



Memorandum of Understanding

This document relates to the provision of support to adult social providers by the Quality and Service Continuity Team.

This document must be read in conjunction with the Approved Provider List Agreement that sets out the procedure for the ordering of Services, contains the main terms and conditions for the provision of the Services and the obligations of the Provider under the Approved Provider List Agreement.

Background – Quality and Service Continuity Team

The Quality and Service Continuity Team undertakes quality assurance and improvement activity with adult social providers on behalf of North Yorkshire Health and Adult Services and the Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICBs). This is to ensure that services are providing a quality service that is meeting and promoting the health, care and support needs of people who are using services commissioned by North Yorkshire Council and the ICB.

The Quality Team has Quality Nurses, Project Assistants (Quality Improvement), Quality Improvement Officers, Quality Assurance Officers and Quality Support Officers working together, with a risk-based approach, to provide support and advice to providers across North Yorkshire. By working as a single service, the team ensure that the most appropriate support is provided by the most appropriate staff for the job.

The team work closely with other stakeholders, such as the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Safeguarding staff in Health and Adult Services, Integrated Care Boards, and the Police, to ensure market oversight is maintained and coordinated approaches are taken when dealing with poor quality services. In working with partners, we support market sustainability and reduce provider failure by directing resources to where it is needed most. This fosters a collaborative approach to supporting our market, building relationships with our providers and partners to ensure the safeguarding and wellbeing of people who use our services, and their families.

We gather data and intelligence that informs decision making and identifies providers who are most at risk. We then identify and rate those risks to support early intervention, enabling support where it is most needed. We monitor risks within the provider market and will coordinate the response to provider failure or service interruption, where appropriate.

Providers can utilise the tools available to quality assure themselves via self-assessment; encouraging them to identify risk at the earliest opportunity as well as identify best practice. Support provided by the Quality and Service Continuity Team, as part of the Quality Pathway, may take the form of virtual support or onsite activity. Quality Visits may be used to assess the quality of the service being delivered, Validation Visits may be used to ensure that the information included in the Provider's self-

assessment can be evidenced and Intervention Visits enable direct support to be delivered, working with the Provider and, where appropriate, staff teams to improve practice. This support is undertaken in commissioned services as well as services provided by the Council.

The team maintains a range of partnerships with statutory and non-statutory bodies and groups, to support the work of Health and Adult Services. Working with partners, we support market sustainability and reduce provider failure by directing resources to where it is needed most. This fosters a collaborative approach to supporting our market, building relationships with our providers, people who use our service and their families.

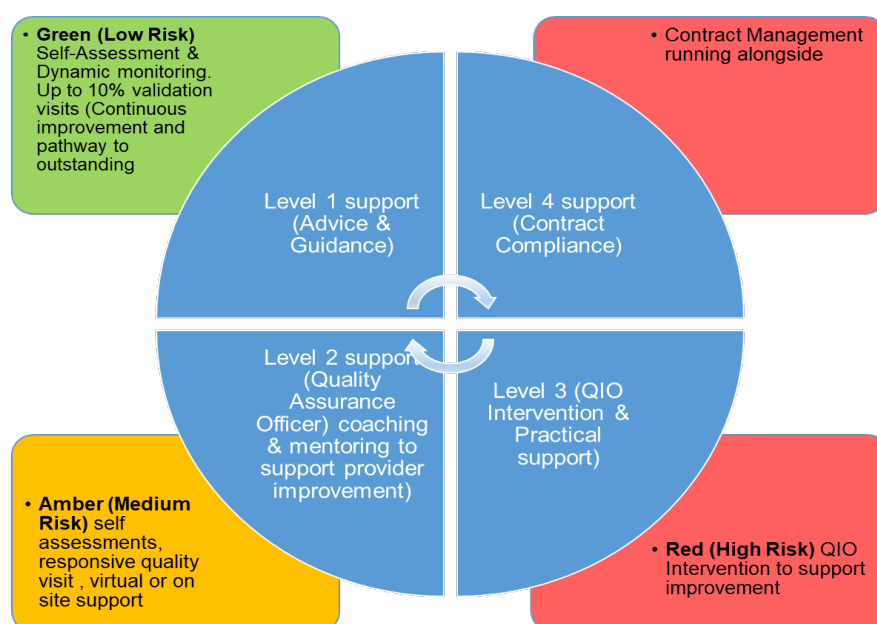
The diagram below shows the levels of support available to providers. This process allows the team to target its resources where they can have the greatest impact.

Green (Low Risk) – Self-Assessment and dynamic monitoring, information, advice and guidance. 10-15% validation visits

Amber (Medium Risk) – coaching and mentoring to support provider improvement

Red (High Risk) – intervention and practical support to secure improvement

Red Contract Compliance



Quality Improvement Activity

The Quality and Service Continuity Team is available to adult social providers who provide regulated (CQC) and non-regulated services based in, or providing services within, the Council's boundaries. The purpose of the Quality and Service Continuity Team is to work with health and social care partners to ensure a joined up approach is taken in improving the quality of services within the adult social care market.

They do this by offering support from a range of staff including qualified social care managers who have experience of working within a wide range of services including older people's residential and nursing services, learning disability, domiciliary care and mental health services, as well as staff from other professional backgrounds. The team also includes qualified nurses and nurse project assistants who are able to provide professional support and link with other clinical professionals to secure quality improvements.

The team use their specialist operational knowledge and skills to support providers and managers. They develop solutions to mitigate risks and drive quality improvement of the service in order to improve and enhance the experience for people receiving care and support. The team works alongside providers to actively address shortfalls in the quality of service provision.

The team will treat everyone involved in the service with dignity and respect. They will use professional curiosity to identify areas for improvement and will be sensitive to how people may feel when working through improvement work. The team will be professional and supportive, demonstrating a no blame culture in their work. This does not mean that they will not question situations and events, but that their approach will be one of understanding, surfacing any issues or concerns, checking understanding and sharing learning to improve.

Where a provider failure or service interruption occurs the team coordinates the actions required on behalf of Health and Adult Services, the ICB and partners to ensure people are safe, that relevant information is shared in a timely manner and that the transfer to alternative services for support is as straightforward as possible. The team has developed a range of tools to assist with this process. When a provider failure or service interruption has occurred the team will undertake a lessons learned or rapid review process to promote continuous learning and improvement. The outcomes will then be shared with relevant statutory and non-statutory bodies and groups for continued learning and development.

Access to the Service

The Provider agrees to permit access to the Providers' premises to staff from the Quality and Service Continuity Team, for the purposes of supporting the Service. In addition to access to the Providers' premises, all relevant records will be made available as requested for the purposes of supporting the Provider. The Provider retains responsibility for ensuring appropriate consent and information governance is in place.

The Quality and Service Continuity Team Staff will use reasonable endeavours to give advance notice of any visits, the majority of which will be pre-arranged. However, the Provider accepts that in an emergency, including where safeguarding or quality concerns have been raised, it may not be possible or desirable. In these circumstances, the Provider agrees to permit access to the Providers' premises.

Support Available

The team will work with Providers in a responsive way to address shortfalls, concerns and issues identified at the service through local authority quality assurance assessment or processes, a CQC inspection that has led to enforcement action being undertaken, other inspections by relevant statutory agencies where action may be taken which may impact on the provider's ability to deliver a service or safeguarding concerns.

The support provided will reflect the level of risk identified, and at an agreed stage, timescales will be prioritised based on the level of concerns and issues. An allocated amount of time will be available to support the provider. The team and Provider will agree how this time will be used and this may include on site support, delivery of training/action learning sets or virtual support. The support provided by the team will be monitored to ensure it is being used effectively. Where onsite support is delivered this will be for a minimum of five hours per session. Time spent onsite will be a combination of observations and time spent with the most appropriate member of staff on duty to review documentation.

The allocated hours to support your service will be (xxxxxxx to be agreed with QAM)

The team will support the Provider to:

- Create and deliver improvement plans
- Provide practical operational support, coaching, learning and mentoring and offer pragmatic solutions on key operational matters in line with the Council's contractual agreement and regulations to ensure the service is safe and compliant.
- Where immediate action is required the team will support the Provider to identify solutions, implement changes and develop solutions to make improvements.

Payment

The Provider is not charged for the provision of improvement support in the first instance, once support and timescales have been agreed. However, should the support be extended beyond the agreed timescales because of non-compliance by the Provider or the Provider requests additional support then the Council reserves the right to charge for this additional service. Any costs will be agreed in advance.

Obligations for Providers

The Provider is required to engage fully with the process and staff from the Quality and Service Continuity Team and be prepared to implement new processes within the agreed timescales. The Provider will remain responsible for the provision of the Service and all regulatory requirements at all times. The purpose of the team is to support and offer guidance, not to manage or run the service.

The Provider shall maintain a professional approach throughout their work with the Quality and Service Continuity Team. It is appreciated that this process can be challenging and, at times people can become emotional, however inappropriate behaviour towards any member of the team will not be tolerated.

The Provider will explain to its staff that the role of the Quality and Service Continuity Team is supportive, with the aim of securing improvements. The Quality and Service Continuity Team will use professional curiosity to identify areas for improvement. Providers' staff will engage with the team, asking for advice where required, and attending learning opportunities offered.

Mentoring and coaching

The team will coach and mentor managers where required, using appropriate resources and tools, enabling them to build their knowledge, skills and confidence, supporting managers to develop and

implement robust effective systems and processes that create a safe, effective, responsive, caring, and a 'well-led' service.

Learning and Development

The team will support Providers to identify and arrange the most appropriate and relevant training and learning suitable for their needs through the local authority, Quality Nursing Team and recognised care industry providers such as Skills for Care. The team will facilitate action-learning sets to support the development and implementation of learning in operational practice areas and work with Providers to create and produce their own action learning sets. The Provider will ensure that staff are made available to attend training and learning opportunities arranged by the team. Where staff do not attend, as agreed, the Provider will be charged for non-attendance.

Employment Responsibilities

At all times the Quality and Service Continuity Team, staff remain under the employment of North Yorkshire Council or Integrated Care Board, as appropriate. They offer support and guidance to staff employed by the Provider. The Provider will maintain adequate levels of insurance at all times and will retain responsibility for decision making within their service.

Line Management Responsibilities

The Quality and Service Continuity Team Staff may advise the Provider's staff in day-to-day duties and they do so under the agreement of the Nominated Individual and/or Registered Manager of the service. Any liabilities remain the responsibility of the Provider and they must ensure that they have adequate levels of insurance at all times.

Governance and Quality Assurance

The team will:

- support Providers to complete effective service quality audit tools.
- work with Providers to access tools that measure the quality of the experience people have to enhance, improve and develop the service.
- support Providers to identify and undertake a range of operational self-assessment audits.

Safeguarding

Any safeguarding concerns identified by the and Service Continuity Team will be reported in accordance with the Joint Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures (West Yorkshire, North Yorkshire and City of York) which can be found at the [North Yorkshire Safeguarding Adults Board website](#).

Recruitment Support

Recruitment support can be accessed through North Yorkshire Council's Resourcing Solutions Team and the Quality and Service Continuity Team can support the Provider to access this service. Any recruitment decisions taken remain the responsibility of the Provider and the Quality and Service Continuity Team cannot take part in the recruitment process on behalf of the Provider.

Record Keeping

All records pertaining to the delivery of the service remain the responsibility of the Provider and the Quality & Service Continuity Team will not remove or store any records pertaining to the delivery of the service without the Provider's consent. The Quality and Service Continuity Team will support the Provider with the completion of appropriate records relating to the service and service delivery.

Safe Staffing Levels

The Provider remains responsible for ensuring safe minimum staffing at all times. However, any concerns identified by the Quality and Service Continuity Team, which relate to staffing levels or the actions of individual staff, will be addressed by the Provider, complying with the recommendations made by the team.

Complaints

If the Provider has reason to make a formal complaint regarding the actions of a member of staff from the Quality and Service Continuity Team they are able to contact [Complaints, comments or compliments | North Yorkshire County Council](#)

Where a complaint is made directly to the Provider, regarding the actions of a member of staff from the Quality and Service Continuity Team the Provider will obtain consent from the complainant to share the complaint with the Quality and Service Continuity Leadership Team. If consent is not forthcoming then the Quality and Service Continuity Leadership Team may not be able to fully investigate the complaint.

Termination

This memorandum of understanding will cease when the Quality and Service Continuity Team cease their involvement with the Provider.

Signatures

Provider

Name of Provider:

Signature:

Name and Role of Manager/Nominated Individual:

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North Yorkshire Council/Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board

Signature:

Head of Quality & Service Continuity*/Principal Nurse*/Quality Assurance Manager*:

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*Delete as required