

**PossAbilities DRIVING UP QUALITY 2019 Self-Assessment and Action Plan**

**Introduction**

We are a social enterprise and we support vulnerable people so that they can 'Live the life they choose'. Mostly we support people with learning disabilities, young people leaving care and people with dementia...though we do lots of other great things too.   
  
We don't have any complicated mission statements that nobody can understand, or anything like that. Just a clear and simple [set of values](https://possabilities.org.uk/values/) that we all try to live by every day.

**Our Values**

Our values lie at the heart of the organisation and underpin everything we do. It is essential that all staff share our values and work together in achieving our mission statement.

**Integrity** – we communicate openly and honestly and build relationships based on trust, respect and caring.

**Creativity** – we thrive on innovation and encourage positive risk taking.

**Happy** – we believe fun is the key to success.

**Person Centred** – we believe that everyone has the right to exercise choice and control in directing their lives and support. We inspire people to achieve greater things.

**Passionate** – we are dedicated and enthusiastic to providing exceptional

services.

Our Mission Statement

To be the very best in everything that we do. Pushing back the boundaries of what it means to be person centred; helping to create a level playing field for vulnerable people; and becoming placemakers, trying to improve the places that we work in.

**Driving Up Quality Code**

The Driving Up Quality Code is a code for providers and commissioners. PossAbilities have signed up to the code as a commitment to driving up quality in services for people with learning disabilities.

Specifically the Code wants to achieve the following:

* Drive up quality in services for people with learning disabilities that goes beyond minimum standards
* Create and build a passion in the learning disability sector to provide high quality, values-led services
* Provide a clear message to the sector and the wider population about what is and what is not acceptable practice
* Promote a culture of openness and honesty in organisations
* Promote the celebration and sharing of the good work that is already out there.

PossAbilities signed up to the code in 2016 and developed a self-assessment and Action Plan. There is an expectation that organisations that have signed up to the Driving Up Quality Code publish their assessments and action plans and are expected to update this annually. We have done this and want to complete a full new self-assessment against our services again in 2019.

**Process**

The code provide 5 key themes which are in the table listed below. The self-assessment includes examples of what 'good' and 'bad' looks like in each area of the Code. We then compiled some information to identify what PossAbilities already do well and what we could do to improve.

We undertook an exercise with a group of managers on Thursday 31st Oct 2019 and they provided their feedback on the 5 Driving Up Quality themes

**Five Driving Up Quality Themes**

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| 1 | Support is focussed on the person |
| 2 | The person is supported to have an ordinary and meaningful life |
| 3 | Care and support focuses on people being happy and having a good quality of life |
| 4 | A good culture is important to the organisation |
| 5 | Managers and board members lead and run the organisation well |

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| 1. **Support is focussed on the person** |

*Example Good*

* *A service is built around an individual, or a group of people, designed with them in mind*
* *All staff have training that is centred on the person and everyone supported has a plan that is centred on them*
* *People choose where they live and who they live with*
* *People choose their staff*
* *Individuals have a network of people in their lives who are not paid*

*Example Bad*

* *Services being built by filling voids*
* *People are put in ‘placements’ determined by their behaviour / disability, not their individual preferences and personalities*
* *People living in environments that are designed for safety first and person second*
* *Generic training is provided and doesn’t reflect the aspirations and needs of the individuals being supported*

**What is happening at PossAbilities that is good?**

* Everyone has a person centred plan
* Champions enable bespoke training based around individual needs, PBS, Autism
* Person centred training is mandatory
* Annual person centred questionnaires
* Quality checkers
* Tenant/house meetings
* Service user base meetings
* Service user forums/advisory group
* Sign a long
* Service user involvement in interviews
* Vacancy pen pictures, hobbies and interests to match potential new tenants
* House wish list
* MDT meetings and reviews
* Active Support
* Iplanit
* At meetings if stuck the defining question is what is right for the person
* Easy read policy

**What improvements do we need to work on?**

* Quality checkers improvement
* More bespoke training involving service users
* People don’t always get to choose where they live, it is sometimes what is available?
* Sometimes resource decisions are made out of necessity rather than completely about what is best for the person
* Feedback form for after all events etc. so can better inform outcomes for individuals
* More service user involvement in training, share experiences etc.
* More individual involvement in recruitment
* Better electronic/digital communication tools/apps
* Better format to evaluate how person centred are you

**Actions Agreed**

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| **Action** | **By when** |
| Continued roll out of Quality Checkers programme and improved sharing of feedback and results | 30.06.20 |
| Better use of communication tools and Apps across all services | 30.09.20 |

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| **2. The person is supported to have an ordinary and meaningful life** |

*Example Good*

* *People are supported to have friends and intimate relationships*
* *People don’t need to live in hospitals/ secure settings to have their needs met*
* *People have opportunities for employment, education and leisure*
* *People contribute to their local communities to the benefit of others. This means mainstream communities, rather than segregated/isolated services designed for people with disabilities*
* *People are generally happy and healthy*

*Example Bad*

* *People being supported are perceived as being just a recipient of services*
* *People spend most of their time in specialist/segregated services*
* *People have no control over their money*
* *People are not known or play any role in their communities*
* *There are restrictions placed on people’s lives (such as activities, where people can go, who they can spend their time with)*

**What is happening at PossAbilities that is good?**

* Person centred plans
* We support volunteers to work through employment team, farm, etc.
* People we support are involved in the things we do in the community
* Support people to build relationships – work completed surrounding romantic relationships also disrespect nobody workshop
* Staff knowledge and skills positive transitions into other services, taking into account their preferences and wishes
* New apartments
* Service user groups
* LGBRQ+
* Access to work placements
* Micro enterprises (projects)

**What improvements do we need to work on?**

* Review of plans, updating
* Resources may restrict activities
* Integrating in the community
* We need to encourage people to make complaints about housing issues
* There are restrictions placed on people’s lives such as activities, who they see, spend time with
* Staff have too much control
* Staff can be over protective, afraid of risk
* Create opportunities/think outside the box/ pursue wishes/find alternatives
* Community map needs ownership – updating, needs to be out three for all people to access
* Stay up late campaign, activities finish based on rota

**Actions Agreed**

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| **Action** | **By when** |
| Add improved information about Staying Up Late, positive risk taking and staff control in our mandatory person centred approaches/ human rights training | 30.06.20 |

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| 1. **Care and support focuses on people being happy and having a good quality of life** |

*Example Good*

* *Staff know how to support people to be happy*
* *Staff feel valued and the organisation quickly deals with staff who are not living up to organisational values*
* *Support plans truly reflect an individual’s preferences, fears and put people in control*
* *Staff are recruited, trained, and developed to understand the value of getting to know the person being supported and recognise that small things are important*
* *Staff creativity is valued and encouraged*
* *Staff have the confidence, skills and authority to make decisions*
* *There is evidence that individual staff make a big difference*
* *Training is produced alongside the people being supported and their families and focuses on the individual needs of the people being supported*

*Example Bad*

* *There is a uniform HR resource that recruits people based on a diplomas/experience/training*
* *No recognition is given to what people being supported would like and generic job descriptions are advertised*
* *Support workers are not recruited to individualised person specifications*
* *Staff are redeployed around services to suit the organisation*

**What is happening at PossAbilities that is good?**

* Staff have excellent knowledge of the service user they support, through values, training, and individuals support plans
* Individuals are the main focus of their plans, demonstrates choice and control
* Happiness manifesto
* Service user groups promote choice and service users have a voice
* Big idea
* Staff valued, Happiness manifesto, mission statement, fun embedded, WOW cards, positive recognition newsletters
* Actions for Happiness
* People encouraged to take part, have a say, make changes to things that affect happiness/ wellbeing/ work life balance
* Co-production charter
* Good positive behaviour support plans
* Person centred plans capture small but important things
* Recruit for values

**What improvements do we need to work on?**

* How involved are families and service users in recruitment?
* Values based recruitment, do we really do this as well as we should?
* Generic job descriptions
* We need more physical space to do our jobs
* Better involvement & training service users and families
* Staff shortages and staff being moved in emergencies
* Some staff need to be recruited to service users’ needs, more involvement in someone’s house re staff
* Better capture and celebrate outcomes
* Better training and involvement in recruitment families and service users
* Person spec made more individual

**Actions Agreed**

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| **Action** | **By when** |
| We will continue to work on improved involvement of the people that we support in our recruitment and training | 30.06.20 |

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| 1. **A good culture is important to the organisation** |

*Example Good*

* *People with disabilities and their families are involved in checking the quality of support*
* *All levels throughout the organisation consider and involve people being supported and families*
* *The organisation can evidence how change has resulted from the voice of people being supported and their families at all levels*
* *Staff feel respected and able to voice their thoughts and contribute to organisational development*
* *The organisation speaks out about bad practice*
* *Senior managers routinely visit people being supported to seek the views of them and their families*
* *There is a commitment to practice leadership*

*Example Bad*

* *Little investment is made to support innovative staff practice and organisational development*
* *Senior managers are invisible to people being supported and their families*
* *Complaints and suggestions do not lead to significant change*
* *There is no direct connection between the ethos of the organisation and the support being offered*

**What is happening at PossAbilities that is good?**

* Senior Manager visits
* Meet the CEO meetings for new staff
* CEO newsletter
* SURF group Halton
* Work done on what values mean to individuals
* Big Idea
* Staff succession
* Family forums
* Innovation is welcomed
* Vouchers
* Staff awards
* Happiness manifesto
* Animals at work
* Senior Managers visits
* Whistleblowing policy
* Staff advisory group
* Robust complaints procedure
* Quality checkers
* People we support & staff are very involve in joint activities and decisions

**What improvements do we need to work on?**

* Lack of communication
* Do out staff get the message? Is the bigger picture out there?
* Consistent management attendance at team meetings
* Halton staff advisory, get back up and running (this should now be integrated into one committee
* Need improved staff survey and 2 way communication

**Actions Agreed**

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| **Action** | **By when** |
| We will investigate options for a revised staff survey to improve communication | 30.06.20 |

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| 1. **Managers and board members lead and run the organisation well** |

*Example Good*

* *Leaders utilise the skills within the organisation and inspire those around them*
* *Leaders encourage open and honest conversations about what is and is not working*
* *Decision making is based on the principle of ‘how will this benefit those we support?’*
* *There is transparency where there are areas of improvement required and these are shared internally and externally to benefit others*
* *There is strong Practice Leadership around challenging behaviour within the organisation*

*Example Bad*

* *Senior managers don’t hold the stories of what’s going on in the organisation*
* *Senior managers are not visible to those they serve*
* *There is a focus on money/profit first and people second*
* *Values are compromised when finance becomes the main driver for new business opportunities*

**What is happening at PossAbilities that is good?**

* Training
* Regular Manager meetings
* Big Ideas
* Service users contribute to discussion about how surplus is spent
* Managers support and attend parties/events
* Open door policy – no structural barriers
* Open and honest, say how it is, no false promises
* Innovative
* Own PBS team, prompt in responding, leaders have bought in
* Regular performance information
* Senior managers visits
* Staff advisory group
* CEO newsletter

**What improvements do we need to work on?**

* More senior management visits
* Staff do not know who Board non exec directors are
* Non Execs board member skills – need to have a full range
* More conversations about what is not working and finding solutions
* Board and Senior Management team development
* Day in the life of – introduce and tell more about senior managers to wider workforce
* More of what’s working and not working across the board – perhaps 6 monthly dedicate a hour of the team meeting

**Actions Agreed**

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| **Action** | **By when** |
| Senior managers will carry out a series of drop ins to house/base meetings to meet staff and discuss specific issues | 30.06.20 |

**Appendix 1 - Overall action plan**

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| **Action** | **By when** |
| Continued roll out of Quality Checkers programme and improved sharing of feedback and results | 30.06.20 |
| Better use of communication tools and Apps across all services | 30.09.20 |
| Add improved information about Staying Up Late, positive risk taking and staff control in our mandatory person centred approaches/ human rights training | 30.06.20 |
| We will continue to work on improved involvement of the people that we support in our recruitment and training | 30.06.20 |
| We will investigate options for a revised staff survey to improve communication | 30.06.20 |
| Senior managers will carry out a series of drop ins to house/base meetings to meet staff and discuss specific issues | 30.06.20 |