

## **Advisory Group to the Community of Communities**

### **Terms of Reference**

#### **Purpose of the Advisory Group**

The advisory group comprises of the chairs and deputy chairs of the reference and development groups that reflect the membership of the Community of Communities. In addition it includes professionals who represent key interests and areas of expertise in the field of Therapeutic Communities (TCs) and service users who have experience of using TCs. The purpose of the group is to advise and further the work of the Community of Communities whose purpose is to improve the quality of TCs by supporting standards-based peer-review and accreditation.

The group will advise the project team that leads the Community of Communities on matters relating to:

- The promotion and further development of the work of the Community of Communities;
- National policy and service context for Therapeutic Communities;
- The methods underpinning the work programme;
- The engagement and involvement of other organisations in the work programme; including professional associations and organisations that represent the interests of service users and of carers;
- The involvement of service users in all aspects of the work programme;
- The involvement of carers;
- The development of national recommendations arising from the review process and strategies for implementing these recommendations;
- Sources of funding to further the work of the Community of Communities.

#### **Membership**

The advisory group comprises a minimum of 10 members and a maximum of 15 members.

If not a chair or vice chair of a reference group, members of the advisory group are appointed following advertisement of the position

The Advisory Group also includes up to 2 service user experts who are recruited to this role by the project team through a process of advertisement and interview. These service user experts are full members of the advisory group.

In addition to full members, the chair of the advisory group, in consultation with the programme manager, may appoint co-opted members to the group (for example expert advisors) provided these do not constitute more than one-half of the group's total membership.

Members normally serve for a period of 3 years. They may stand for re-election/reappointment/re-nomination for a further period of three years.

The advisory group is led by the Chair who will serve for a period of three years.

The chair is selected by advisory group after advertisement

Appendix 1 is the role specification for members of the advisory group and appendix 2 for the chair.

An advisory group meeting is quorate when 5 or more members are present. At least 4 of these members should be full members.

If members miss more than two meetings in a row their membership of the group will be reviewed by the Chair.

## Appendix 1

# Member of the Community of Communities Advisory Group

### *Role and Responsibilities*

The advisory group is a key component of the Community of Communities. Its purpose and way of working is described in the group's terms of reference. A member's role is to participate actively and collaboratively in the process of advising and representing the team that manages the Community of Communities.

The member's specific responsibilities are to:

1. Attend meetings of the advisory group and to participate in its discussions and in the formulation of its advice about the issues that fall within its remit (see terms of reference).
2. Keep up-to-date with revisions of the standards used by the Community of Communities and with new developments in the methods used to monitor compliance with these.
3. Promote the work of the Community of Communities within any stakeholder group with which they have influence.
4. For members who are nominated by a professional association or other national body:
  - i. to represent the perspective of that organisation on the advisory group;
  - ii. to promote the interests of the Community of Communities within the organisation that they represent;
  - iii. to act as a link with the members of the organisation that they represent.
5. Undertake any other duties related to the role purpose and terms of reference.

### **Person Specification**

#### **Essential**

- Broad knowledge and experience relevant to Therapeutic Communities.
- Good interpersonal skills.
- Good spoken communication skills.
- Positive manner and ability to enable the forming of consensus.
- Understanding of the principles of quality improvement.

#### **Desirable**

- Practical experience of managing quality improvement work.
- Experience of working with service users or their representatives.

## Appendix 2

# Chair of the Community of Communities Advisory Group

### *Role and Responsibilities*

The advisory group is a key component of the Community of Communities. Its purpose and way of working is described in the group's terms of reference. The chair's role is to ensure that the advisory group works in a manner that optimises the quality of advice it gives.

The chair's specific responsibilities are to:

1. Chair the Community of Communities advisory group in a manner that ensures that it abides by its terms of reference and that ensures that all members of the group are able to contribute fully.
2. When desirable, to meet with service user and carer members of the advisory group before meetings to ensure that they are fully briefed and to discuss their input to the meeting.
3. Advise and support the Community of Communities team to recruit to and maintain an advisory group that represents key stakeholder interests.
4. Maintain regular contact with the Community of Communities team and to be available to deal with ad hoc requests from the project team.
5. Provide occasional advice and input to the College Centre for Quality Improvement team using assured channels of communication.
6. Act as a spokesperson to represent the interests of the services that are members the Community of Communities and to encourage other services to join the scheme.
7. Communicate information about the Community of Communities to individuals, Faculties and departments within the College, within other partner organisations and externally, for example to other professional associations and to the Department of Health.
8. Represent the Community of Communities at Department of Health and other planning groups that develop policy.
9. Head up targeted lobbying about specific priority issues.
10. Advocate developments in local services.
11. Prepare papers for publication in peer-reviewed journals and more popular media and for presentation at conferences.
12. Undertake any other duties related to the group's terms of reference.

## **Person Specification**

### **Essential**

- Experience of chairing committees at the national or regional level.
- National expert on Therapeutic Communities e.g. publications and conference papers.
- Excellent interpersonal skills.
- Excellent written and spoken communication skills.
- Positive manner and ability to enable the forming of consensus about decisions.
- Understanding of the principles of quality improvement.
- The person's service is a member of the Community of Communities

### **Desirable**

- Practical experience of managing quality improvement work.
- Experience of working with senior civil servants, health service staff and policy makers.