

Subscription to the 'Better Services for People who Self-Harm' Programme

1. Service standards

We will provide you with a manual of service standards for professionals working with people who self-harm. These are based on a review of key documents, including the NICE guideline for self-harm, guidance from the Royal College of Psychiatrists, the Faculty of Accident and Emergency, the Royal College of Nursing, the Department of Health, and others. The standards are mapped against the Healthcare Commission's 'Standards for Better Health', allowing you to demonstrate compliance against some of their core and developmental standards. The standards have gone through a consultation process with healthcare professionals, service users and voluntary organisations.

2. Audit tools and guidance

A series of tools and guidance notes to support the collection of your local data will be provided. Much of the data will be collected electronically, via a series of short surveys for staff and service users.

3. Peer-review

Your local team will be expected to host a one day peer-review by another team and attend a visit at another hospital in the region, to discuss the findings of your initial data in a supportive and educational manner. This is a critical part of the programme, where valuable lessons are learned from seeing best practice elsewhere and from frank discussion about problems and exploring potential solutions. In preparation for the peer review, your project team leader will be invited to attend a free training session by the central project team on 'how to lead a peer-review'.

4. Data analysis and local report

All of your local data will be collated and analysed by the central project team. Your team will receive a local report detailing your performance against the standards and areas in need of improvement. The report will incorporate the views of staff from all of the main groups involved, as well as feedback from service users.

5. Report of aggregated findings

We will provide you with regional and national reports, containing aggregated data from all participating services. This will allow you to benchmark your performance anonymously against those of your collaborative, and against the national pool of teams. By comparing your results with other teams, you may be able to argue for extra resources. The national report will also include a helpful list of 'experts' to contact for advice on specific issues.

6. Local learning Events

Your team will be invited to attend a series of free events to hear about successful interventions taking place to improve services for people who self-harm. We will also provide you with expert advice on action planning and in particular, 'Plan, Do Study, Act' (PDSA) methodology.

7. Self-harm newsletter

We will provide a quarterly newsletter containing policy news, project updates and papers written by members describing successful service improvement initiatives.

8. E-mail discussion group

This is a free service open to all participating teams. The discussion group is a speedy way to access the experience and knowledge of individuals (staff and service users) from a range of backgrounds. The list can also be used to advertise relevant events, publications and job vacancies, free of charge.

9. Re-audit

One year after initial data collection, a re-audit will take place to measure the improvements your team has made. You will receive a summary of your performance, which will highlight your success as a team, and list any areas that still require action.

10. National Event

This event will mark the end of the project/programme and teams will present summaries of problems and progress in your service and share lessons learned through learning workshops and seminars, run by members and other experts in the field. Members can also feed back their views on the national programme and influence the future direction of the work. Members will receive a subsidised entry fee (no more than £50 per head), instead of the non-members fee (£140).

11. Certificate of Participation

On completion of the eighteen-month programme, your team will receive a 'Certificate of Participation'. The certificate, awarded by the Royal College of Psychiatrists, confirms that your local team has demonstrated a commitment to ongoing evaluation and quality improvement, and is striving to meet best practice standards.

12. A structure for joint working

Because teams will be drawn from mental health, emergency departments, ambulance services and service user/voluntary sector organisations, involvement in this project will provide you with an infrastructure that will enhance communication across different services. This collaboration should benefit teams enormously, even after the initial programme of work has ended. Teams will also receive extensive and valuable input from service users that may currently be unavailable.

13. Ongoing support from the central project team

The central project team will be on hand to advise you on all aspects of the programme from start to finish, including data collection, peer-review and applying interventions. We aim to troubleshoot for local teams and point them in the direction of other members taking part to avoid services 're-inventing the wheel'. We will also be consulting with teams regularly to ensure that the programme of work is manageable.