



GM Housing First Quality Assurance Framework

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1. Overview

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of the document is to define how fidelity will be monitored, evaluated and managed by the Central Team at Great Places and the rest of the partnership to ensure consistency of delivery across Greater Manchester and multiple partners. It will also define expected quality assurance activities carried out by each delivery partner and minimum requirements for team leaders to follow to create a culture of reflection.

1.2. Document Scope

The document will provide a framework to allow the monitoring of the GM Housing First service and define key tools and methods that will be employed to oversee service fidelity of each delivery partner. The document will also define how this information will be used to inform future development of the GM Housing First Service.

2. Fidelity to the Housing First Principles

2.1. Introduction

The success of GM Housing First is dependant on how well our service adheres to the seven guiding principles of Housing First in England. Housing First England recommends:

“Commissioners and providers follow these principles as closely as possible when planning a Housing First service, and that those already delivering a project use them to review and refine their schemes on a regular basis. Evidence suggests that services with higher fidelity to the core principles of Housing First are more successful at generating positive outcomes for their clients, regardless of the operating context”

With this in mind, delivery partners should focus all aspects of their delivery around these principles and all of the assurance activities used during the GMHF pilot will be based around these guiding principles and how closely the pilot aligns to them.

2.2. The Principles

Principle 1: Everyone has a right to a home

- Housing First prioritises access to housing as quickly as possible
- Eligibility for housing is not contingent on any conditions other than willingness to maintain a tenancy
- The housing provided is based on suitability (stability, choice, affordability, quality, community integration) rather than the type of housing
- The individual will not lose their housing if they disengage or no longer require the support
- The individual will be given their own tenancy agreement.

Principle 2: Flexible support is provided for as long as is needed

- Providers commit to long-term offers of support which do not have a fixed end date; recovery takes time and varies by individual needs, characteristics and experiences
- The service is designed for flexibility of support with procedures in place for high/low intensity support provision and for cases that are ‘dormant’
- Support is provided for the individual to transition away from Housing First if this is a positive choice for them
- The support links with relevant services across sectors that help to meet the full range of an individual’s needs
- There are clear pathways into, and out of, the Housing First service..

Principle 3: Housing and support are separated

- Support is available to help people maintain a tenancy and to address any other needs they identify
- An individual’s housing is not conditional on them engaging with support
- The choices they make about their support do not affect their housing
- The offer of support stays with the person – if the tenancy fails, the individual is supported to acquire and maintain a new home

Principle 4: Individuals have choice and control

- People can choose the type of housing they have and its location within reason as defined by the context. (This should be scattered site, self-contained accommodation, unless an individual expresses a preference for living in shared housing).
- They have the choice, where possible, about where they live
- They have the option not to engage with other services as long as there is regular contact with the Housing First team
- People can choose where, when and how support is provided by the Housing First team
- People are supported through person-centred planning and are given the lead to shape the support they receive. Goals are not set by the service provider

Principle 5: An assertive engagement approach is used

- Staff are responsible for proactively engaging the people in the service c; making the service fit the individual instead of trying to make the individual fit the service
- Caseloads are small allowing staff to be persistent and proactive in their approach, doing 'whatever it takes' and not giving up or closing the case when engagement is low
- Support is provided for as long as each person requires it
- The team continues to engage and support the individual if they lose their home or leave their home temporarily

Principle 6: The service is based on people's strengths, goals and aspirations

- Services are underpinned by a philosophy that there is always a possibility for positive change and improved health and wellbeing, relationships and community and/or economic integration Individuals are supported to identify their strengths and goals
- Individuals are supported to develop the knowledge and skills they need to achieve their goals
- Individuals are supported to develop increased self-esteem, self-worth and confidence, and to integrate into their local community.

Principle 7: A harm reduction approach is used

- People are supported holistically
- Staff support individuals who use substances to reduce immediate and ongoing harm to their health
- Staff aim to support individuals who self-harm to undertake practices which minimise risk of greater harm
- Staff aim to support individuals to undertake practices that reduce harm and promote recovery in other areas of physical and mental health and wellbeing.

2.3. Assessing Fidelity to the Principles

The guiding principles were published in November 2016. Housing First England have always encouraged services to take ownership of reviewing fidelity to the principles. Homeless Link have been commissioned to review fidelity to the principles for the three MHCLG funded pilots. As the pilot progresses a representative from Homeless link will visit our pilot to assess how closely our service aligns to the principles. The activities have been designed using the fidelity guidance issued by Homeless Link (below).

The planned fidelity assessment activities have been created to help delivery partners to align their service to the principles and have been co-designed by the co-production panel. These could change to reflect feedback from Homeless Link following a periodic fidelity review. The central team will regularly review the QA activities as the pilot continues and will always seek input from the co-production panel, delivery partners and people accessing the service.



Housing First fidelity
guidance.pdf

3. Quality Assurance Activities

3.1. Internal Quality Assurance Activities

Due to the nature of the partnership there is an expectation that Housing First delivery teams will follow their own internal quality assurance processes to ensure the quality of service delivery is consistent and of an exceptional standard.

We also want to ensure a culture of reflection is created, offering support to staff required when working with people with multiple and complex needs.

Reflective practice helps staff to learn through and from experience and assist teams in:

- Learning to pay attention – listening to ourselves
- Coming face to face with our assumptions
- Noticing patterns
- Changing what we see
- Changing the way we see

It is hoped that with time to reflect, Housing First staff will become more self aware, will learn from their own experiences and identify improved ways of working for themselves and their teams.

Quality assurance records should be made available to the central team on request for auditing purposes and details of the activities carried out should be included in the self assessment report.

3.2. Minimum Requirements

GMHF staff should be supported by a robust framework of reflective activities to provide and contribute to a supportive, continuous learning culture. In order to achieve this, team leaders should provide oversight and supervision activities in line with the minimum standards below.

Activity	Frequency
100% Desk based case note/record reviews/audits To review recording of activities on GMTHINK in line with organisational and partnership recording standards and fidelity guidance	Monthly – 100% of records audited
1-2-1 case supervision with staff Reflective session where each case is discussed	Monthly, every member of staff
Group supervision The team reflect on their cases and work together to share good practice and address barriers	Weekly

4. Fidelity Assessment Activities

4.1. Self Assessment

Activity	Self Assessment
Overview and Purpose	<p>An opportunity for delivery partners to reflect on the service delivery over a period of time. The template asks for a rating on five key statements per principle lifted from homeless link's fidelity guidance. The ratings are associated with a sliding scale between 1 and 5. 5 = Always, 3 = Sometimes, 1 = Never.</p> <p>Delivery Partners are encouraged to rate their service delivery honestly to give an overall fidelity rating for each principle.</p> <p>Free text boxes ask for detail on barriers that affect the delivery of that principle along with examples of best practice in relation to each principle and overall. These will inform future developments and training opportunities and will form part of the agenda at monthly progress meetings.</p>
QA tool	 <p>GMHF Fidelity Self Assessment.xlsx</p>
Frequency	One per delivery partner every quarter.
Responsible	Zone Leads, Team Leaders
Reported to	Quality and Assurance Manager
Feedback	Quarterly Quality Assurance Review Meetings

4.2. Case Note and GMTHINK Record Reviews

Activity	Case Note and GMTHINK Record Reviews
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Overview and Purpose	<p>Desk based reviews of customer records and case notes on GMTHINK, primarily to check that the information is recorded correctly and in a timely fashion. Secondly to ensure the case notes being recorded reflect the 7 principles. Dip test to be selected at random from GMTHINK reports but will sample a cross-section of Housing First worker records to ensure consistency across delivery teams and the partnership.</p> <p>To help to identify areas for improvement for delivery partners recording on GMTHINK. To help to identify training needs for GMTHINK. To ensure that the way that Housing First workers are recording case notes on GMTHINK aligns to the principles of Housing First and reflects the work carried out.</p>
QA tool	 <p>GM THINK Review feedback template.xl</p>
Frequency	One per delivery partner, quarterly.
Responsible	QA Manager
Reported to	Team Leaders, Zone Leads, Project Manager and Programme Lead
Feedback	Email, Quarterly Quality Assurance Review Meetings

4.3. Guided conversations with people accessing GMHF

Activity	Guided conversations with people accessing GMHF
Overview and Purpose	<p>A guided conversation with people accessing GMHF services in accommodation. The co-production panel members will speak with people accessing the programme to assess how the service that each person has received so far aligns to the 7 principles.</p> <p>The results of this will inform conversations with the delivery partner around the feedback from people accessing the service and will help to develop some quality actions at Quarterly Quality Assurance Review Meetings. This will also feed in to the training and development plan.</p>
QA tool	Guided conversation interview guide and thematic framework in development by co-production panel.
Frequency	3 per delivery partner, quarterly.
Responsible	Co-production Panel members
Reported to	Quality Assurance Manager, Project Manager and Programme Lead
Feedback	Email, Quarterly Quality Assurance Review Meetings

4.4. Observation/Attendance at Caseload Review Meetings

Activity	Observation/Attendance at Caseload Review Meetings
Overview and Purpose	<p>Observation of meetings where whole Housing First delivery teams review caseloads and discuss cases. Observation records include sections for each of the principles for examples of good practice. It will also give the central team an opportunity to meet with delivery teams, gain feedback on barriers and address issues.</p> <p>To identify difficulties in delivering to principles, whether this is within the teams control or not and what is being done/needs to be done to address these difficulties. To identify training needs and bring consistency to how delivery teams review cases and carry out group reflective practice.</p>
QA tool	 Caseload Meeting Observation Record.
Frequency	One per delivery partner, quarterly
Responsible	QA Manager
Reported to	Team Leaders, Zone Leads, Project Manager and Programme Lead
Feedback	Email, Quarterly Quality Assurance Review Meetings

4.5. Peer to Peer Reflection (Observation)

Activity	Peer to Peer Reflection
Overview and Purpose	<p>Observation or shadowing of meetings between Housing First workers and people accessing the service. Carried out by team leaders on their own Housing First workers and workers operating in other zones.</p> <p>To ensure staff are working in line with the principles, to improve consistency in delivery and to identify areas for development. To encourage team leaders to reflect on services delivered by their own staff and staff from other delivery teams and sharing of good practice.</p>
QA tool	 Peer to Peer Reflection Record.xls  Peer to Peer plan.xlsx
Frequency	Minimum 1 observation per HFW every 6 months
Responsible	Team Leaders (Peer to Peer, across zones – See schedule)
Reported to	Quality and Assurance Manager, Team Leaders, Programme Lead.
Feedback	Email, Peer to Peer feedback, Quarterly Quality Assurance Review Meetings

4.6. External Stakeholder Survey

Activity	External Stakeholder Survey
Overview and Purpose	<p>Feedback gathered from external partners in the form of a survey. The external partners surveyed will be contacted at the end of the quarter and their information will be taken from a report on the services added in the quarter by Housing First Workers.</p> <p>To gather an external perspective on how the pilot is seen, gather information on what the pilot does well and understand how external working contributes to high fidelity delivery</p>
QA tool	Survey created on Survey Monkey.
Frequency	Minimum 3 external surveys per Zone per quarter (B,C and D – ideally one per LA area)
Responsible	QA Manager
Reported to	Quality and Assurance Manager, Team Leaders, Programme Lead.
Feedback	Quarterly Quality Assurance Report and Review Meetings

5. Quarterly Quality Assurance Reports and Review Meetings

At the end of each quarter and once all evidence from the quality assurance activities have been received, the Quality and Assurance Manager will prepare and send a report to each lead delivery partner detailing the findings from the quarter for their zone. Fidelity ratings from the self assessments will be moderated based on the evidence received to give an overall fidelity rating for each principle. In addition, where barriers or issues have been identified a series of recommendations will be made in the report for discussion at the quarterly QA meetings.

The QA meetings will focus on the recommendations made and aim to build an action plan around each of them that will be reviewed at the next QA meeting. It is the responsibility of the delivery partner to create an action plan based on the recommendations, track progress and report progress to the Quality and Assurance Manager.

An overall Quality Assurance report will detail common barriers and issues as well as best practice observed. A pilot-wide fidelity rating for each principle will also be included.

6. Quality Assurance Improvement Measures

If the central team have concerns that a delivery partner is having difficulty aligning their service to any of the Housing First principles or following the QA framework/recording standards it may be necessary to initiate Quality Assurance Improvement Measures.

The measures will include an action plan to be produced by the delivery partner and will contain agreed actions, responsibilities and deadlines to ensure issues are rectified and future service delivery is in line with the principles of Housing First.

Following the production of the action plan, a weekly or fortnightly meeting will be arranged to track progress against the actions and to give oversight of service improvements to the Quality Assurance Manager. This progress will also feed in to the regular project progress meetings with the project manager and programme lead.

7. Document History

Revision Date	Version	Summary of Changes	Author
10/09/2019	0.1	First Draft	Daniel Allman
30/09/2019	0.2	Changes as suggested by EC	Daniel Allman
22/10/2019	0.3	Changes in-line with co-production feedback	Daniel Allman
12/11/2019	0.4	Changes in line with feedback from DP's	Daniel Allman
17/12/2019	0.5	Updates following co-production meeting	Daniel Allman
15/07/2020	0.6	Updated timeframes for some QA activities	Daniel Allman
12/11/2020	0.7	Updates to Language and frequency of peer to peer reflections, addition of report and meeting section	Daniel Allman
06/01/2021	0.8	Added QA activity – External Stakeholder Feedback	Daniel Allman