

The ‘Driving Up Quality Code’ Self-Assessment

A review of our annual self-assessment process and action plan by Voyage Care - December 2018



Introduction

The Driving Up Quality Code was developed following the abuse of people with a learning disability and autism at Winterbourne View. The code is part of a Winterbourne View Concordat and action plan to make sure that this never happens again.

Signing up to the code is a further commitment to driving up the quality of Voyage Care support for people with a learning disability and/or autism. As part of the on-going response to Winterbourne View, we recognise the need for providers to take responsibility for continuously improving the services they provide.

When Voyage Care signed up to the Driving Up Quality Code we saw this as a public commitment that we are able to evidence good practice as well as being transparent around how we maintain a culture of continuous improvement, constantly striving to deliver the highest possible quality of services.

The 5 areas covered by the Driving Up Quality code closely align with our 5 values, which have been co-produced with the people we support. Our values represent our commitment to ensure maximum involvement by people we support at all levels of our organisation:

1. **Empowering** – this value supports us to evidence the ‘Care and support focuses on people being happy and having a good quality of life’ area of the Driving Up Quality Code, ensuring that we empower people to live the life they want to lead.
2. **Together** – this value aligns closely with the ‘Support is focussed on the person’ area of the Driving Up Quality Code, ensuring that we listen, engage and collaborate, while promoting a culture of creativity and co-production.
3. **Honest** - ‘A good culture is important to the organisation’ is a key area of the Driving Up Quality Code. Our ‘Honest’ value links closely with this area, ensuring that we build mutual trust and understanding, while always learning.
4. **Outstanding** – this value aligns closely with the ‘Managers and board members lead and run the organisation well’ area of the Driving Up Quality Code, ensuring the removal of barriers to success and leadership in delivering quality outcomes.
5. **Supported** - this value supports us to evidence ‘The person is supported to have an ordinary and meaningful life’ area of the Driving Up Quality Code, ensuring that we encourage people to reach their potential, while providing support that expands horizons.



Voyage Care's purpose is to deliver great quality care and support, and our vision is to make a lifelong difference to the people we support and their families. We are proud of the quality standards our services achieve through both internal and external monitoring, including 95% of our CQC registrations achieving 'Good' or 'Outstanding' CQC ratings. We also recognise the need to continuously monitor, engage and improve. This is reflected in our commitment to listen to the people we support and enable them to build good and meaningful lives in the community.

Signing up to the Driving Up Quality Code supports this organisational commitment. While the code has a focus on improving outcomes for people with behaviour that challenges, Voyage Care recognise the organisation wide benefits of using the 5 areas of the code to shape our support.



Applying the principles of the self-assessment process as outlined in the Driving Up Quality Code guidance

We have summarised our approach to the Driving Up Quality Code self-assessment under the following headings:

Including a range of people

The self-assessment process has been led by our national Quality team who engage closely with both our specialist central teams (HR, Recruitment, Learning and Development, Behavioural Therapy etc.) and our Operations team. This has therefore captured the view of people within all parts of the organisation, nationally and locally.

Our Quality team also lead on the co-production process with people we support and families, ensuring that the process is meaningful and accessible. This has included ensuring that information shared meets individual communication needs (for example easy read) and people have appropriate levels of support to engage, from people that know them well. We will build on this involvement in future self-assessments e.g. involving more professionals.

Including a range of evidence

In line with the self-assessment guidance we have utilised a range of evidence through the process ranging from our policies and procedures, systems, learning and development programme, case studies etc.

We have also utilised our Quality Questionnaire, an annual outcomes focused survey which the people we support are supported to complete. This ensures that evidence is based on the views of people we support as 'experts by experience'. The survey aligns closely with many of the 5 areas of the Driving Up Quality Code. For example the Quality Questionnaire provides a measure of how far people we support feel that their support is focused around them, including the following 'I' statements: "I choose who I live with", "I choose where I live" and "I choose who supports me".

Breadth and Depth

One of the key challenges of the self-assessment process for larger organisations is ensuring that all areas and levels of the organisation are included in the process. We are working hard to ensure that the Driving Up Quality self-assessment process is relevant to all parts of the organisation and that the process reflects an organisational culture rather than pockets of excellence. This has included involving local teams in shaping the approach to involving people we support and families.



We will build on this approach through initiatives such as utilising communication methods to share information about the Driving Up Quality Code such as our magazines for staff (Huddle) and people supported (Zest), our website, manager communications, social media and ensuring that our internal service level quality audit programme reflects the key self-assessment areas of the code.

The Driving up Quality 5 key areas has been added to the underpinning principles of Voyage Care’s Quality Framework; a document that sets out how the organisation ensures continual improvement in the support that we provide. The self-assessment action plan is monitored by our Quality team.

Constructive challenge

Voyage Care encourage feedback and involvement to shape the future of our support. This is particularly reflected by our ‘Growing Together’ programme. Growing Together ensures that people we support have the opportunity to influence how the organisation operates, especially where decisions and actions directly impact their own lives. With the relevant support from the Quality team, representatives from each region facilitate the local Growing Together events which inform continuous improvement based on what is important to people we support.

Local people we support are invited to take part in events and are supported to engage in line with their needs e.g. communication, mobility etc. We have started to align the Driving Up Quality Code self-assessment process with Growing Together and will build on this for future assessments.

Creativity

We are committed to ensuring that our approach to involving people we support and families, is accessible and meaningful for people we support. This includes exploring creative communication approaches and engagement sessions that ensure that everyone has a voice.

We also have specialists such as Behaviour Support Practitioners and autism, Prader-Willi syndrome and brain injury rehabilitation specialists who can advise on how we can involve people who may have more complex needs. For example, ensuring that venues offer an environment that is suitable for people with heightened sensory sensitivity and strategies are agreed with people supported to help them self-manage e.g. a dedicated quiet space people who may feel overwhelmed and anxious at times.

Ongoing improvement

The assessment process has actively identified areas of good practice from across the organisation, while recognising gaps where progress needs to be made, with a clear action plan so that responsibilities and timeframes for progress can be monitored by our Quality team. This will



include internal reporting as well as feedback as part of our co-production approach with people we support.

As part of our commitment to continuous learning we will ensure that we review our approach to self-assessment before starting our next self-assessment. This will help us build on our use of the Driving Up Quality Code while ensuring that our approach to involvement has been meaningful for people we support and their wider circle of support.



We have summarised below under each of the 5 areas of the code our self-assessment findings and areas of continuous improvement identified:

1. Support is focused on the person

This area of the Driving Up Quality Code is about delivering support which is fully shaped around the person supported. This includes:

- Support is built and designed around an individual, or a group of people.
- All staff have training that is centred on the person.
- People supported choose where they live and who they live with.
- People choose their staff.
- Individuals are supported to develop natural support networks.

Our self-assessment process has identified and evidenced that Voyage Care:

- Delivers staff training that is shaped around the person’s needs.
- Facilitates involvement which includes people being meaningfully involved in choosing their staff.
- Develops tools such as ‘Relationship Maps’ which are used to promote the development of natural support networks.
- Builds ‘specialisms’ in areas such as autism to ensure that our teams are supported to deliver specialist support to meet individual needs.
- Enables people we support to be involved in shaping the quality of support. This includes our Quality Checkers programme where people are supported and trained to review our support and capture the views of peers.

We have identified through the self-assessment process areas where we may be able to improve which has been reflected in our action plan. This will include:

- Reviewing opportunities to involve families more in monitoring the quality of our support.
- Planning to increase involvement within the delivery of our learning and development programme relating to areas such as Positive Behaviour Support.

2. The person is supported to have an ordinary and meaningful life

This area of the ‘Driving Up Quality Code’ is about ensuring that people are supported to have good lives in the community. This includes:

- People are supported to have friends and positive relationships.
- People don’t need to live in hospitals/ secure settings to have their needs met.
- People are supported to access employment, education and leisure opportunities.
- Individuals contribute to their local communities to the benefit of others.
- People are generally happy and healthy.



Our self-assessment process has identified and evidenced that Voyage Care:

- Is ambitious for the people we support and focuses on enabling people to achieve their aspirations. This is reflected by our Active Support training, which ensures that staff have the skills to support people to live good and meaningful lives in the community.
- Monitors the expectations and experience of people we support through our Quality Questionnaire which focuses on key themes such as community engagement and employment.
- Delivers a positive risk enablement approach which is supported by clear policies and procedures and staff training.

We have identified through the self-assessment process:

- An opportunity to further develop our tools relating to community mapping.
- Working with our staff to utilise these tools with people we support.

3. Care and support focuses on people being happy and having a good quality of life

This area of the 'Driving Up Quality Code' is about ensuring that staff promote quality of life outcomes with the people supported. This ensures that:

- Staff know how to support people to be happy
- Staff feel valued and the organisation quickly deals with staff who are not living up to organisational values
- Support plans truly reflect an individual's preferences and promotes choice and control.
- Staff are recruited, trained, and developed to understand the value of getting to know the person supported.
- Creativity is valued and encouraged
- Staff have the confidence, skills and authority to deliver support effectively.

Our self-assessment process has identified and evidenced that Voyage Care:

- Ensures that support is sometimes shaped by the person e.g. rota planning so that people can be supported at a time that they choose.
- Effectively promotes co-production approaches that go beyond surveys. This includes our Growing Together events, which are facilitated by people we support.
- Delivers values based recruitment and effectively communicates with staff through a range of communication channels to ensure that teams understand what is expected by the people we support.
- Ensures that staff cover arrangements are person centred wherever possible to ensure minimum impact on the person supported. For example if a support worker is unwell, we have utilised staff capacity from nearby services who have specialist training and the person has already met rather than using agency staff.



- Utilises creative communication techniques to involve people we support. For example, social stories have been used to support autistic people during transition to promote involvement during times of change.

We have identified through the self-assessment process areas of improvement including:

- Reviewing the involvement of people we support in HR processes such as probationary/appraisal reviews.

4. A good culture is important to the organisation

This area of the Driving Up Quality Code is about ensuring there is a positive culture of support throughout the organisation. This includes:

- People with disabilities and their families are involved in checking the quality of support.
- All levels throughout the organisation consider and involve people supported and families.
- The organisation can evidence how change has resulted from the voice of people supported and their families.
- Staff feel respected and able to voice their thoughts, contributing to organisational development.
- The organisation speaks out about bad practice.
- Senior managers routinely visit people being supported to seek the views of them and their families.
- There is a commitment to practice leadership.

Our self-assessment process has identified and evidenced that Voyage Care:

- Facilitates a range of opportunities to engage with staff around the quality of our support and what is and isn't working. This includes manager's briefings, Quality Roadshows and listening events.
- Responds to suggestions and comments and makes changes.
- Supports sector wide initiatives and campaigns through engaging with committees/working groups to drive sector change, social media campaigns, taking part in consultations etc.
- Promotes practice leadership through initiatives such as our 'Living Leader' and Active Support programmes for managers and support from our Behavioural Support team.

We have identified through the self-assessment process opportunities for:

- Further improvement which will include rolling out further listening events with managers.
- Reviewing our approach to monitoring culture through our audit process.



5. Managers and board members lead and run the organisation well

This area of the Driving Up Quality Code is about ensuring that teams are well led. This includes:

- Leaders utilise skills within the organisation and inspire those around them.
- Leaders encourage open and honest conversations about what is and is not working.
- Decision making is based on the principle of ‘how will this benefit those we support?’
- There is transparency where there are areas of improvement required and these are shared internally and externally.
- There is strong practice leadership around challenging behaviour within the organisation.

Our self-assessment process has identified and evidenced that Voyage Care:

- Recognises the need for our senior team to actively promote a culture of openness around what is and is not working. This has been reflected when organisational leaders such as our CEO, Business Company Secretary and Head of Legal have worked a week in a service – engaging with people we support and staff teams to develop understanding and inform improvements.
- Implements an effective Quality Framework which ensures effective monitoring at every level of the organisation. This includes risk assessment and management policy and procedures.
- Recruits board members against specific person specifications to ensure the right cross section of skills and experience is achieved.

The self-assessment process has identified the need to:

- Continuously monitor the leadership and management ethos within the organisation to ensure that best practice is maintained.