

Role of the Principal Social Worker in CQC Assessment

I'm not talking on behalf of CQC

Sharing my own views and insight gained from working with them

- Warwickshire and Coventry volunteered to help as the CQC developed its approach
- Two 'test and learn' processes with Hampshire and Manchester
- Two pilots as a Specialist Adviser with Lincolnshire and Suffolk
- Peer Reviews
- CQC assurance lead for Warwickshire

- CQC is learning and developing its approach

- Inspectors are like us – a lot are social workers, have worked in local authorities, done frontline or commissioning roles
- They are nice!
- They have a strong values that we share – customer and carer focussed
- They want to know how things really are – they look for what is good as much as they look for issues
- They are good at assessment and inspection
- They are taking a lot of care to get this right
- It's a good fit with the PSW role – it supports

- They look at national data
- They look at your self-assessment
- They look at your information return (currently 48 items)
- They do case tracking - 50 cases that covered a range of work i.e. older adults, transitions, LD, MH, physical disability, people who face barriers. Out of which they select 6 (+ 2 spare) Copy of records of completed cases provided – not accessing systems. Experts by experience will talk to customers and carers. Not talking to staff unless a reason is identified
- Using the above they identify lines of enquiry – things they want to know
- They then tailor/focus their onsite work if anything is identified as an area for closer examination
- Think about what is relevant to PSW role – what would you ask?
- If new themes emerge, they will adapt and seek to triangulate as they go

1:1s

- Lead member
- Principal Social Worker
- Director of Public Health
- Chair of Health and Wellbeing Board and ICS
- Advocacy Organisation
- Healthwatch
- Director
- Assistant Director
- Chief Exec

Groups

- Various meetings themed to cover operational staff from **full** range of teams, including contact centre, inhouse providers, external reablement service
- Managers
- Commissioning staff
- Quality Monitoring Team
- Brokerage
- Staff representative group leads
- Provider forum chairs
- Voluntary Sector Forum
- NHS – selected by LA and were senior leaders
- User and carer representative groups

- Meetings have been early on – first sometimes
- They seem to regard the role as important
- Not sure they appreciated the variety of ways PSW roles differ
- Not sure how much this matters because they are looking at broad themes and it's understandable if they ask about broad range of things
- But important to be aware of because if things are outside your role and/or you don't know - then explain this

- It's a conversation about your job
- Introductions and explanation – what they are doing, confidentiality, note taking etc
- Start with some scene setting so they know who they are talking to and what you do – chance to set out boundaries/extent of your role (don't assume they know)
- Mixture of broad open questions and more focused questions
- Follow up questions to understand more
- Quality of practice
- Equality and diversity will be covered
- Looking for good as well as areas of development
- Will include any themes they have identified before the on-site days
- The PSW session has been an hour
- If you have other roles, you may see them in other meetings

- Tell us about what's working well, is there anything you are particularly proud of?
- What challenges are you facing?
- How are workloads?
- Do you have wait lists? What are these? How are they managed? Waits for what – assessment, support, OT, financial assessment?
- What is it like working for....?
- Do you feel supported?
- What opportunities are there for learning and development like?
- CPD, training, other ways of learning?
- Supervision?
- Learning - what customers and carers say, SARs, complaints etc.

- Practice
- What are you good at? Are you good at saying it? Don't undersell yourself.
- What is challenging? Be clear and balanced. What's being done about it?
- Can you talk about all areas covered in the themes in a way that's relevant to your role?
- Can you talk about equality diversity and inclusion?
- They are interested in **experience** and **outcomes** – what difference it makes for people

- The best answers include how you know something - evidence
- This can be audits, reports, surveys, data
- Don't forget day to day things you do - "I talk to people" "I always ask in supervision"
- Your role in quality assurance, decisions etc.
- Involvement in complaints
- Any opportunities to hear from customers and carers
- Regional meetings that focus on good practice, sharing and learning