multi-disciplinary working

- Forums to review and address issues of multi-disciplinary practice.
- Protocols, working agreements, and formal memorandums of understanding are in place to address interagency working/ and working in complex situations.

(i.vii) Consistent process for gathering information

- Information system to support the collation, analysis and reporting of relevant information.

(ii) Delivering Effective Care

(ii.i) Information Sharing with Public

- Information on access to services to be agreed regionally by Trusts and adopted by organisations.

(ii.ii) Service User Involvement

- Service User Engagement Policy implemented within Trusts.
- Opportunities for children and families to engage in the planning, review and delivery of service.

(ii.iii) Preventing, Detecting, Communicating and Learning from near misses/incidents

- Dissemination of research.
- Forum for sharing learning from Inspections and Case Management Reviews across the region.

(ii.iv) Apply knowledge and learn from experience

- Forum for sharing good practice – including learning from experiences, near misses/adverse incidents.
- Developing culture of celebrating good practice (e.g. Conference, Magazines, Award Schemes etc).
- Compliment system.
- Opportunities for staff and service users to engage in tools for service improvement, such as process mapping.

Theme 2 – Children and Families are Safe. Services are Effective

(3) Examples of Practice

- A statutory standards checklist has been developed which offers an audit system for the monitoring of adherence to statutory requirements within family and childcare services. The project developed audit tools which can be used by team leaders or social care governance leads to monitor any aspect of statutory requirements or recommendations from reports at any point in time.
- A Social Services Directorate has developed a magazine called 'Quality Matters' which celebrates the areas of service improvement and quality initiatives by staff. The newsletter also records staff achievements which are supported through the Annual Awards Ceremony and Quality Conference which focus on audits completed throughout the Trust.
- A procedure called 'Learning from Incidents' has been developed which engages staff both within the organisation and voluntary agencies to review significant incidents and to encourage learning for alternative approaches in the future. This has been facilitated by the Senior Social Worker (Quality) and the purpose is to learn from events rather than apportion blame.
- In Vermont USA a document is published every 3 – 5 years entitled "Children of a Hidden War" which is a listing of EVERY child abuse incident over the last year in the entire state, summarized in 3 or 4 lines with enough information to get the public's attention without bringing exposure to any given case. It has been a powerful public relations tool.
- A Risk Monitoring Summary has been developed which is reviewed and updated monthly. Some of the information collated by the risk monitoring summary includes:
 - That all urgent referrals are responded to within 24 hours and that a full assessment is carried out to determine appropriate action.
 - Reviews which are being held are within the statutory timescales.
 - That Looked After Children and those on the Child Protection Register receive a monthly visit.
 - Monitors looked after children who have been missing from placement.

Theme 3 – Services are Accessible and Timely

Services must take account of the current and future requirements of local communities and be planned in partnership with them.

Many services provided to children and families can be undertaken by local communities who provide an un-stigmatised and preventative approach. In order to ensure preventative approaches it is important that organisations make best use of these services and develop opportunities for linking service users with community based approaches that will meet their needs and prevent the need for engagement in statutory family and childcare services.

When children and families are engaged in health and social care delivery they should have opportunities to be located in a child friendly environment and supported by respectful and understanding staff.

The child's view of the service must be considered when planning facilities.

(1) Strategic Requirements

- (i) Service User Engagement Policy
- (ii) Knowledge of available community services and community planning approach
- (iii) Public awareness about accessing and influencing services
- (iv) Meaningful engagement with service user and communities in the organisation's planning cycle
- (v) Customer Care Standards.
- (vi) Practice focused on the child's perspective

Theme 3 – Services are Accessible and Timely

(2) Operational Indicators

(i) Service User Engagement Policy

- Service Users are encouraged to provide feedback on service received and feedback on staff delivering care.
- Evidence of innovative practice/service involving the service user e.g. involving communities in location of offices and opening hours.
- Providing information about the service. For example, team statements of purpose.
- Service User Engagement Policy – forums to engage service users in the design, delivery and review of service.
- Monitoring quality – including service user feedback systems.

(ii) Knowledge of available community services and community planning approach

- Community Development Unit and community development approaches should be fully involved in the design and delivery of services.
- All staff should have local knowledge and relationships with voluntary and community providers of support.
- A directory of services for children and families should be available.

(iii) Public awareness about accessing and influencing services.

- Information to Public about service availability.
- Interpreting services.
- Leaflets.
- Internet service.

(iv) Meaningful engagement in planning cycle

- Service Users and those delivering care should be fully involved in planning for future needs.

(v) Customer Care Standards

- Standards for Reception and Administrative staff.
- Standards for Customer Care – appropriate reception area – child focused, private areas, and cleanliness of facility.
- Audits of Customer Care.
- Audit and analysis of staff interaction with clients.

(vi) The child's perspective

- Children as service users should have forums for providing feedback on experiences and influencing for change.

Theme 3 – Services are Accessible and Timely

(3) Examples of Practice

- One Trust has a Family Support Panel which comprises managers from within the trust and voluntary/community agencies. The panel meets to allocate resources to children and families in need.
- Working in partnership with Locality Action Groups. There is a representative from a Trust who helps to identify gaps in service provision and work with community groups to provide appropriate identified services.
- An ADHD Project which encourages direct participation of parents and carers in delivery and review of treatment interventions.
- Local community Life Skill and Mentoring Programme delivered by Peer Educators outreaching into Trust's residential homes to promote integration of young people into localities, offer advocacy and direct supports.
- Multi-professional schools-based project delivering primary interventions. Key focus on establishing participation of young people in development and review of programmes incorporating curriculum inputs, and citizenship.

Theme 4 – Health and Social Wellbeing is Improved

Families are required to look after their children safely, protect them from abuse and support them to develop to their full potential; however it is recognised that some families, due to issues of poverty, deprivation and other challenges, are unable to provide the care necessary to enable children to fully achieve.

Practitioners in Family and Childcare Services are very aware of areas of high levels of need and risk and families who are vulnerable due to their own parenting experiences or difficulties they experience with addiction and health problems. It is important that all agencies delivering family and childcare services work in partnership with service users, carers and the wider public to identify inequalities in health and social well being and proactively work together to promote health and social well being.

It is important that staff delivering services are fully aware of opportunities to highlight service needs and influence for change. Essentially while delivering the service they also understand their role in planning for tomorrow's needs.

(1) Strategic Requirements

- (i) Using information to assess current and future needs of local population
- (ii) Gathering information to influence policy and service design
- (iii) Engaging service users to solve problems
- (iv) Developing partnerships and sharing responsibility.
- (v) Services to support staff (including leadership)
- (vi) Effective & efficient emergency planning

Theme 4 – Health and Social Wellbeing is Improved

(2) Operational Indicators

- (i) Using information to assess current and future needs of local population**
 - Quality information that links needs assessment to service delivery.
 - Knowledge of geographical areas with specific levels of need e.g. areas of high deprivation.

- (ii) Engaging planning and development of local solutions**
 - Children's Services Plan informed by local needs - gathering information to influence policy and service design.
 - Front line staff should have opportunity to influence actual service plans.
 - Undertaking Article 20 Reviews.

- (iii) Engaging service users to solve problems**
 - Policies and practices that support service users to resolve problems e.g. Family Group Conferencing, restorative justice.

- (iv) Individuals roles – partnership – taking/sharing responsibility**
 - Developing partnerships and shared responsibility, when designing, delivering and reviewing outcomes.
 - Promotion of partnership working with community and service users.
 - Indicators of effective partnerships e.g. quality of service enhanced.

- (v) Services to support staff (including Leadership)**
 - Developing a 'can do' culture to reflect complexities of posts.
 - System of staff support and acknowledgment.
 - Opportunities for 360⁰ appraisals.
 - Monitoring of sickness rates and supportive occupational health initiatives.
 - Exit interviews.
 - Staff Forums.

- (vi) Effective & efficient emergency planning**
 - Policy and procedures for emergency situations. All staff must be trained in understanding their role and responsibility in emergency situations.
 - Skilled and experienced staff co-ordinating response, particularly First Aid.
 - Protocol within emergency services for responses required for families and Children Looked After.
 - Services for debriefing and review.

Theme 4 – Health and Social wellbeing is Improved

(3) Examples of Practice

- Evaluation and feedback forms are completed by young people to help inform the delivery of the service.
- Questionnaires completed by young people regarding attendance and non-attendance at reviews and reasons why in order to be able to encourage attendance at reviews.
- A group led by the Director of Social Services including social care governance lead and human resources representation has reviewed the issues in relation to recruitment and retention within the family and childcare programme. The group has co-ordinated an annual audit of staff views in relation to support and development. The outcome of the audit formed an action plan in order to meet issues raised by staff within the programme.
- The Information Officer collates information to be used as a learning and management tool, to deliver safe and effective services for users.
- Establishment of Senior Practitioners Forum to facilitate consolidation and development of role, promote programme's research and evidence-base practice and particular emphasis on enhancement of skills base in relation to user involvement and engagement.

Theme 5 – Information is Effectively Used and Communicated

Good communication and the effective use of information is essential in order to enable individuals, organisations and the public to make informed decisions about health and social care services.

Information systems within Trusts must allow for the evaluation of outcomes and how its services are contributing to promoting good outcomes for children and families.

In family and childcare information sharing is core to the delivery of quality services. Information sharing should be integrated within the culture of the organisation and led by senior managers.

Communication should be promoted positively outside of the organisation and Trusts should actively inform the public about positive developments in family support services. Within the organisation service users should be supported to provide feedback and encourage learning from their experiences.

(1) Strategic Requirements

- (i) Knowledge Management Strategy
- (ii) Information and Communication Strategy
- (iii) Media Management
- (iv) Records Management Policy
- (v) Compliments and Complaints Management

Theme 5 – Information is Effectively Used and Communicated

(2) Operational Indicators

(i) Knowledge Management Strategy

- A system for capturing, organising and storing knowledge, and experiences of individual workers and groups should be implemented within the organisation.
- Information should be shared across teams, programmes and providers in forums such as communities of practice, shared learning events and multi-agency practice forums.
- Knowledge management system should proactively support activities linked to measuring outcomes for children – information should be created, assimilated, disseminated and applied to organisational learning and development.

(ii) Information and Communication Strategy

- Implementation of a regionally agreed information system which reflects the organisation's ability to monitor the delivery of quality services.
- Communication system which ensures all staff understand their role in supporting the organisation to achieve outcomes.
- Systems, processes and protocol that promote inter-agency and multi-disciplinary working together.
- Information must be used as a driver to engage communities and motivate staff.

(iii) Media Management

- Proactive media engagement.
- Family and Childcare services should have a protocol to proactively engage with the media to share good news stories and promote the positive contribution of family support services
- Service Users should be involved in developing and promoting this strategy and actively engaged in good news events.
- Research undertaken within organisations should be published and shared with other agencies and the public.
- Staff should be encouraged to engage in research and evidence based practice.
- Organisations should consider partnerships/joint posts with Universities.

(iv) Records Management Policy

- Adoption of a common model of recording.
- Adoption of a common model for storing records for children and families.
- Protocol for audit and analysis of quality of recording.
- Caseload management model.

(v) Compliments and Complaints Management

- Compliments process in each Trust.
- All staff should be knowledgeable of compliments/complaints process.
- All staff should have regular training on complaints process with particular emphasis on early resolution.
- Compliments and complaints process linked to planning cycle and recommendations shared across organisation.
- Evidence that there is learning from complaints and Case Management Reviews.

Theme 5 – Information is Effectively Used and Communicated

(3) Examples of Practice

- Organisation utilises technology (NSPCC Children’s Record Information System).
- Structural implications (professional structure within clinical and social care governance structure).
- A childcare team has developed a protocol for referrals and information sharing between their team and the A & E Department of the local hospital. Every morning the duty social worker telephones the A & E Department and discusses specific cases of concern about children attending A & E. The Team Manager and A & E staff meet on a regular basis to review working arrangements.
- A protocol has been designed to ensure good partnership arrangements between Mental Health Departments and Family and Childcare Services when working with children and families who are known to both teams.
- Health team check information and risk monitoring summary reported to Senior Manager and Director of Social Care on a monthly basis.

Equality

This policy/proposal has been screened for equality implications as required by Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, and it was found that there were no negative impacts on any grouping.

Human Rights

This policy has been considered under the terms of the Humans Rights Act 1998 and was deemed compatible with the European Convention Rights contained within the Act.