

# DALESVIEW PARTNERSHIP

(supporting people with severe learning disabilities and complex needs)



## Driving Up Quality

Initial Self Assessment

[www.dalesviewpartnership.co.uk](http://www.dalesviewpartnership.co.uk)

## Introduction

The Driving Up Quality Code was developed by a number of learning disability groups and associations across England in response to the abuse that happened to people at Winterbourne View in 2011. The Code has a particular focus on people with challenging behaviour who have longstanding and complex support needs but can be applied to all people with learning disabilities.

Dalesview Partnership provides care and support services to people with profound learning disabilities and complex needs. Our organisation is working to ensure that the principles of the Code are reflected within all the services we provide.

## Commitment from the Board

The Board and senior management of Dalesview Partnership are committed to listening to the people that our organisation supports and we want to support them to build lives that have meaning for them. As part of this commitment, we have signed up to the Driving Up Quality Code. This will involve ongoing-self assessment exercises focusing on quality. The objective will be to continue to drive up quality within our organisation, in line with the aims of the Code.

## Our Initial Self-Assessment

During March and April 2015, we have carried out our first self-assessment under the Driving Up Quality Code.

This involved meetings and consultations with many people, both within our organisation and elsewhere. Those who contributed to the assessment included the people we support, families of the people we support, healthcare and social care professionals from outside our organisation, and members of staff from different levels across our organisation.

Our assessment report on the next pages follows the five good practice areas set out in the Code.



# **Good Practice 1: Support focused on the person**

## **What we do well**

Each individual has their own person centred care plan, including a health action plan and a hospital passport. Most individuals have communication guides.

Annual reviews are person centred and conducted in ways that are appropriate to each individual to enable maximum input and ensure personalisation (using things like video footage, photos, signing and objects of reference). Appropriate action plans are created for the following year that can be adapted/revised when required.

As well as a general induction, staff also receive person specific induction that is designed around each individual that they will be supporting.

Staff also receive formal training around specific needs of people with complex needs (intensive interaction, communication awareness, PEG feeding, epilepsy etc)

Family members are sometimes involved in and attend specific training about their relative.

Some individuals as well as family members are involved in recruiting and interviewing new staff.

To keep people healthy and safe we employ a physiotherapist and a speech and language therapist.

Our separate day care service (“Lifestyle”) allows the people we support to choose and engage in a wide range of activities and social interests, both at home and in the community.

The activities and social interests that we support the people using our service to access are appropriate for people with profound and complex needs and help promote their inclusion in society.

Our organisation places great importance on supporting our service users to maintain relationships with their family and friends and to make new relationships. This is difficult for people with profound and complex needs and our service has developed innovative ways of supporting people to do this.

## **We could do even better if...**

We would like all of the people that use our service to have communication guides – even for individuals that may have verbal communication.

Whilst our organisation already has Service User Council, it is difficult for people with profound and complex needs to make contributions to it. We want to explore new ways of making the Council more inclusive.

## **Good Practice 2: The person is supported to have an ordinary and meaningful life**

### **What we do well**

The people who use our services have profound learning disabilities and complex needs.

All our services are aimed at supporting people to live a life which is stimulating, interesting and fulfilling.

Our staff, particularly within our day care service (“Lifestyle”) try to support individuals to interact easily, to make connections with other people and to access their community.

Everyone we support is regularly involved in the local community, taking part in a wide range of activities from trampolining to grocery shopping to carriage riding.

Many individuals we support attend courses at local colleges with whom we work closely to provide a relevant programme of experiences and education.

We adopt a positive approach to risk taking in supporting our service users. We believe that people have a right to experience some degree of risk in the activities associated with their daily life.

In the context of positive risk taking, we are particularly proud of some of the activities and interests that our service users choose to engage in.

Service users are supported to maintain important relationships with family and friends and to make new friends and relationships.

Our organisation believes communication is a highly important issue in our service users leading ordinary and meaningful lives. We employ a communication coordinator and all staff are trained in communication techniques and awareness. We promote a ‘total communication’ approach and assist individuals with any specific technology required.

### **We could do even better if...**

Making friends and relationships is particularly difficult for people with profound and complex needs. Whilst we are always trying to find new social situations and events that may provide opportunities for friendships and relationships to develop, we want to explore new ways of supporting our service users in this important aspect of their lives.

We intend to further develop staff training around encouraging ‘connections’ and helping to foster potential relationships.

We feel our newsletter to families could be sent out more regularly – particularly so that they can be better informed about events that may be happening in service users’ homes (parties, bbq’s theme days etc)

## **Good Practice 3: Care and support focuses on people being happy and having a good quality of life**

### **What we do well**

Comprehensive care and support plans are maintained for all individuals. These include many details around who and what is important to individuals and what contributes to them leading happy lives.

Each of our service users has a one-page profile which allows staff to focus on the important things in peoples' lives.

Service users also have communication plans which help staff understand individuals' choices and preferences.

Our separate day care service ("Lifestyle") supports individuals to choose and engage in a wide range of relevant activities and social interests, both at home and in the community. We believe this service in particular contributes to the happiness and quality of our service users' lives.

Staff are trained in all mandatory courses and also receive specialist training in supporting people with profound learning disabilities and complex needs.

### **We could do even better if...**

We want to look at the way that people who know individuals well – such as family, friends and support staff – contribute to the way in which individuals are supported. We want to make sure that this important information is always reflected in individuals' support plans, and that any new information and changes are promptly reflected.

We believe that happy support staff creating a happy atmosphere in individuals' homes, has a direct influence on the happiness of our service users. We want to ensure that our senior staff place important emphasis on and continually monitor the atmosphere within individuals' homes



## **Good Practice 4: A good culture is important to the organisation**

### **What we do well**

Feedback from the people consulted during this assessment is that generally our values and beliefs are evident throughout the organisation.

Our organisation is committed to providing person centred support and we believe we have a reputation for promoting active and fulfilled lives in the local community and at home

We strive to get to know the individuals we support very well by fully engaging with them and those who love them and know them well. We try to be flexible and creative in our approach. We foster and maintain excellent relationships with friends and families. We listen to what people say and make changes because of it.

We invest a lot of our resources into getting and retaining the right staff. Our staff are well trained and have opportunities to progress and gain relevant qualifications.

Our service tries hard to maintain working conditions that are good for our staff and encourage a sense of belonging amongst the staff teams. We want staff to be proud of working for Dalesview Partnership.

We use several tools to measure quality throughout the organisation and this includes discussing our culture and reflecting on what is and isn't working

Confidentiality is good and people are confident that they can make complaints and will be listened to and things acted upon.

Senior staff are trained in how to manage and lead teams.

Agency staff are only ever used as a last resort (which has remained at negligible levels since the service began in 1989).

### **We could do even better if...**

We want to continue to explore and use more technology to enhance/encourage communication and interaction within our service.

Despite the funding crisis within social care, our service will continue to look for and find ways of improving rates of pay for our staff.

We would like to produce our staff newsletter more regularly.

We want to look for ways of celebrating our successes more throughout the organisation

## **Good Practice 5: Managers and board members lead and run the organisation well**

### **What we do well**

Our organisation has a flat management structure and senior management are very much involved in the day to day running of the organisation and the support being provided.

The Director of Care carries out unannounced visits on a monthly basis to review the quality and consistency of services being delivered.

The senior management team work in a number of small offices nearby to our service users' houses and homes, ensuring that someone is contactable at all times.

Managers work close to the people and staff they support, and in most cases, provide 'hands on' support themselves. This allows managers to better understand the needs of staff and of the individuals living in the house.

Managers are encouraged to maintain a close level of contact with the people we support and their families.

Training and development for the managerial staff is considered on an individual basis, through the use of appraisals, so that each manager can learn new skills according to their structured development plan and utilise this in the support of service users and staff.

Information is passed between the senior management team and home/house managers at regular meetings. Information is passed between home/house managers and staff, during regular staff meetings or in supervisions.

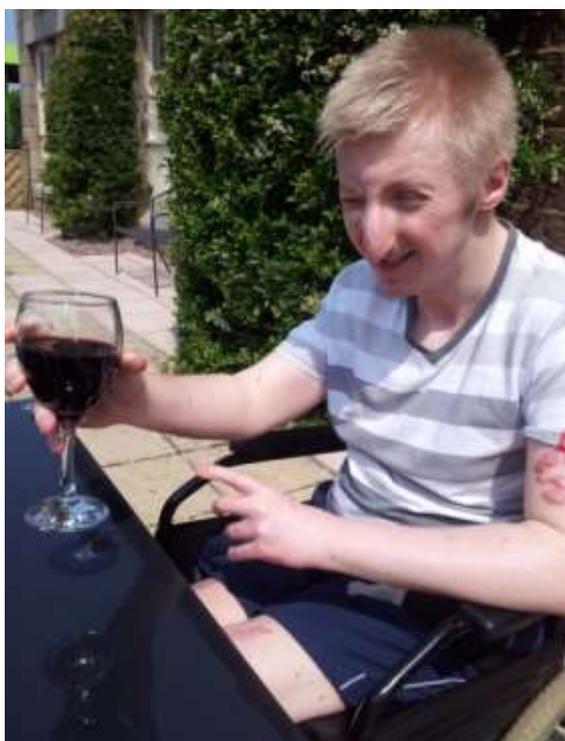
During these exchanges, and through anonymous surveys, staff are encouraged to discuss what they feel is working well and anything that needs improvement. This is then relayed back, consequently opening a dialogue between the staff team and senior management.

As an organisation we regularly hold 'theme' days, in which individuals from one home may invite friends from other homes, along with staff and management to celebrate and socialise in an informal setting. We feel that these events help to strengthen and promote the values and ethos of our service.

### **We could do even better if...**

Whilst feedback suggested that senior management are approachable by other staff, new staff joining the organisation were sometimes unaware of what the roles of some senior managers were. We want to look at whether this could be covered within the induction training that new staff receive.

Given the high number of staff within our service, we want to explore whether there may be a way of usefully recording particular skills and experience within our workforce that may be helpful to senior management.



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