



NEWS RELEASE

QUALITY FRAMEWORK FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN IRELAND LAUNCHED BY MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION

6th March 2007

The Mental Health Commission (MHC) today, Tuesday 6th March, launched *'The Quality Framework for Mental Health Services in Ireland'*.

The Mental Health Commission report *'Quality in Mental Health – Your Views'* published in 2005, brought together a wide range of perspectives on what constitutes quality in mental health care systems. *The Quality Framework for Mental Health Services in Ireland* has built on the wealth of ideas expressed in that report. It is aligned to the national mental health policy – *'Vision for Change'* (Department of Health and Children 2006) that provides a strategic 'road map' for the development of mental health services over the coming years.

According to Commission Chairman Dr. John Owens, the Quality Framework will assist in generating a culture of continuous quality improvement where service users receive the support that they require to assist them in their recovery and facilitates their involvement in the planning, and monitoring of mental health services.

“The quality framework promotes a user centred, recovery focused approach. But it is much more than that. It helps to empower users of the service while emphasising the individual’s personal journey towards recovery. Importantly, the quality framework is broad and enabling, and therefore applies equally to all services, irrespective of funding mechanisms or whether they are being delivered in the home, community settings or in in-patient settings.”

The Quality Framework comprises of 8 themes, 24 standards and 163 criteria. The standards embrace the following components of mental health services:

- Individual care and treatment
- Planned entrance to and exit from mental health services
- Community based services (2 standards)
- Prevention, early detection, early intervention and mental health promotion
- Therapeutic services and programmes
- Respect for service users values, beliefs and experiences



- Promoting integration within the community
- Active involvement through the provision of information
- Choice, rights and informed consent
- Access to peer support / advocacy
- Recovery focused approach to treatment and care
- Safe settings, respect for dignity and privacy
- Mental health service accessible to community
- Family / chosen advocate support and involvement
- Training and continuous professional development for all staff
- Outcomes focussed care and treatment
- Evidence based codes of practice, policies and protocols
- Integrated mental health information system
- Management and delivery underpinned by corporate governance.

Chief Executive of the Mental Health Commission, Ms. Brid Clarke, underlined the importance of the quality framework:

“The framework is a broad and ambitious document, as it aims to deliver high standards and good practices across all mental health services. The quality framework promotes a respectful, empowering and equitable service for everyone, and the Commission will use the framework to monitor the delivery of mental health services throughout Ireland.”

The themes, standards and criteria contained in the quality framework provide clear guidance for service users, their families/chosen advocates, service providers and the public as to what to expect from a mental health service. The quality framework is flexible to allow for the diverse needs of service users as well as the different nature and scale of organisations involved in service delivery.

“The Commission looks forward to working with service users and service providers and other key stakeholders with the aim of building on current quality initiatives and improving the experiences of all those involved in mental health services in Ireland” concluded Dr. Owens.

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Media Queries

For further information please contact:



Sean Dolphin, Carr Communications
087 2490930
01 7728937

Marina Duffy, Mental Health Commission
01 6362404