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Guidance Module 1

Trusted Assessor Roles

Supplementary

Guidance for Adults



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1. Strategic Fit

Chapter 10 of the statutory guidance issued under Part 9 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 sets out local authorities and local health boards responsibilities to develop written agreements concerning formal and less formal partnership arrangements which involve the delegation of functions.¹ Trusted Assessor models should be considered in this context.

2. What is a Trusted Assessor?

“A trusted assessment involves a trusted assessor – someone acting on behalf of and with the permission of multiple organisations – carrying out an assessment of health and/or social care needs in a variety of health or social care settings.”²

3. What is the aim of this Organisational Agreement Guidance Module?

To provide guidance/information to organisations:

- To provide support to develop Trusted Assessor roles/functions
- To provide information on what good looks like when developing organisational agreements

4. Why have Supplementary Guidance?

To support the development of “trusted” relationships between health boards, adult social care, third sector and provider services that bring together all stakeholder to codesign the service, for mutual benefit of the organisations and to provide better outcomes for the person.

Trusted Assessor roles are embedded in National Policy and Practice Guidance

The term ‘trusted assessor’ is used in a number of national documents in Wales:

- Trusted Assessor is referred to as one of the building blocks and one of the key principles in Home First.
- The Hospital Discharge Service Requirements WG COVID-19 ³ also refers to the role of Trusted Assessor. This requirement is expected

to be confirmed in the anticipated updated WG Discharge Requirements.

- Trusted Assessor Role Guidance circulated by WG on 21st December 2022.

In addition, the Part 3 Code of Practice (Assessing the Needs of Individuals) issued under the Social Services and Well-being Wales Act 2014 ⁴ states:

“Local authorities should work with their partner local health boards and NHS trusts to agree arrangements across the local health board footprint area for delegating practitioners to undertake assessments for care and support.”

5. What are the Benefits of the Trusted Assessor role/function?

The benefits of the Trusted Assessor role/function include:

- Reduced duplication of effort and of tasks (cost avoidance, increasing value)
- Smooth out the referral interface between organisations.
- Reduces inappropriate or incomplete referrals.
- Provides a single proportionate assessment of person’s needs.
- Supports joined up integrated working across health, social care and third sector to improve service users’ experience and outcomes.



6. What are the Key Principles of developing a Trusted Assessor role/function

- Trusted assessment is a function that can be taken on behalf of others. It can be a dedicated role or a function as part of an existing role.
- The function of a trusted assessment can be between different organisations and professional groups and operate across existing boundaries.
- There is a clear understanding of risks, costs, and the local market to inform any agreement between organisations.
- Trusted Assessment agreements do not remove or replace statutory responsibilities, rather organisations/roles retain their statutory responsibilities but “trust” another organisation to undertake an assessment function on their behalf.
- There is strong leadership and governance arrangements
- There should be written agreements in place, with executive sign off, which detail the function of the Trusted Assessor Scheme. These should be explicit agreements between partners, with governance arrangements and due diligence processes in place e.g., for making financial/resource commitments on behalf of one or more partners, periodic review of the scheme.

Provide added value and be person focused, designed around achieving the best outcome for the person



7. What information should be included in an Organisational Agreement for Trusted Assessor Schemes

Trusted Assessor Scheme Agreements between organisations should include details on:

- The scope of the scheme, what is included and what is excluded.
- The rationale for the scheme development and the expected outcomes and benefits
- A risk assessment and actions taken to mitigate any identified risk
- Nature/types of assessments to be included and excluded, including any commissioning agreements for ongoing services
- An equalities impact assessment
- Service specification to include the processes and pathways that have been agreed, the aim should be to streamline and avoid repeat assessments between professional groups and partners
- Service operational guidance, e.g., how will complaints be managed, what times of the day, and days of the week is the function/role available, escalation procedures and reporting hierarchies.
- Standards of expected practice should be drafted, along with a delegation framework and clear role descriptors
- Clear projection of the resources required including the costs of any short-term receiving services arranged for a person to move to the next stage in their care journey. Details must include the services and approach regarding any cost to the person in line with the code of practice on charging for social care services.
- Details of the autonomy and accountability arrangements for the commissioning (where agreed includes increases to current commissioned services) and/or the commissioning or provision of equipment and other services on behalf of partners to support the next stage of care in a person's care pathway
- Details of receiving services and review requirements for individuals (it is anticipated these services would be used to support recovery and viewed as preventative and be outside of local authority fairer charging guidance prior to review). Where this is not the case, the

Part 4 and 5 Code of Practice (Charging and Financial Assessment) ⁵ sets out the requirements on local authorities to undertake a financial assessment of a person when using their discretion to seek from that person a financial contribution, or a reimbursement, towards the cost of securing care and support or support to an unpaid carer. This will, inevitably, be expected to impact on the potential responsiveness and benefits of Trusted Assessor arrangements.

- Professional competencies and skill levels required and the defined boundaries applicable.
- End to end process for patient and carer involvement and feedback
- Information governance agreements, with detail on any access to partner organisations computer operating systems.
- Information Governance arrangements in compliance with regulations to include the access to, recording of, storing and transfer of information and data.
- Accountability for resource risk where temporary or grant funding.
- Clear review deadlines and local governance arrangements including an evaluation process
- Clear outcome measures that would capture the effectiveness of the scheme/role/function
- Review and dispute mechanisms for resolving any challenge or concerns in a timely and professional manner

8. Summary

Developing Trusted Assessor roles support the embedding of “trust” and provides organisations the opportunity to streamline process, reduce duplication of effort and provide better outcomes for the individual.



9. References

¹ Social Services and Well Being Act 2014 Part 9 (<https://www.gov.wales/partnership-arrangements-care-and-support-guidance>)

² Trusted Assessor Role Guidance circulated by WG in Dec 22

³ Hospital Discharge Service Requirements: Covid19 – Gov. Wales April 2020

⁴ <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-05/part-3-code-of-practice-assessing-the-needs-of-individuals.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-04/social-services-and-well-being-wales-act-2014-part-4-and-5-code-of-practice-charging-and-financial-assessment.pdf>