

Quality Monitoring Policy

Current version approved: June 2009
Next refresh due 2010

1. Statement.

- 1.1 The Intercom Trust is committed to providing the best possible quality of service in all service-areas and at all levels of the Trust's operations, both externally and internally.

2. Responsible officer

- 2.1 The officer who has active responsibility on behalf of the Trustees for all issues of monitoring and quality control, including the implementation and monitoring of the working of this Policy, is the Executive Director.
- 2.2 The responsibilities of the Executive Director under this Policy are:
 - a. to ensure that this Policy is implemented across all levels of the Trust's operations;
 - b. to assess the learning and skills development needs of staff and volunteers in respect of quality management and monitoring issues, and to arrange appropriate training;
 - c. to ensure that the issues covered by this Policy are appropriately covered during the induction process for all new staff and volunteers;
 - d. to be active as the Trust's champion internally and externally for all issues of best practice and best value, both in respect of service delivery to individuals and communities, and also in respect of the Trust's relationships with funders and other partner agencies;
 - e. to assess and monitor the working of this Policy;
 - f. to review the working and the contents of this Policy at least once a year in consultation with both staff and volunteers, and with funders and other external stakeholders, and to report to the Trustees as and when appropriate.

3. Identifying and extending good practice

- 3.1 All employees and volunteers will:
 - a. familiarise themselves with all issues of good practice that relate to the work they are doing for the Trust;
 - b. actively ensure that they make themselves aware as far as possible of developing good practice on these issues regionally, nationally and internationally; and
 - c. develop and improve as far as they can the Trust's standards of good practice by making recommendations to the Executive Director via their line-manager or volunteer co-ordinator.

4. Quality in Service-Delivery: individuals and partner organisations

- 4.1 All Intercom employees and volunteers involved in service delivery to individuals and partner organisations (including funders) have personal responsibility for ensuring that:
- a. the Trust's standards for best practice are adhered to and enhanced at all times
 - b. they monitor all interactions with service-users and all advocacy activities undertaken in partnership with service-users so as to ensure that they can identify both any examples of particularly good practice and also any occasion where best practice standards may not have been met, and communicate them to their line-manager or volunteer co-ordinator.
 - c. any case where any concern has been or might be expressed about the standards of the Trust's service-delivery is communicated without delay to their line-manager or volunteer co-ordinator, or directly to the Executive Director.
- 4.2 In all issues relating to service delivery the staff and volunteers of the Trust shall prioritise at all times:
- a. the Trust's duty of confidentiality to all service-users irrespective of age and sexual orientation and gender identity; and
 - b. the Trust's active concern for the protection of all service-users and others who are protected by provisions of the Children Act 1989 and other relevant child-protection legislation and good-practice guidelines; and
 - c. the human rights of all who have any dealing with the Trust, as detailed in the Trust's Human Rights and Responsibilities Policy.

5. Quality in Service-Delivery: grants and service-level agreements

- 5.1 Intercom's staff will at all times bear in mind the terms and conditions of those grants or service-level agreements which relate to their work, and the agreed outcomes towards which the Trust is working in partnership with its funders.
- 5.2 Expenditure of restricted or dedicated resources (including direct expenditure of funds and also the allocation of staff and volunteer time) will wherever appropriate be audited in advance against the terms and conditions of any grant or agreement which may govern that particular activity. The audit process will assess whether the use of resources can be demonstrated to be:
- a. appropriate for that funding source,
 - b. compliant with all relevant agreements and undertakings,
 - c. calculated to deliver outcomes by the best route and according to best practice.
- 5.3 The resources allocated to any such audit process shall be proportionate both to the requirements of any terms and conditions involved and to the capacity of the Trust at that time.
- 5.4 Book-keeping and other financial and accounting records shall fully and transparently record the use made of all monies received as restricted grants.
- 5.5 Staff shall ensure that no undertaking is given, or terms and conditions accepted, for any proposed grant or other funding, or under the terms of any proposed contract, unless the Trust's senior staff have documented grounds for being confident that

the Trust's capacity in the relevant time-frame will be adequate to perform the obligations in compliance with the undertaking the Trust has given.

6. Activity monitoring

- 6.1 The Trust is committed to a continuous process of extending and improving its mechanisms for recording, monitoring, evaluating and analysing information concerning its activities.
- 6.2 All such mechanisms will be tailored to provide information which will enable staff and volunteers to monitor and evaluate the quality of the Trust's operations internally and externally.
- 6.3 The primary concerns of all staff or volunteers involved in setting up such mechanisms are that the information so gathered must, as appropriate:
 - a. at all times protect the confidentiality and other human rights of all service-users and others who have any form of contact with the Trust; and
 - b. document the Trust's activities for the purpose of actively implementing the Trust's duty of care and protection towards both its staff and volunteers and its service-users; and
 - c. enable the Trust to monitor and demonstrate compliance with the Trust's obligations under the terms and conditions of grants, contracts, or other formal undertakings; and
 - d. build up material which can add to the Trust's understanding of, and evidence-base for, the needs of the LGBT communities in and across the Trust's area of benefit; and
 - e. enable the Trust to develop and extend good practice in the areas of activity-monitoring and quality management.
- 6.4 All activity-monitoring will be proportionate to:
 - a. the needs and the human rights of the Trust's community service-users; and
 - b. the need of the Trust to develop and improve its services; and
 - c. the needs and requirements of funders and other partner agencies; and
 - d. the resources and capacity of the Trust.
- 6.5 It is a responsibility of all senior staff to consider carefully in advance whether the monitoring requirements of any proposed funding or service agreement or contract make a reasonable and proportionate demand on the Trust's resources, and specifically whether that demand is both consonant with the Trust's obligations to be able to provide services to the LGBT communities and other service-users and also proportionate to the Trust's capacity.
- 6.6 However, once a funding or service agreement has been entered into, it is an obligation on all staff and volunteers actively to ensure that the Trust has at all times complied, and can document its compliance, both with the monitoring requirements and with the other terms and conditions involved in that agreement.