Quality Improvement in Social Work 2018

Summary of Improvement Initiatives
Foreword

This is the third year of the Regional Quality Improvement Programme for Social Work, but the first year where nursing colleagues from across the region have joined social workers to learn about and experience improvement science. Twenty-five social workers and eight nurses have participated, leading nineteen improvement initiatives across the region. Using the model for improvement, there has been a real focus on measuring the impact of improvement on the outcomes for people who use our services.

It is important that the learning from improvements is shared to encourage others to sign up for quality improvement training and get involved in leading improvements where they work. This publication, which provides a summary of each social work improvement initiative undertaken and the outcomes achieved or to be achieved, is designed to help share the learning from this year’s programme.

Congratulations to all the participants who completed the training and their commitment to making a difference to social work and nursing care. And a big thank you to those involved in supporting the delivery of this programme, for their dedication and commitment to quality improvement and putting improvement at the heart of social work.

Sean Holland
Chief Social Work Officer
Introduction

Quality Improvement for Social Work

This regional programme was developed in 2015 to support the social work profession to develop skills and knowledge in quality improvement. Based on the Institute of Healthcare Improvement (IHI) framework, it presents a model for examining the safety and quality of service delivery for patients and service users.

A range of quality improvement principles and methods underpin the programme, with a core component being the use of the model for improvement.

This simple yet powerful tool enables staff to test ideas for change on a small scale, to learn from these tests and build on them. This ensures testing ideas in practice before implementation, scale up and spread.

The overall aim of this year’s programme is to develop and strengthen social work practitioners and leaders by utilising quality improvement techniques and contribute to the regional development of quality improvement.

Completion of the programme is dependent on participants attending seven taught days, completing online IHI modules and participating in a service improvement initiative. In addition social workers undertake eight reflective learning tasks which allows them to claim three requirements of the leadership and strategic award in social work.
Children’s Services Improvement Projects

- **Voices:** Value-based Outcomes, Improving Co-production, Enabling young people & Strengthening relationships

- Relationships Matter

- Participation and Engagement of Kinship Foster Carers in Annual Reviews.

- Improving Children and Young People’s feedback on their experience of the Guardian Ad Litem Agency
It was recognised that young people living in a children’s home were not involved in the recording of their own daily logs. These logs were completed in isolation by the staff. The aim of this improvement initiative is to increase young people’s participation and contribution in the completion of their daily logs from 0% to 50% by October 2018 within one children’s home.

Following feedback from a focus group of young people, an ex-service user and a survey monkey questionnaire to the staff team, changes were tested. An electronic system which prompts staff to record more significant information with regards to the young people’s day to day routines, has been set up and training given to the staff team. Staff are now testing completion of the daily log with young people once a week.

**Outcome measure:** % increase of young people who report they feel their voices are being heard and that they are part of the recording process.

To date, two young people within a children’s’ home setting are now engaged in recording their daily logs. This has promoted more open and honest discussions with the young people.

Next steps include use of iPads and development of a child friendly pro-forma with the young people to share their views on their daily records.

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Title: Relationships Matter

Improvement Team: Orla Murtagh & Gráinne McConville

Mentor: Allison Watt & Geraldine Harvey

It has been our experience that parents and professionals tend to underestimate the power of their interactions and the opportunity these can offer to support a child’s mental health and development.

Providing psycho-education and strategies informed by insights from neuroscience, has shown positive benefit in consolidating how ‘Relationships Matter’ within CAMHS. While effective, the repetitive and time intensive nature of this intervention on an individual basis prompted us to consider cost and time efficiencies evident from group delivery methods.

The improvement initiative aims:

• To demonstrate an 80% improvement in parent and professional understanding of ways they can support a child’s mental health and development
• This aim will be achieved by providing psycho-education and sharing strategies underpinned by developmental neuroscience
• We will deliver this through tailored workshops to parents and professionals who support children aged 0-18, attending Newry & Mourne CAMHS by September 2018.

A series of psychoeducation workshops, based on evidence based research, were designed and tested. Workshop content was embedded in the principles of developmental neuroscience, covering the infant brain and adolescent brain, the biology of stress and the science of hope. Participant feedback resulted in changes being tested throughout the process, including the resource pack and the sequencing of the delivery of the workshops. Parental self-care has now been identified as a necessary precursor to workshop delivery.

Outcome measures include parental / professional improved understanding of how brain functioning influences a child’s development, emotions and behaviour. Parental / professional confidence and knowledge of strategies to support and respond to their child’s difficulties was also measured.

To date, there has been over 80% improvement in participant understanding of ways they can support their child’s mental health. Next steps include consideration of how to best embed these workshops as a standardised CAMHS intervention to ensure focus on building capacity in the system around the child.

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Title: Participation and Engagement of Kinship Foster Carers in Annual Reviews

Improvement Team: Briege Quinn, Catherine Young & Jacintah McCaffrey

Mentor: Sonya McGuckin

In this improvement initiative, the aim is to increase staff and foster carer participation and engagement in kinship annual reviews by 50% from May 2018 to December 2018.

Recognising that statutory annual reviews were not being completed within the required time frame by social work staff, a number of changes were suggested for testing, including:

• Information awareness sessions to kinship fostering team and looked after children teams
• Development of a data base to include all kinship carer’s information and necessary alerts regarding when annual reviews are due
• Information packs to kinship carers prior to annual reviews to allow completion of all necessary checks and forms and kinship carer and staff questionnaires.

To date there has been an increase in annual reviews completed on time with a system that allows for an alert in relation to the timing of annual reviews regardless of staff absenteeism or annual leave.

Questionnaires have highlighted an increased engagement from staff and increased awareness of the impact annual reviews have on kinship carers and how they feel when annual reviews do not take place.

Next steps include testing ideas to ensure the improvement is sustainable, such as monthly informal learning forums, focus groups, bi-monthly kinship support groups with view to spreading improvements to all annual reviews for both kinship and non-kinship foster carers.

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Title: Improving Children and Young People’s feedback on their experience of the Guardian Ad Litem Agency

Improvement Team: Teresa Fallon & John Sheldon, NIGALA

Mentor: David Hamilton

Recognising the low rate of feedback from children and young people, this improvement initiative aims to increase feedback from children and young people on their experience of the guardian ad item service from 20% to 30% by October 2018.

A number of changes were tested, including:
- Reducing the number of questions on feedback from 49 to 9
- Stopping an automated system and introduced a personal system
- Changing the age from 5+ to 7+
- Introducing an appreciation gesture for all
- Addressing staff culture.

Measures include the number of responses, the increase in number and % of young people who submit feedback and improved engagement with service users.
To date a better feedback system has been achieved, involving staff and young people, with increased feedback and profile of feedback, integrating “What Matters to You.”

Staff have been engaged to address culture and next steps include engaging service users in efforts to change the culture and sustain and spread the improvements.

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Adult Services Improvement Projects

• Wheels in Motion - Transport Service Cancellations

• Valuing Social Care Practice

• Getting Monitoring Right

• What Matters to Me

• Service User Involvement in Day Opportunities Planning

• Keeping Safe: Protecting Communities No Matter Where You Live

• Maintaining Northern Ireland Social Care Council Registration

• What Matters to You: Improving Engagement between Lay Assessors and Residents during Inspections

• Identification of Young Carers within Acute Psychiatric Inpatient Unit
Title: Wheels in Motion - Transport Service Cancellations

Improvement Team: Patsie McManus

Mentor: Teresa McKee

Within day service facilities for adults with learning disabilities in the North Down & Ards area, a high level of bus cancellations has been impacting on service users and their families.

The aim of the Wheels in Motion project is to decrease the number of transport cancellations effecting service users and their families at one Training & Resource Centre by 50% in 3 months.

The improvements in process are:

- Introduction of driver rota - shared impact
- Introduction of checklist - increased efficiency
- Introduction of text bursts - improve communication
- Arranged parents / carer information sessions.

The project group consists of the transport department and day services staff, a parent representative and service user representative. We have taken a co-production approach to reduce the number of bus cancellations and the number of service users impacted whilst creating a culture of greater understanding through improved communication and sharing of ideas.

The project team have the shared will of improving the experience for service users and are motivated to work together and learn from each other’s experiences and to share our learning across services. There is also a will amongst the team to continually improve and create the best service possible.

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Title: Valuing Social Care Practice

Improvement Team: Tessa Murphy & Frances Kelly

Mentor: Roisin McCann

No formal way exists to measure learning outcomes regarding social care staff levels of competence and confidence in transferring learning into practice post training.

This improvement initiative aims to increase staff confidence in transferring learning achieved from training courses directly to their practice from 20% to 80% by October 2018.

Through completion of a series of PDSA cycles based on ongoing consultation with social care staff, managers and other relevant agencies (i.e. NISCC) we have developed and implemented an evaluation tool within a day centre that cultivates and promotes a culture of developing staff confidence and creating opportunity for reflection on training and transference of learning.

Staff have increased their confidence in transferring learning to practice and providing evidence of their KSF and NISCC requirements. Data also shows a distinct improvement in staff identification of learning and their confidence in addressing learning / issues with their Line Manager.

Next steps are to continue to promote the identification and transference of learning as a standard item within the supervision process, continue to progress service user involvement and spread this evaluation process across all day centre facilities and eventually across all social care staff within the Trust.

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Title: Getting Monitoring Right

Improvement Team: Mary May & Myrtle Harron

Mentor: Norma Cairns

The lack of direction and cohesion within the monitoring process in nursing homes has led to confidence issues amongst social workers within Primary Care and Older Peoples Services, who are tasked with monitoring the health and social care needs of service users.

The aim of this initiative is to improve levels of social workers’ confidence in nursing home monitoring visits from 60% to 80% by October 2018. We aim to do this by introducing a person centred approach to monitoring visits that improves quality and consistency.

Working with social work and nursing staff, in consultation with service users and carers, a pro forma has been developed that standardises practice and aims to improve monitoring visits. This pro forma has been amended following PSDA cycles. Social workers’ confidence levels were measured alongside process measures such as time taken to complete a monitoring visit and write it up.

Levels of confidence amongst social workers have increased with regards to monitoring visits and continue to be measured.

Next steps include the establishment of a focus group to increase the element of co-production and co-design through greater involvement with service users and their families. This group will identify further improvements to the monitoring process that will be tested through PDSA cycles.

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Title: What Matters to Me

Improvement Team: John McCosker & Kitty Downey,

Mentor: Caragh McLaughlin

This improvement initiative sought to maximize the benefits for individuals availing of short breaks in a community based inpatient rehabilitation unit. By October 2018 the improvement team aim to increase to 20% the number of service users who will have a “What Matters to Me” plan completed during their short break.

The team have tested a number of change ideas including the development of a “What Matters to Me” plan and improving access to Wi-Fi to enable the use of electronic devices such as Alexa or an iPad. Staff training has also been developed connected to enhancing personalized practice.

Measures to date have shown over 20% of service users have a plan, with very positive feedback received from service users, carers and staff.

The improvement project has improved communication between staff and service users providing a vehicle for open conversation about what matters to them. The introduction of technology has improved all aspects of the service users experience particularly those with sensory needs.

The “What Matters to Me” Plan is now part of the standard admission process and the initiative will be rolled out to all service users who use the facility.

Next steps will be to explore how the improvements can be spread to other physical disability services in the Trust.

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Recognising the barriers that existed to service users being actively involved in their initial assessment and individual development, this improvement initiative aims to increase involvement, ownership and motivation in day opportunities planning to 50% of service users by December 2018.

To increase involvement and a sense of ownership, a number of changes were tested, including focus groups and questionnaires with existing service users, redesigning the initial assessment documentation and training for all staff in Quality 2020 to increase their knowledge of quality improvement.

As a result, the initial assessment document including the care plan has been redesigned and a new development plan introduced with the involvement of service users.

This has greatly increased service user engagement and also motivated the staff group to accept and be part of the change.

The initial aim has outgrown the project with a number of different strands developing.

Next steps will be to further test changes made at a local level and measure the improvements before spreading further.

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Title: Keeping Safe: Protecting Communities No Matter Where You Live

Improvement Team: Elizabeth Craig & Scott Fleming

Mentor: Caroline McGonigle

This improvement initiative aims to improve the understanding and engagement of service users, carers and staff in adult safeguarding in a nursing or residential home setting.

Recognising there is limited understanding and engagement regarding adult safeguarding in these settings, a quality improvement team of service users, carers and staff was developed to ensure collaborative improvement and a focus group established to generate improvement ideas.

Changes such as adult safeguarding training sessions and development of a co-produced leaflet and poster were then tested.

An initial baseline measurement regarding staff, service users and carers understanding and engagement in adult safeguarding was obtained. Outcomes regarding the level of understanding and engagement of adult safeguarding were ascertained; using questionnaires and a Likert scale, with feedback from training sessions and focus groups.

An improvement in both the understanding and engagement of service users, staff and carers in adult safeguarding has been noted to date through use of a co-produced leaflet, poster and a bespoke training package.

Next steps include testing the project in other homes and in the community and establishing alternative Adult Safeguarding Clinics.

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The aim of registration with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC) of the entire social care and social work workforce is to protect the public through improving safeguards for vulnerable people, raising the standards of social care practice and strengthening the professionalism of the workforce. NISCC wants to ensure that registrants and employers have the knowledge and confidence to meet the standards.

This improvement initiative aims to ensure that social care workers in one nursing home will maintain NISCC registration by increasing their knowledge of post registration training and learning (PRTL) audit from 60% to 80% by December 2018.

To progress this improvement, a number of changes have been tested, including PRTL posters and leaflets to employers, an initial letter to social care workers including a link to the website with guidance materials, coaching and guidance for managers and supervisors and systems in the workplace to capture the required information for PRTL.

Measures include the % level of confidence and knowledge of social care staff, % satisfaction with the letter and guidance and satisfaction with staff training re: PRTL.

To date how we engage with registrants has had positive feedback, indicating satisfaction with the NISCC letter and guidance, and improved link to the website. Guidance has been made available in hardcopy and measures show an increased knowledge and confidence in understanding how to meet PRTL requirements.

Next tests of change will be how registrants are communicated with, the type and design of guidance material and to engage managers to clarify and aid their involvement in supporting staff who have been selected for PRTL.

Next steps will be to improve support for managers in supporting staff selected for PRTL.

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Title: “What Matters to You”: Improving Engagement between Lay Assessors and Residents during Inspections

Improvement Team: Kylie Connor & Alice McTavish with RQIA Residential Care Homes Team

Mentor: Pauline Thompson

The aim of this improvement initiative is to increase the quality of feedback received from residents and their representatives in one residential care home from 44% to 90% by March 2019.

Lay assessors, who met with residents and their representatives during inspections, were not provided with suitable documents to record the lived experience of residents and did not contribute usefully towards the inspector’s assessment.

A project team was established and focus groups undertaken with residents, resident representatives and also with Lay Assessors and Inspectors.

An engagement tool and accompanying guidance document has been developed to assist Lay Assessors engage with residents and capture and record feedback for RQIA inspectors.

Baseline data gathered from sampling Lay Assessor and inspector feedback, using four agreed quality indicators, indicated 44% as current quality of feedback.

An engagement tool template and guidance document has been tested in co-production with focus groups and is being refined with further ‘live’ testing in the home. Initial indications are that significant improvements have been made.

Next steps include the design and co-production of a training module with Lay Assessors and Inspectors for existing and new Lay Assessors.

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Title: Identification of Young Carers within Acute Psychiatric Inpatient Unit

Improvement Team: Denise Scott & Lisa Hannah,

Mentor: Kathy Lavery

Frequently young carers are not being identified when parents or relatives are admitted for inpatient assessment and/or treatment.

This improvement initiative aims to increase the number of young carers identified by social work professionals for patients admitted to a psychiatric unit by September 2018.

A number of changes were tested including development of an audit tool to prompt social work staff in the unit to consider young carers within their assessment.

An awareness session on the needs of young carers and supports available and the referral process was provided by Action for Children for the social work team.

Two prompt questions were then developed in partnership with a former young carer and Action for Children, which were shared with other professionals within the multi-disciplinary team to include in their own assessments.

Measures included:

• The number of young carers identified within the unit each month
• The number of young carers who consented to onward referral for assessment with Action for Children
• Increased staff understanding of the needs of young carers, the supports available and the referral process.

To date, ten young carers have been identified and nine of these have been referred to Action for Children. Since the awareness session provided by Action for Children, 100% of the social work team in the unit feel they have a clear understanding of the needs of young carers and feel confident in referring a young carer for support.

Next steps will be to spread to the multi-disciplinary team on one specific ward in the unit and further test the prompt questions until they become standard practice.

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A Regional Quality Network for Social Work

A regional quality network has been established for social workers who have trained in quality improvement.

The network facilitates the sharing of innovative practice, enabling network members to lead or contribute to quality initiatives within their own Trust with the aim of supporting continuous improvement in social work practice.

The network meets five times per year, with meetings hosted by each Trust in turn.

If you would like more information, please contact:

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Quality Improvement projects are taking place right across Health and Social Care in N Ireland. When a project is complete we’re encouraging the people involved in the project to let HSCQI know about it. The projects are listed within the categories below.

- Hospital based quality improvements
- Community based quality improvements
- Primary care and Partnership working
- Improvements related to medicines use
- Corporate and Support Services improvements.

To view projects already on the digital platform please go to http://qi.hscni.net/qi-projects/

Anyone wishing to have their QI Project poster added to the HSCQI Digital Platform please email the following information along with a pdf copy of your QI Poster to QIHUB@hscni.net

- Project Title
- Aim
- Final poster version
- Project Category as listed above.

This is a great way to share your QI work across the Region.
For further information on the Regional Quality Improvement Programme

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