

WHAT IF Team Development and Support Strategy

Staff

Support

PPC are Quarriers employment counselling service and is available to all staff. In addition Quarriers Managers have negotiated external supervision for all WHAT IF staff to be provided by GAMH. This is a recognition of the demands that can be placed on the resources of individual workers and the team in general when working with our young people.

Team Building

Two team building sessions per year will be organised for each WHAT IF service. These team building sessions should focus on the team working cooperatively on organised group tasks which stretch both the individuals and the team. Scenarios should not be related directly to work and an element of physical challenge should be included.

FAQs

As both services mature, it is important to record and consolidate best practice and identify what works. This will promote consistency and provide guidance for new staff and sessional staff. This should take the form of Frequently Asked Questions. This can be added to as our practice develops and improves.

Recruitment

Three main strategies will be used to recruit the appropriate staff to the WHAT IF services.

- We will regularly recruit externally, be explicit with applicants about the challenges of the job and only appoint based on ability to do the job rather than the need to fill vacancies.
- We will attempt to develop project workers through a supportive and developmental approach to sessional staff. This approach will include good induction, supervision, coaching and mentoring. This will be an explicit discussion with staff, who wish to aspire to this.
- Secondment opportunities will be offered to project workers within the current Quarriers youth housing support projects. The benefits and challenges of this secondment opportunity will be explicitly outlined to staff. Interested staff will be invited to an open evening, where they will meet existing staff.

Staff Profiling

Individual members of staff will be encouraged to develop their own profile which highlights their particular areas of interest or strength. This will differ from their

individual development and competency plans, as their profiles will be explicit statements which are openly shared with colleagues and others. This profiling will allow the individual and team resources to be identified and strengthened, will also targeting learning and training opportunities towards the appropriate individuals.

Assertive Problem Solving

Quarriers senior management will adopt a creative and assertive approach to solving issues and problems which arise from staff in the project. This may involve managers departing from existing standard approaches, in recognition of the demands of the current job, to ensure that staff stability and retention is promoted.

Practice development

Practice development seminars

Monthly practice development seminars will be held jointly within the WHAT IF services. These seminars will involve external contributors. The main focus will be on using the external contributions to develop, explore and inform the development of best practice within the services. The seminars will not be used for external agencies to provide information about their services, as this can be done elsewhere. These joint events will also facilitate practice discussions across the services.

External specialised training

Opportunities to access specialized external training will be provided to members of staff.

Raison d'etre – project philosophy

It would be our intention to develop a working philosophy which underpins and articulates our approach to young people and the interventions we employ to support and nurture them. This would explicitly state what we do and why we do it. This philosophy will also be enhanced and developed as our practice matures.

Organisational raids

The projects will be willing to learn from other organisations, while also sharing our own experiences with them. This could take the form of organisational raids, where we explicitly take best practice or approaches and import them into our project. A mutual approach to this process will also encourage the development of strong links with other providers with a shared philosophy on how to work with young people.

Research proposal

The services will also be involved in research which will attempt to identify the gender differences and similarities in relation to the impact of trauma/abuse by vulnerable

young women and men, while also assessing the effectiveness of our service interventions.

Service delivery

Seasonal service delivery

The services will adopt different styles of service delivery to acknowledge the challenges and opportunities that are presented in delivering a community based service across 365 days per year.

Reflective practice

Members of staff will be encouraged to keep a record of their experiences of working with young people. Staff will be encouraged to share these reflections with colleagues to share both practice and anxieties. This form of recording and reflection will contribute to building resilience within the team.

One-to-one contact

There will be a recognition of the emotional and physical impact on workers of delivering intensive supports to the young people. A team approach to meeting the needs of the young people within the services will be employed. Each young person will have a project worker who takes lead responsibility for coordinating the supports and interventions they experience within their support plans.

Length of contact

Our length of contact with young people and the intensity of this contact will be closely monitored to ensure that staff do not experience unhelpful levels of stress. Supervision and team meetings will be used to acknowledge this issue and identify a range of appropriate responses, which may include rotation of staff and short periods of time out for staff from individual young people.

Counselling

Young people will be supported and encouraged to utilize the counselling sessions provided externally by SAY Women.

Alternative health therapies

Both services will adopt an inclusive approach to use of alternative approaches and therapies in relation to our young people.