

North Staffs Mind Quality Policy

Commitment to Quality:

“Being the best we can be; doing the best we can do for people”.

The people at North Staffs Mind are committed to achieving high quality in the provision of care and support for people with mental health needs. By “quality” we mean striving for excellence in all we do including our therapeutic approaches; using only up-to-date, evidence based approaches, as well as our systems of work as a not-for-profit charitable sector organisation. North Staffs Mind works within Quality Management in Mind, the Mind quality assurance system, to guide our working practices and provide assurance to people who commission our services on behalf of the public.

North Staffs Mind Quality Statement:

North Staffs Mind is committed to achieving high quality in the provision of services for people with mental health needs and according to the following quality principles:

- We strive for continuous improvement in all that our people do;
- We use recognised and agreed standards of therapy and support as a means of continuous improvement and not as ends in themselves;
- We promote equality of opportunity throughout the organisation and all our services;
- We agree quality standards with commissioners and service users and work hard to adhere to these expectations at all times;
- We work in the best interests of the people of North Staffordshire, including Stoke-on-Trent, at all times.

Our definition of Quality

We believe that ensuring high-quality support for people is organised around **safety**, **effectiveness** and **outcomes**, and **ensuring positive experiences** by the people we serve:

1. Safety

The first dimension of quality must be that **we do no harm to the people to whom we offer support and therapy**. This means ensuring our environments are safe, clean and suit the purpose of our work with people.

2. Effectiveness

We must know our success rates and have clear indicators of improvement in mental and emotional wellbeing; equally our commissioners and service users must be able to measure and report the success of our interventions. Assessing this at a contractual level will include outcome measures agreed with commissioners and at an individual service user level, measured against people’s

perspective of benefit, such as reduced symptoms of ill health and increased accounts of wellbeing and ability to live independent lives.

3. User experience

Quality of care and support includes the quality of caring. This means how personal care is – the compassion, dignity and respect with which service users are treated; how we work with them. We believe that people’s experiences can only be improved by considering and understanding people’s satisfaction with their own experiences.

As an important contributor of support and therapy for vulnerable people with a range of mental health and emotional care needs we are closely aligned with public sector health and care providers, and North Staffs Mind has adopted the principles recognised across this sector, outlined above. Like other sector workers, we understand that if quality is to be at the heart of everything we do, it must be understood from the perspective of the people who use our services, those who commission support on behalf of the public, as well as our management and our staff.

Our definition of quality is adapted from *High Quality Care for All – NHS Next Stage Review Final Report (Department of Health, 2008)*; often referred to as *Lord Darzi’s Definition of Quality*.

Quality Management in Mind

North Staffs Mind is affiliated to national Mind and has adopted its quality assurance system. The system is tailored to the needs of Local Mind Associations and:

- Covers organisational values and purpose
- Defines minimum standards
- Establishes performance indicators
- Ensures minimum standards are met
- Measures outcomes
- Encourages continuous improvement.

The Chief Executive is the quality lead within the organisation and as such co-ordinates a cycle of quality reviews to assess quality in our management and service provision. Staff, volunteers, trustees and service users contribute to the quality reviews, which form part of the national Mind affiliation process.

Quality in Service Delivery

We will keep our service delivery under regular review and ensure continuous improvement by:

- Reviewing the Annual Plan every year;
- Reviewing the Strategic Plan every 2-3 years;
- Reviewing organisational policies every 2-3 years – or more frequently where required;

- Supporting the influence of current and potential service users;
- Responding to and acting on feedback received from a variety of sources;
- Learning from other members of the Mind network of Local Mind Associations;
- Encouraging a culture of continuous personal development and investing in training for staff, volunteers, service users and trustees;
- Investing in service improvements and developments which can make the organisation more efficient and cost-effective;
- Implementing and adapting to changes in legislation and national policy;
- Consulting with partner agencies (both current and potential) to identify opportunities where joint working could add value;
- Learning from changes in good practice in mental health.

We recognise that the services people need and how they are delivered must respond to the changing make-up of the local population and the new challenges that people face. We will endeavour to innovate by providing new services which offer people the help they need to maintain their mental health and wellbeing and develop existing services to continue to meet the needs of the people who may use them.

North Staffs Mind is committed to gaining relevant external accreditations which relate to the specific care and support services that we deliver. As at July 2011 the organisation:

- Has achieved external accreditation of its counselling services for adults, children and young people through BACP (British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy);
- Has achieved the Approved Provider Standard of the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation for its Befriending/Mentoring Service;
- Implements the Supporting People Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) within its Housing Service.

Performance monitoring

All of North Staffs Mind's services monitor and report on service performance to commissioners on a quarterly/six-monthly basis. Services are monitored and evaluated against the service aims, agreed service standards, and outcomes and contractual targets.

Feedback mechanisms

In planning and delivering services we will elicit feedback from current or potential service users, staff, volunteers and external stakeholders including commissioners. Feedback is received through a number of different channels/mechanisms, including:

- General meetings, house meetings and other client/service user forums;
- Meetings and liaison with stakeholders;
- Comments, compliments and complaints leaflets;
- Website – www.nsmind.org.uk;

- Staff meetings, away days, forums that support volunteers, training events, annual appraisal processes and ongoing line management;
- Trustee meetings;
- Open meetings and North Staffs Mind events including Annual General Meeting and conferences;
- Annual staff and service user satisfaction surveys;
- Regular meetings with funders/commissioners.