Quality Assurance Policy

April 2021

1. Introduction

1.1 Healthwatch Cornwall (HC) is committed to providing the best services possible for its commissioners and stakeholders and has developed both policies and procedures to be able to demonstrate this. As a publicly funded organisation it is important to demonstrate both efficiency and effectiveness in all that it does.

1.2 Quality assurance is the process of assessing and determining whether an organisation's services meet or exceed the expectations of both our commissioners and public. It is a process-driven approach with specific steps to help define and attain goals. It is essentially about learning what we are doing well and striving to do it even better. It also means finding out what we may need to change to make sure we meet the needs of our stakeholders.

2. Our approach

2.2 In developing its approach to quality there is a commitment to ensuring that there is a shared understanding throughout the organisation of our agreed priorities and how we are to achieve these.

2.3 This involves:

2.3.1 Agreeing quality objectives, reviewing their relevance, and monitoring performance against them. In this respect performance is regularly assessed against the standards set out in the Healthwatch (England) Quality Framework.

2.3.2 Ensuring that our commissioners and public know what to expect from us.

2.3.3 Having a Board and management team in place who can provide clear vision and direction.

2.3.4 Having relevant policies and procedures documented, accessible and reviewed.

2.3.5 Ensuring that there are links between the learning generated through our complaints and compliments procedures. and our commitment to continuous improvement.

2.3.6   Having a Business Plan that details our strategic priorities and measuring an individual's performance against these.

2.3.7   Developing a Personal Development Plan for each employee through the supervision and appraisal processes, to ensure that they have the relevant skills and expertise.

2.3.8   Using effective communication tools to keep everyone informed.

2.3.9   Actively participating in audit processes which occur both internally and externally to provide additional assurance as required.

2.3.10 Ensuring there are monitoring procedures in place to ensure that policies and procedures are being implemented and are effective.

3.   External accreditation

3.1   In addition to meeting the requirements of the Healthwatch (England) Quality Framework there are various industry quality marks and accreditations that demonstrate that an organisation has effective quality management systems in place.

3.2   The benefits of specific external accreditations will regularly be reviewed, and where deemed to be an organisational priority and benefit, the organisation will commit accordingly.

4.   Responsibilities

4.1   Ultimate responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests with the Board. They are responsible for ensuring that the policy is reviewed and ensuring that the organisation is in a position to deliver quality services as described above. The Chief Executive is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Quality Assurance Policy and ensuring that monitoring, support and training is delivered to enable all employees and volunteers to deliver the required standards.

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