



Client Involvement and Empowerment Strategy 2021- 2023

Introduction

QVT Trust is dedicated to strengthening the ways it engages with people who use its services and enabling them to become better involved in helping design, shape and monitor services to ensure they continually improve and meet the needs of our local communities. In this strategy we aim to build on our relationships with clients so there is greater parity and opportunities for genuine collaboration. The changes we make in QVT are co-produced with our clients. We recognise that equality issues of religion, race, disability, sexuality, age, gender, ethnicity, and culture among other personal circumstances, must be integral to clients' involvement. We aim for all clients to be treated with respect and dignity and valued as equal citizens.

This strategy focusses on our ambition to create more opportunities for clients to get involved in all parts of the organisation and to co-produce service improvements and new service design.

The goals

The starting point for this strategy is our collective investment to:

1. Standardise methods of sharing information and consult with clients around the different schemes.
2. Develop and consolidate the Client Development Program.
3. Offer a range of training to clients and with staff enabling the development of new skills and access to new roles.
4. Set clear robust systems for ensuring clients are valued and rewarded for their work (including arrangements for paying clients and ensuring sufficient regularity which falls in line with national policy).
5. Ensure staff have the skills, information, and training to support clients in individual support planning, and recovery.
6. Consolidate the in-house counselling service to provide clients with ongoing psychological support which will facilitate their recovery and journey into independence.
7. Research fundings to support and fund activities mentioned above and those developed through needs assessments.

1. Standardise methods of sharing information and consult with clients around the different schemes.

What we aim to achieve:

- We will build trust and better relationships with people who use our services so they feel more confident and in control of choosing how best their needs can be met.
- We will ensure clients have better access to information about services in QVT.
- We will make sure that clients living in different schemes are offered different opportunities to get involved in the service.

Actions:

- Communicate more frequently and widely with clients and their families and communities to engage them and create meaningful support plans.
- Share more information on our website and on house notice boards so clients, significant others involved in their life and their carers can find out about local events, and resources, and can research on mental health topics available for participation.
- Schedule in advance house meetings, board meetings and quality review groups so that clients have enough notice.

Outcomes:

- People who use our services will feel more involved and in control of their own recovery.
- Clients will have greater awareness about mental health issues and accessible information and involvement opportunities.

2. Develop and consolidate the Client Development Program

What we aim to achieve:

- Clients will take ownership of their support plan.
- Housing officers will work in partnership with clients, the client development department and other departmental leads, volunteers, and students.
- We will unify actions of different departments to support, engage and empower our clients
- We will develop and consolidate a framework which will support the holistic wellbeing of our clients.

Actions:

- Develop a program of workshops and one to one session on the different areas of the Recovery Star.
- Arrange training for staff and clients on the Recovery Star Chart.
- Involve clients in 3 monthly meetings review of the Star Chart and goals, arranging three-way meetings with clients, Housing Officers, and volunteers.
- Engage clients in tailored workshops and one to one session to achieve specific goals.
- Signpost clients to local services, which will help them to achieve their goals.
- Work in partnership with local services, such as the Housing Solution Employment, CGL, and Slam Recovery College to name a few of the resources.

Outcomes:

- Increase the number of step-downs and move-ons
- Decrease the number of evictions
- Increase the number of goals achieved by clients
- Improved holistic wellbeing of clients
- Support clients to move on meaningfully, back to the community

3. Offer a range of training to clients, with staff enabling the development of new skills and access to new roles.

What we aim to achieve:

- We will standardise client involvement at the organisational level.
- We will develop a series of Training Modules, with clients actively contributing.
- We will provide specific training courses for clients who are interested in peer and volunteer roles.
- We will have a wide and diverse group of clients to consult with and listen to on how to improve services and in-service re-design.
- We will improve client skills and knowledge, so they feel supported in pieces of work they undertake so they can be better equipped to engage with more complex and challenging projects within the organisation, potentially leading to feeling confident to apply for paid positions.
- We will create a Quality Review Group so that there is greater parity and power sharing between clients and staff.
- We will make sure there is sufficient time and flexibility in these positions to engage and enable clients with mental health support needs. If staff ask for clients' help, then the expectations of involvement will be clearly written out and agreed, and it is the responsibility of the member of staff to support the clients.

Actions:

- Have a rolling programme of training for clients advertised through the Client Development Department to offer skills sessions to build clients confidence in undertaking distinct involvement opportunities- member of interview panels, representative on the committee, work group etc.
- Advertise and share information about all roles and opportunities to get involved and regularly circulate information about opportunities through our website, social media, clients' groups, and information boards.
- Send a survey to all clients asking which role they are interested in applying for and creating a list for clients to be contacted in the future.
- Create and run training for the different peer worker and volunteer roles.

Outcomes:

- Improve opportunities for clients to get involved in the service in a way that better suits them.
- Have a bigger and more skilled group of clients actively influencing and shaping our services in the Trust.

- Increase the number of activities for clients to contribute to service design and delivery in a constructive way
 - Offer training which can help clients to learn new roles, skills, and knowledge
 - Clients will know how the Trust is structured and which positions they can apply for to influence decision making.
- 4. Set clear, robust systems for ensuring clients are valued and rewarded for their work (including arrangements for paying clients and ensure this is sufficiently regulated and falls in line with national policy).**

What we aim to achieve:

- We will develop a robust and more comprehensive Reward and Recognition scheme which will ensure clients are valued for their contributions to the organisation in a suitable time, and in a variety of ways and means.
- We will introduce an affordable pay structure for client involvement that is set at a threshold which is in line with National policy and reflects 'Equal pay for work of equal value' and benefits clients to gain work experience, which may lead to different career opportunities.

Actions:

- Research in detail a national benchmarking standard for client reward and recognition schemes and how these might lead into permanent employment.
- Share and update information on the website and information boards
- Create a protocol to ensure clients are recognised and rewarded promptly and without delay.
- Measure year on year the number of clients who get involved in pieces of work, and how much we invest in client engagement activities.

Outcomes:

- Clear and transparent systems for rewarding and paying clients which demonstrate regularity and robust governance.
- Clients will be valued as equal partners.
- Contributes to building a culture of working equally with people who use our services.

- 5. Ensure staff have the skills, knowledge, and information about local resources to support clients in individual support planning and recovery.**

What we aim to achieve:

- We will ensure all staff, volunteers and students on placement have sufficient training and expertise to work collaboratively with clients in support planning, and actively promote clients' involvement.
- We will ensure all staff, volunteers, and students on placement, are sensitive to the needs of clients and are confident in how to engage and consult.

- We will ensure all staff are ‘culturally competent’ and EDI literate and know how to reach out to our most vulnerable communities.
- We will ensure staff have access to information about local resources, groups, and client involvement opportunities in the organisation and locally.

Actions:

- Have information on each scheme and community team base for staff about the client development program.
- Arrange training, coaching and mentoring support so that this ensures that all staff know how to engage and consult with clients in Communications, Complaints, Learning and Development, Safeguarding, HR, Mental Health, Finance, Housing and Employment, among other areas.
- Arrange induction and refresher training and coaching on the Recovery Star Chart, Setting Goals, Client Involvement, Co-Production
- Publish and share a monthly calendar of activities, posters, and leaflets about local community services.

Outcomes:

- All staff will have relevant information to share with clients.
- Staff will improve their skills and knowledge around how to work in partnership with clients.
- Staff know how to co-design and co-produce service improvement programmes
- Improved client engagement and a culture of working equally with people who use our services.

6. Consolidate the in-house counselling service, to provide clients with ongoing psychological support which will facilitate their recovery and journey into independence.

What we aim to achieve:

- We provide an in-house counselling service to our clients
- We will make psychological support more accessible and reduce waiting times for clients in need.
- We will help to reduce depression, anxiety, and isolation by supporting our clients to meaningfully engage in our tailored programmes based on individual needs.

Actions:

- Apply for grants to fund the project
- Employ one professional in-house counsellor
- Guarantee weekly sessions to clients requesting psychological support

Outcomes:

- Clients will have quicker access to psychological support with the added advantage of this being in- house. The programme will engage them in accessing support to

alleviate psychological, emotional, and other barriers to wellbeing, leading to improved outcomes and holistic development.

7. Research funding to support and fund activities mentioned above.

What we aim to achieve:

- We will work to sustain the Client Development Department and Program
- We will finance the training of clients once funding has been acquired
- We will finance external professional involvement to run workshops on the different areas of the Recovery Star and training modules
- We will continue to work to fund the Counselling program
- We will support and ensure a fair payment plan for volunteers, students, and clients

Actions:

- Continue working with a bid writing consultant to identify client development opportunities which can be funded
- Secure funding towards the client development program
- Develop a shortlist of prospective funders and refer to this for tailored programmes

Outcomes:

- Client activities will be financed through funding, at no added cost to the charity. QVT has had a good track record of securing funding towards client development activities. It is hoped that this new client development programme (and especially the focus around monitoring and outcomes) can attract future funding.
- QVT will become more established in fundraising from grant makers - both in terms of becoming more known to some of the key players such as the National Lottery Community Fund and in terms of becoming more practised at applying for funding and being accountable to funders (reporting, accurate spend, considering outputs and outcomes).

Action Plan

Actions	Actioned By	Lead By	When	Completed on
Standardise methods of sharing information and consult with clients around the different schemes.				
Communicate more frequently and widely with clients and their families and communities to engage them and create meaningful support plans.	Hosing Officers Client development coordinator	Deputy Head of Operations/ Scheme managers	Ongoing	
Share more information on our website and on house notice boards so clients, significant others involved in their life, and their carers can find out about local events, and resources, and can research on mental health topics available for participation.	Social Media Manger/ Housing Officers/ Client Development Co-ordinator	Deputy Head of Operations/ Social media manager	Ongoing	
Schedule in advance house meetings, board meetings and quality review groups so that clients have enough notice.	Housing officers Client Development Coordinator	Deputy Head of Operations/ Scheme Managers	Ongoing	
Develop and consolidate the Client Development Program				
Develop a program of workshops and one to one session on the different areas of the Recovery Star.	Client Development Department coordinator and students/ Deputy Head of Operation	Deputy Head of Operations	August 2021	
Arrange training for staff and clients on the Recovery Star Chart	Client Development Coordinator/ Deputy Head of Operations	Deputy Head of Operations & Client development co-ordinator	Oct 2021	
Involve clients in 3 monthly reviews of the Star Chart and goals, arranging three-way meetings with clients, Housing Officers, and volunteers	Housing officers/ Client Development Coordinators, volunteers, students	Deputy Head of Operations/ Scheme managers	Ongoing	
Engage clients in tailored workshops and one to one session to achieve specific goals	Housing Officers/ Clients Development Coordinators, volunteers, students	Client Development co-ordinator and manager	Ongoing	

Signpost clients to local services which will help them to achieve their goals	Housing Officers/ Clients Development Coordinators, volunteers, students	Deputy Head of Operations/Scheme managers	Ongoing	
Work in partnership with local services, such as the Housing Solution Employment, CGL, and Slam Recovery College to name a few of the resources.	Housing officers, Client Development coordinators	Client Development co-ordinator and manager	Ongoing	
Offer a range of training to clients and with staff enabling the development of new skills and access to new roles.				
Have a rolling programme of training for clients advertised through the Client Development Department to offer skills sessions to build clients confidence in undertaking distinct involvement opportunities- members of interview panels, representatives on the committee, work group etc.	Client Development co-ordinator	Deputy Head of Operations	Feb 2022	
Advertise and share information about all roles and opportunities to get involved and regularly circulate information about opportunities through our website, social media, clients' groups, and information boards	Clients Development coordinator, social media manager, housing officers	Deputy Head of Operations/ Social media manager/ Scheme managers	Ongoing	
Send a survey to all clients asking which role they are interested in applying for and creating a list for clients to be contacted in the future.	Client Development Coordinator	Deputy Head of Operations	From Aug 2021, to be sent off every 6 months	
Create and run training for the different peer worker and volunteer roles.	Client Development coordinator	Client Development coordinator and Deputy Head of Operations	March 2022	
Set clear robust systems for ensuring clients are valued and rewarded for their work (including arrangements for paying clients and ensuring sufficient regularity which falls in line with national policy)				

Research in details a national benchmarking standard for client reward and recognition schemes and how these might lead into permanent employment.	Client Development co-ordinator and Deputy Head of Operations	Deputy Head of Operations	Feb 2022	
Share and update information on the website and information boards	Social Media manager/ Client Development Coordinator/ Housing officers	Social media manager/Deputy head of Operations/ Scheme managers	Ongoing	
Create a protocol to ensure clients are recognised and rewarded promptly and without delay.	Client Development Coordinator/ Housing officers	Deputy head of Operations/ Scheme managers	Feb 2022	
Measure year on year the number of clients who get involved in pieces of work, and how much we invest in client engagement activities.	Client Development department/ Finance team	Deputy Head of Operations/ Finance Manager	Ongoing	
Ensure staff have the skills, information, and training to support clients in individual support planning, and recovery.				
Have information on each scheme and community team base for staff about the Client Development Program.	Client Development co-ordinator	Deputy Head of Operations	Ongoing	
Arrange training, coaching and mentoring support so that this ensures that all staff know how to engage and consult with clients in Communications, Complaints, Learning and Development, Safeguarding, HR, Mental Health, Finance, Housing and Employment among other areas.	HR department	Deputy Head of Operations/ HR manager	Ongoing	
Arrange induction and refresher training and coaching on the Recovery Star Chart, Setting Goals, Client Involvement, Co-Production	Deputy Head of Operations/ HR department	Deputy Head of Operations/ HR manager	Ongoing	
Publish and share a monthly calendar of activities, posters, and leaflets about local community services.	Client Development co-ordinator/ Housing Officers	Deputy Head of Operations/ Scheme Managers	Ongoing	
Consolidate the in-house counselling service, to provide clients with ongoing psychological support which will facilitate their recovery and journey into independence.				

Apply for grants to fund the project	Bid writing consultant	Deputy Head of Service/ Bid writing consultant	September 2021	
Employ one professional in-house counsellor	Client development Co-ordinator	HR department/ Deputy Head of Operations	Jan 2021	Jan 2021
Guarantee weekly sessions to clients requesting psychological support	Counsellor	Client Development Co-ordinator (acting Counsellor supervisor) and Deputy Head of Operations	Ongoing	
Research fundings to support and fund activities mentioned above and those developed through needs assessments.				
Continue working with a bid writing consultant to identify client development opportunities which can be funded	Deputy Head of Operations/ Finance Manager	Deputy Head of Operations/ Finance Manager	Ongoing	
Secure funding towards the client development program	Deputy Head of Operations/Bid Writing Consultant	Deputy Head of Operations/Bid Writing Consultant	Ongoing	
Develop a shortlist of prospective funders and refer to this for tailored programmes	Bid Writing Consultant	Operations Management team/Bid Writing Consultant	Ongoing	