

Human Services Quality Framework

The Department of Communities' Human Services Quality Framework has been endorsed for phased implementation over a three year period from July 2012.

The framework was developed in partnership with the community services sector and demonstrates that working together through the Queensland Compact on complex issues delivers better results for all stakeholders.

The Human Services Quality Framework is the first consolidated set of standards developed for human services in Queensland. The framework was trialled with non government organisations from across the state. The trial found the framework significantly reduced participants' administrative burden and compliance costs. Savings in staff time for non government organisations per audit cycle who participated in the trial were in excess of \$100,000 for large organisations and \$10,000 to \$30,000 for medium organisations.

Trial participants unanimously supported the introduction of the framework, with the trial auditors stating that these standards were the most effective they had used from across Australian jurisdictions and New Zealand.

The Human Services Quality Framework will replace the: Queensland Disability Sector Quality System; Queensland Disability Advocacy Standards; Community Services Standards; and the Child Safety Service Standards. Mutual recognition of the framework is currently being negotiated with the Department of Health and Ageing in relation to the Community Care Common Standards.

Organisations that are currently required to comply with the National Community Housing Standards will not initially be required to apply the Human Services Quality Framework. The level of inclusion of these organisations in the framework will be considered when the role of the National Housing Regulator is more defined in June 2013. Similarly, the level of inclusion for community mental health providers is also being delayed until the role of the Queensland Mental Health Commission is further defined.

Implementation will occur over a three year period. As funded organisations are due to renew their quality status, they will be assessed against the Human Services Quality Framework. The department will individually negotiate renewal arrangements with funded organisations who have had to comply with multiple quality frameworks and who, therefore, have multiple renewal dates.

The department is currently working on implementation issues such as inclusion criteria, funding arrangements and forms of assessment. Consultation will occur with a sector reference group to inform this process. The outcomes will be communicated to the sector as soon as this is finalised.

The Human Services Quality Framework does not contain any new requirements. Organisations, therefore, that have previously been required to comply with one or more of the

existing quality frameworks will not have to develop any additional evidence to adopt the framework.

The Human Services Quality Framework contains the following six quality standards:

- governance and management
- service access
- responding to individual need
- safety, wellbeing and rights
- feedback, complaints and appeals
- human resources.

Copies of the following documents can be viewed on the Community Door website located at www.communitydoor.org.au

- **Human Services Quality Standards** – a copy of the six standards and the associated indicators.
- **User Guide** – explains each standard in detail and provides examples of evidence that organisations could use to demonstrate compliance with each standard.
- **Self Assessment Tool** – to assist organisations in the internal process of self assessing against the standards.
- **Standard comparison tools** – a map of the HSQF against the existing state and national quality standards.

For further information regarding the HSQF, please contact:

Ms Carolyn Murphy-Clarke
Director (Human Services Quality Framework)
NGO Sustainability Unit
NGO, Child Safety and Families Strategic Policy and Performance Branch
Department of Communities
Telephone: (07) 300 64020
Email: carolyn.murphy-clarke@communities.qld.gov.au