

Who do the standards apply to?

The standards apply to all organisations providing mental and emotional wellbeing and suicide prevention services which are funded by the PHA.

PHA may also apply these standards as appropriate to other health and social wellbeing themes or other elements of PHA business.

Please note that all references to practitioners, therapists, counsellors, volunteers and staff within these standards, includes paid, unpaid and voluntary staff.

Core standards:

Criteria

- 1 Management and organisational governance
- 2 Employment and volunteering structures
- 3 Organisational practice and service delivery
- 4 Monitoring and evaluation
- 5 Communication processes

Additional standards:

Criteria

- 6 Training
- 7 Self-harm services
- 8 Counselling
- 9 Complementary therapy
- 10 Bereavement

Overview of

PHA quality standards for services promoting mental and emotional wellbeing and suicide prevention

Introduction

Improving mental health and wellbeing and reducing levels of suicide in the population of Northern Ireland is a key priority for the Public Health Agency (PHA). Quality improvement is a common goal and is central to the development of health and social care services. Improving quality is focused on three main areas integral to the modernisation and reform agenda:

1. Setting minimum standards to strengthen services, practice and improve outcomes for service users.
2. Improving governance arrangements and improving the way in which service providers across all sectors manage their business.
3. Improving the way in which service providers are held to account for the services they provide.

(Source: PHA Quality Standards for Services Promoting Mental and Emotional Wellbeing and Suicide Prevention, Jan 2015, p. 4)

What is a standard?

The PHA defines quality standards as an essential level of quality to ensure safe and effective practice against which performance can be measured. Standards are designed to encourage and support improved services.

It is important that standards do not become outdated and therefore these will be regularly monitored, reviewed and updated drawing on the best up-to-date evidence available.

**Download the Standards
from PHA website
<http://bit.ly/MHstandards>**

Using the standards

The standards will be used to measure quality by providing a framework to assess your organisation or service against.

The document is divided into a number of sections, each of which relates to a specific area of work (please see overleaf).

Each section contains:

- a number of defined standards, i.e. explicit statements of expected quality;
- an explanation of what the standards mean;
- examples of how you can evidence that your organisation meets the standard.

It is important to note that not all sections within the standards may be relevant to your organisation or service.