

## Quality Pathway Information Sheet 2

# Establishing a Quality System

This Information Sheet summarises the steps involved in setting up a system for managing quality within service provider organisations.

A quality system is simply the way that various quality management processes are set up and linked together so that they support one another. The foundations of a quality management system are:

- ▶ **Customer engagement:** Review of customer and stakeholder feedback forms the central part of any quality system, and customer engagement strategies should be embedded throughout the service.

*Refer to **Customer Engagement Information Sheet***

- ▶ **Policies and procedures:** Policies and procedures provide essential guidance to the governing body and staff in consistent and good practice.

*Refer to **Policies and Procedures Information Sheet***

- ▶ **Accountability for quality management:** Roles and responsibilities for quality management need to be defined, assigned and monitored.

*Refer to **Quality Roles and Responsibilities Information Sheet***

- ▶ **Records and reporting:** Records need to be kept that can provide information for monitoring the performance and quality of service, and for demonstrating quality internally and externally.

*Refer to **Quality Records and Reporting Information Sheet***

The first step in implementing a quality system is to undertake some planning and preparation. This helps identify the direction and extent of the service provider's quality management and how it is going to get there. Planning and preparing is also the start to engaging staff and the governing body in quality management and developing a culture of quality improvement. The more staff who understand and are involved in quality system processes, the more likely successful change and improvement will take place.



### SET THE SCENE

- ▶ **Action: Leadership endorsement**
  - Gain endorsement and commitment from the governing body and senior executive/managers; these leaders play a key role in supporting, communicating the value of quality systems, and contributing to change required for improvement.
  - Communicate governing body and senior executive/manager endorsement and commitment, and how they will support staff to implement and maintain quality management.
- ▶ **Action: Build engagement**
  - Identify the particular challenges facing the service provider and the benefits of implementing quality management for staff, stakeholders and ultimately customers.

- Start communicating about quality management – the purpose, the process, and how the results will be used; the details of this information may vary for staff, governing body, customers and stakeholders.

## SET THE SCOPE

### ▶ Action: Understand quality requirements

- Identify HSQF requirements
- Confirm whether independent audit is required
- Where the service provider has existing accreditation, check the extent to which this meets HSQF requirements
- Identify any additional quality and industry standards that the organisation needs to, or may wish to meet.

### ▶ Action: Allocate resources

- Identify the people, knowledge and skills required to implement and maintain quality management.
- Assess current staff and governing body capacity, knowledge and skill to identify gaps.
- Identify costs for implementing a quality system, including people, support tools, training, external audit (if required) and improvement activities.
- Identify and allocate timeframes and people time required for quality management implementation and maintenance.

## PLAN FOR ACTION

### ▶ Action: Prepare for change

- Address staff and governing body capacity, knowledge and skill gaps through recruitment, information, training, and/or mentoring.
- Communicate quality management goals, plans and activities to staff and the governing body.
- Facilitate opportunities for staff and governing body involvement in quality management activities, allowing time for people to become familiar with the process, and to ask questions and discuss concerns.

### ▶ Action: Develop quality action plans

- Develop a schedule of key activities for managing quality – self-assessment, customer and stakeholder feedback and external audit (where required).
- Develop quality improvement action plans detailing activities, expected outputs, responsibilities and time frames.
- Establish working and review groups inclusive of staff, management and governing body members for shared workload and a range of input.



**Practice tip: Keep it simple**

- ✓ *Managing quality need not be complex – keep to the basics.*
- ✓ *Keep it in scale with the size and complexity of the service provider organisation.*
- ✓ *Use systems and processes already in place – use what you have and look at what improvements are needed to meet standards.*
- ✓ *Keep it manageable by planning out steps in advance and working within available resources.*