

Quality Policy

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Introduction

Carers First is committed to providing high quality services for carers. Co-production is a central tenet of our approach, with carers co-designing, developing, and evaluating services, based on what matters to them. Our Quality Assurance Framework supports us to drive up quality standards and practice, supporting our commitment not only to carers but to our funders and partner agencies. This commitment lies at the centre of our work with carers; and every effort will be made to achieve this commitment.

Scope

The scope of this Quality Policy covers every employee, volunteer, trustee, temporary and agency member of staff, student, carer, visitor and anyone else who may engage on any work or activity of the charity. We strive for carers and wider individuals who use our services to receive a high-quality service offer, no matter which part of the organisation they inter-act with. It is therefore important that all personnel familiarise themselves with and commit to the values for delivery in this policy.

Policy Purpose and Aims

We are committed to developing, delivering, and improving our services through Carers First's Strategic Objectives and Values. Our Quality Assurance Framework supports us to deliver our strategy, fostering continuous improvement in service delivery, and emphasising high standards, good practice and compliance with statutory, policy and legislative requirements. Our approach, led by our Senior Leadership Team (SLT), includes:

- A Plan-Do-Check-Act model.
- A culture of openness, transparency and learning.
- Working in co-production with carers to design services.
- Dissemination of good practice across teams.

This Quality Policy sets out our commitment to achieving our quality objectives, programmes, and targets through a culture of continuous improvement. It includes how we will meet the requirements of the ISO9001:2015 accreditation, a globally recognised standard for Quality Management Systems (QMS). Our QMS is our internal set of rules which are defined by our policies, processes, documented procedures, and records, and which enable us to deliver outcomes for carers

It also sets out our commitment to ensure quality of practice, through our wider, over-arching Quality Assurance Framework, which encompasses not only our ISO9001 requirements, but

also our mechanisms for ensuring safe and effective practice with carers and individuals, for example through:

- Competencies set with staff in 1-2-1s and appraisals.
- Feedback from carers/colleagues/professionals.
- Case audits.
- Reflective practice discussions/debriefs.

We will promote a culture of learning, reflection, and improvement, ensuring staff and stakeholders actively contribute to identifying areas for development, innovation, and positive change.

Carers First Values

The following values underpin the qualities, standards and practices we seek to achieve as part of our continuous improvement model and underpin everything we do:

Positive

We are dedicated to working with carers to make a positive, material difference in their lives. We celebrate diversity and work in an inclusive, positive, and supportive way, actively listening and valuing everyone's contribution.

Collaborative

We recognise the importance and strength of working in collaboration with local and national organisations to deliver improved support to carers. We also know the importance of collaborating with our Carers First colleagues, sharing knowledge and learning, being curious, respecting differences and working with integrity and transparency.

Ambitious

We are ambitious and tenacious in our determination to support more carers in better ways. We will innovate and develop our programmes of support, so more carers are able to obtain the support they need, at the time they need it, to achieve a balance in their lives and enable them to live their lives to the fullest.

Quality Objectives

Our Quality Objectives are shaped by and aligned with our values above. We will strive to be:

Safe – carers, staff and visitors will be protected from avoidable harm and / or abuse.

Measured through management information and data such as numbers of safeguarding incidents and referrals, health and safety reports and RIDDORS.

Effective – service delivery will be delivered to specification and on time for funders, and will be professional, ethical, and well-organised. It will be evidence-based and shaped by carer feedback, promoting good outcomes and quality of life.

Measured through management information and data such as contract performance indicators, carer and staff feedback, and outcomes for carers (informed by our Impact Measurement Framework). Also, within Induction through policies and procedures such as Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and the Code of Conduct.

Caring – people will be treated with compassion, kindness, dignity, and respect, with this being a fundamental part of the culture of the organisation.

Measured through management information and data such as carer feedback, staff surveys and exit surveys, and outcomes of management investigations.

Responsive – support delivered to carers will be timely, flexible, and tailored to their individual needs, based on a person-centred care approach.

Measured through management information and data such as contract performance indicators, number of customer complaints, non-conformances, corrective action reports, customer feedback and outcomes for carers, as reported to and acted upon by the Senior Leadership Team and Trustees

Well-led – the leadership, management and governance of the organisation will ensure the delivery of high-quality person-centred care, will support learning and innovation, and will promote an open and fair culture. Running within the annual allocated budget, with adherence to the relevant charity / financial regulations.

Measured through management information and data such as all of the above; as well as regular budget forecasting and monitoring of spend; and reporting of Management Accounts monthly.

Responsibility for this Policy

All staff are responsible for adhering to the Quality Policy and contributing to the achievement of its Quality Objectives through their roles, actions, and behaviours. The Senior Leadership Team will ensure that:

- The Quality Management System is reviewed regularly through Quality Management

Reviews to make sure it remains appropriate and suitable to our business.

- Our Quality Objectives and Values are reviewed regularly in line with our Strategy.
- Staff will be provided with the required resources and support including equipment, training, 121s, appraisals, policies, procedures, and any other requirements to enable these Objectives to be met.
- The Quality System is reviewed by undertaking both internal and external annual audits to maintain our ISO9001:2015 accreditation, and our commitment to Continuous Improvement.
- We continue to develop our broader Quality Assurance Framework, encompassing not only our ISO9001 requirements, but all aspects of practice, particularly around service delivery and safeguarding, to ensure the highest quality of support to carers at all times.

Alison Taylor
Chief Executive