

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Introduction

This policy is intended to provide an overview on the way in which Kingwood assesses and monitors the quality of service provision.

Kingwood's vision is that 'Adults with autistic spectrum disorder will be valued by and contribute to society'. In line with that vision, we recognise the responsibility we have to deliver high quality services. Our aim is provide the right support and services to meet the individual needs of the people we support ensuring effectiveness and value.

Services are monitored in a number of ways, not least of all by listening to the people we support, their families and our commissioners.

Every employee in the organisation, regardless of role, has a responsibility to make sure we deliver quality services to people with autism.

Quality Assurance Process

There are a number of processes in place that Kingwood uses to monitor the provision of support to people.

Complaints & Compliments

Whilst it is always disappointing to receive a complaint, the response can be a positive one as it provides an opportunity to review the action/s that led to the complaint and where necessary make changes to improve a process. Complaints are logged at Head Office and reported to the Board quarterly. Equally compliments are also important to reiterate success and share good practise.

Monitoring

Every service completes a monthly report that provides the Senior Management Team and Chief Operating Officer & Director of Services with an overview of incidents that have occurred in the previous month, any housing related issues, staffing problems, training that will be required in the future but not currently scheduled for and an opportunity to raise anything else that may be problematic to that service.

Every Supported Living service has at least 2 internally organised quality monitoring visits each year, completed by external consultants in Health & Social Care. Kingwood's registered care home (White Barn) will receive a quarterly quality visit. A report is completed (appendix A) and sent to the Chief Executive and Chief Operating Officer & Director of Services, following which it is cascaded to the relevant Area Manager and local team for information and action where appropriate. In addition the Chief Executive and Chief Operating Officer & Director of Services visit services on a regular basis focussing on meeting the people Kingwood supports and staff.

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Service Action plans

Every service has an action improvement plan that focuses on three areas for change and continuous improvement; the people we support; the environment in which they live and staff work, and the team. The plan is owned by the local team and updated regularly.

Incident reporting

Kingwood has a thorough incident and accident reporting procedure. As well as meeting our legal requirements, accurate incident reporting also enables information to be analysed for patterns in behaviours and circumstances.

The procedure requires reports for incidents, accidents, near misses and medication errors.

Every incident form is logged at Head Office and statistics reported to the Board quarterly.

Inclusion of People We Support

Kingwood strives to include the people we support in meaningful ways in all aspects of their support. Every person receiving a support service from Kingwood receives a User Guide. The guide states that Kingwood will check that support is meeting individual's needs and where it is not, we will try to make changes to remedy this.

Kingwood supports the use of advocates and a number of people we support have advocacy arrangements in place.

Review meetings

Every person we support takes part in a formal annual review meeting, whereby families/carers, care managers and other health professionals are often invited (with the permission of the individual). In addition, Kingwood will arrange an internal review at least every 6 months, although reviews may take place quarterly or monthly.

Part of the review meeting will involve asking the individual if they are happy with the support they receive in a way that is appropriate for them. This will often take the form of questions about their support workers, the activities they do, the things they would like to do but are not undertaking at present, and their health.

Notes from meetings are taken and available for review and inspection according the wishes of the person being supported.

However, if the person being supported or Kingwood identifies something that is not working for either party; it will be raised and addressed with immediate effect.

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People we support Forum

It is important to Kingwood that we listen to the people that receive a service from us and enable them to be involved not only in their support, but in the way the organisation operates. In 2010 we launched a forum for people we support to take part in, and share their thoughts and opinions on what we can do better. As a step towards making the forum accessible we provide minutes with photosymbols and in the future will provide video footage of minutes and action points for those people who are not able or do not wish to attend.

Looking at Us

Kingwood is a partner organisation in the Looking At Us project, which provides training for people with autism and/or a learning disability to enable them to visit individuals receiving a service from other providers and assess the quality of that support.

Working Parties

On a project basis Kingwood has facilitated working parties of people we support and/or families to undertake specific pieces of work. The User Guide was designed and agreed by a combined working party and the Rules for People we Support was prepared by a group solely made up of people we support.

Managing Risk

Kingwood has a positive approach to risk that is reflected in the risk assessment tools we use. Our aim is to support someone to be aware of the risks, overcome and/or reduce risk where possible and enable them to take part in the activity. The process is simple and uses a traffic light method of helping staff identify the level of risk. However, importantly, the process includes a section whereby all those involved consider whether the activity is important enough that the individual proceeds despite the risks involved. The decision whether or not to proceed is recorded by all parties.

Support workers and Support Managers are typically responsible for creating and monitoring risk assessments for individuals, although each one is signed off by the Area Manager. This process ensures the people we support have opportunities to try new activities and have new experiences, in a measured and safe way.

Each assessment is reviewed according to the risk rating allocated, which can be monthly, quarterly or annually.

All this work needs to take place within the context set by the Mental Capacity Act, which requires capacity to be assumed and reviewed on a case by case basis.

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Consultation with Families/Carers

Kingwood supports adults with autism, people over the age of 18, and it is important to us that we respect the rights of the people we support. Kingwood also recognises that families and carers of people we support are very important and understand that they normally want to be involved in their relatives lives. We support their involvement whilst maintaining the rights of their adult relative.

Surveys

Once a year we distribute a questionnaire to the families and we feedback comments and scores at the following event. All issues raised are addressed at the Senior Management Team and then within the services.

Meetings

We provide at least 3 formal opportunities each year for families and carers of people we support to jointly meeting with the Kingwood Chairman, trustees and senior management team to discuss openly the support provided and the projects we may be working on.

Importantly we have made a number of changes to the way the organisation operates as a result of feedback received.

Kingwood staff

The quality of our work is heavily dependent on the staff that we employ. There are a number of aspects to the way in which we ensure quality:

Recruitment

Every applicant completes a job application form that includes a criminal disclosure. The application form is checked for gaps in employment history and requires details for two referees.

We have a comprehensive interview pack that includes a literacy and numeracy test, as well as carefully chosen questions that provide the interviewers with an initial assessment of the applicant's value base and experience.

In addition the interviewing managers will assess whether the applicants appear to be fit to undertake the job and where the last role was working with vulnerable adults, clarification as to their reason for leaving is always sought.

On acceptance of a job offer, references will be obtained and an enhanced criminal record check applied for.

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Training

All new staff take part in a training programme that consists of core training and in some instances will include additional training to meet the needs of individuals. The induction consists of a 2 day course typically held at Kingwood's head office which includes an introduction to autism on day 1, presents the aims of the organisation, safeguarding and key policies. Day 2 is presented by Kingwood's senior clinical psychologist and considers the possible causes of autism, how it affects individuals, communication difficulties and different support approaches. In addition the rules created by the working party of people we support are delivered to new staff on day 1 by someone we support.

Kingwood's whistle blowing policy is highlighted to staff during induction training, and their responsibility to report unacceptable practice is emphasized.

Supervision

Operational members of staff (Support workers, Support Managers and Area Managers) receive formal supervision at least 4 times a year. It is recognised supervision is a continual process and as such line managers are encouraged to keep notes of impromptu meetings and discussions throughout the year if issues are raised.

Every member of staff has an annual performance review.

Performance

Kingwood undertakes regular reviews of staff performance and will not tolerate actions from staff that negatively affect people we support. Where staff fail to perform to the required level due to reasons of capability, Kingwood will consider how it can help employees reach the standards expected. Where staff fail to perform in a manner that Kingwood finds acceptable due to competency and/or deliberate intent an investigation will be commissioned and its findings reported to the Chief Operating Officer & Director of Services for consideration. In some circumstances in order to ensure an investigation is seen to be free of bias, an external person may be commissioned to undertake the investigation. Where appropriate disciplinary action will then be considered and taken.

It is the responsibility of the line manager to ensure that staff are adequately trained and supervised to undertake the role they are performing.

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Commissioner Quality Assurance Processes

In addition to the above measures that Kingwood has in place to best ensure the people we support receive the quality support and service they deserve, local authority commissioners all have their own quality assurance processes.

These can include;

- Desktop assessments such as the Quality Assessment Framework conducted by Supporting People. These may then be validated by a site visit.
- An annual sample inspection of a number of services in a LA area and resulting Quality Monitoring Report as that undertaken by Oxfordshire.
- Sporadic quality visits to specific services.

Kingwood has successfully been approved for the Preferred Provider Lists for three local authorities. The process in each case required evidence of financial stability, strong organisational leadership and review of specific policies and procedures.

Care Quality Commission

As the regulator for health and adult social care in England, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) is currently reviewing the processes in place to assess the provision of services.

The new Essential Standards of Quality and Safety are outcome based and are centred on the views and experiences of the people receiving a service.

CQC regulators will review a range of information about a provider in order to assess its performance and compliance will be considered using the Judgement Framework as a measuring tool. Providers will be inspected on a risk basis according to the information CQC have about its service delivery.