

EQUASS 2018

Principles, criteria and Indicators for EQUASS Excellence recognition

© EQUASS 2017
V.010117

Table of contents

Introduction	3
Principles	5
1. Leadership	5
2. Staff	10
3. Rights	16
4. Ethics	20
5. Partnership	25
6. Participation	27
7. Person-centred approach	32
8. Comprehensiveness	37
9. Result-Orientation	42
10. Continuous improvement	47

Introduction

The European Quality in Social Services (EQUASS) is an initiative of the European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR). EQUASS provides comprehensive services in the areas of development, promotion, recognition and certification of quality, all of which comply with the European requirements¹ for quality in the provision of Social Services. EQUASS aims to enhance the social service sector by engaging sector providers in quality, continuous improvement, learning and development, in order to guarantee service users quality of services throughout Europe.

EQUASS offers recognition and certification programmes for quality in social services. It enables organisations that provide services in the social sector to engage in an external assessment process at a European level. This means they can prove the quality of their services to service users and other stakeholders.

The EQUASS 2018 system comprises 10 Principles for Quality that are derived from stakeholder consultation in the social sector and based on the European Quality Framework for Social Services (Social Protection Committee, 2010). Each principle for quality is broken down into detailed quality criteria. Specific performance indicators will clarify the performance according to the quality criterion. This document presents the principles, criteria and indicators that must be taken into account while implementing the EQUASS criteria and striving for valid and relevant results for EQUASS Excellence recognition by the European Quality for Social Services. It also briefly describes five perspectives on which performance on implementation and results will be assessed.

EQUASS Excellence 2018 recognition will be given to those social service providers who can show successful implementation of all EQUASS 2018 requirements. To help in this assessment, an assessment grid has been developed.

To help in this assessment, an assessment grid has been developed. This has two perspectives:

- 1) “Implementation of approaches”: to what extent have social service providers implemented clear and sound approaches, systems and methods for the criteria and are they able to implement improvements.
- 2) “Results”: to what extent have social service providers identified relevant results for the criteria and are they able to successfully implement improvements based on comparing results with other social service providers in the sector. Each perspective has 5 levels of performance² that correspond to phases of organisational development and learning. They are linked to the various types of recognition: “Committed to EQUASS Assurance” (Stage 1), “EQUASS

¹ Position Paper on Quality (High Level Group on Disability, September 2007) and the Voluntary Quality Framework for Social Services (SPC, October 2010)

² The levels of performance are closely related with each other: each levels also includes performance criteria taken from the previous level.

Assurance certification” (Stage 2), “Committed to EQUASS Excellence” (Stage 3) and “EQUASS Excellence certification” (Stage 4 and 5).

The EQUASS certifications³ ensure that there is a satisfactory performance on the EQUASS principles for quality and one which meets the requirements set in the European Quality Framework for Social Services. It also ensures performance on the key elements of an operational Quality Management System⁴.

The EQUASS 2018 system is customised for the social sector and offers a comprehensive approach based on specific quality criteria, performance indicators and clear external assessment and audit procedures. After sending the application form and some core documentation, a site visit is carried out. This involves an external audit based on how the service provider performs in its implementation of the EQUASS criteria and its achievement of valid and relevant results. During this site visit, an independent auditor verifies the applicant’s implementation of the criteria and the achieved results by reviewing core documentation and conducting interviews with employees, service users and other relevant stakeholders.

The assessment outcomes and the audit are detailed in a written audit report. An organisation that meets the criteria for EQUASS certification will be certified for three years. EQUASS certified organisations are committed to report their progress on performance, improvements and development on annual basis. The EQUASS Awarding Committee, an international consortium of various European social sector stakeholders, oversees the EQUASS system and its processes.

³ EQUASS recognition / certification is based on a comprehensive scoring system. The EQUASS scoring system is described in a separate document.

⁴ The basic elements for quality management are: 1. Identifying customer needs and expectations; 2. Management of processes ; 3. Management of responsibilities; 4. Management of resources; 5. Measurement and data analysis; 6. Customer satisfaction; 7. Systematic Quality Improvement system (ISO 9000 system)

1. Leadership

- Social service providers demonstrate governance, leadership and social responsibility. They promote social justice by inclusion into the society. They set ambitious organisation and service goals and encourage best practice. Social service providers are committed to continuous learning and innovation.

Criteria 1

The social service provider defines and implements its vision, its mission and corporate values in the delivered services by establishing ambitious organisation and service goals.

- Indicators:
 1. The social service provider has implemented the organisation's Mission, Vision and Values (*Documentation of Mission, Vision and Values is required*).
 2. Employees demonstrate their contribution to the implementation of organisation's mission, vision and values.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is a clear written description of mission, vision and values. The description is "on the wall", but rarely used to guide actions.	There is a clear written description of mission, vision and values. Most people within the organisation demonstrate their contribution to the mission, vision and values.	There is a clear written description of mission, vision and values. Most people within the organisation demonstrate their contribution to the mission, vision and values and the provider understands how successfully the mission, vision and values have been implemented.	The social service provider explores learning activities to identify innovative approaches to implement its mission, vision and values.	The social service provider has carried out innovative approaches to implement the mission, vision and values successfully as the result of learning activities.

Criteria 2

The social service provider defines and implements a system for management that promotes a quality culture.

- Indicator: 3. The service provider has implemented ways of working that contribute to the common quality culture of the social service provider.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
The social service provider has a common way of meeting quality requirements that are aligned with organisational mission and values and adopted by most people in the organisation.	The social service provider has a common way of meeting quality requirements that are aligned with organisational mission and values and adopted by all people in the organisation.	The social service provider has a common way of meeting quality requirements, which are aligned with organisational mission and values and adopted by all people of the organisation. The provider understands how successfully the ways of working have been implemented. These ways of working reflects the organisation quality culture.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of working to contribute to a common organisational quality culture.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative ways of working to contribute to a common organisational quality culture as a result of learning activities.

Additional EQUASS Excellence requirement:

- A. The social service provider has results of evaluating the performance of managing the organisation. *(Documentation of the results evaluating the performance of managing the organisation is required)*

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
The social service provider has some results on evaluating the performance of managing the organisation that gives an indication of meeting the requirement of the criteria.	The social service provider has results, based on relevant indicators that clearly show the performance of managing the organisation.	The organisation has reliable and tangible data and information that gives a clear understanding of the achieved results of the performance of managing the organisation.	The organisation has identified trends and compares the results of the performance of managing the organisation with other social service providers and/or other organisations at national and/or an international context.	The organisation has implemented improvements in the performance of managing the organisation as result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

Criteria 3

The social service provider demonstrates its commitment to long-term quality goals, continuous learning, innovation and new technology.

- Indicators:
 4. The social service provider has implemented its organisation's quality policy (*Documentation of organisation's quality policy is required*)
 5. Social service provider has defined long-term quality goals and demonstrates measures for continuous learning, innovation and new technology.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
The Quality policy is translated into a set of concrete goals. Some people within organisation are familiar with the goals.	The Quality policy is translated into a comprehensive set of concrete long-term goals. The goals are clear and concrete and have a time frame for measuring. Most people of the organisation know the goals. The quality policy is often used to set priorities.	The Quality policy is translated into a comprehensive set of concrete long-term goals. The goals are clear and concrete and have a time frame for measuring. All people in the organisation know the goals. The quality policy is often used to set priorities and to initiate concrete actions. The provider understands how successfully the policy has been implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of improving the understanding of the organisation's quality policy approach and measures for innovation and new technology.	The social service provider has successfully implemented the innovative approach to the organisation's quality policy approach and measures for innovation and new technology as a result of learning activities.

Criteria 4

The social service provider defines and implements an annual planning and review process reflecting the organisations objectives and service activities delivered.

- Indicators:
 - The social service provider has implemented annual planning. *(Documentation of annual plan is required)*
 - The social service provider carries out a review on objectives and services results described in the plan.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
The social service provider has a defined annual plan including objectives and service activities. Reviews of objectives and service results are carried out on ad-hoc basis. The annual plan is linked to strategic planning activities and used to guide operations / activities.	The social service provider has a defined annual plan including objectives and service activities. Reviews of objectives and service results are carried out on a regular basis. The annual plan is linked to strategic planning activities and used to guide operations / activities. The annual plan applies to the scope of the application. Employees contribute to implementation.	The social service provider has a defined an annual plan including objectives and service activities. Reviews of objectives and service results are carried out on a regular basis. The annual plan is linked to strategic planning activities and used to guide operations / activities. The annual plan applies to the scope of the application. Employees contribute to implementation. The provider understands how successfully the plan has been implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative approaches to annual planning.	The social service provider has successfully implemented an innovative approach to annual planning as a result of learning activities

Criteria 5

The social service provider demonstrates its commitment to social justice and active inclusion of persons served into the society.

- Indicator:
 - The social service provider shows concrete commitment to social justice and active inclusion of person served.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
The social service provider shows inspiring and energetic leadership with concrete commitment to social justice and inclusion of person served into society. The social service provider encourages others in doing so.	The social service provider shows inspiring and energetic leadership with concrete commitment to social justice and inclusion of person served into society. The social service provider encourages others in doing so. This commitment to social justice and inclusion is relevant for all areas of the organisation.	The social service provider shows inspiring and energetic leadership with concrete commitment to social justice and inclusion of person served into society. The social service provider encourages others in doing so. The commitment to social justice and inclusion is relevant for all areas of the organisation. This service provider understands how successfully the approach has been implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of including persons served	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative ways of including persons served as a result of learning activities

Additional EQUASS Excellence requirement:

B. The social service provider has results on the inclusion of person served into the society. *(Documentation of results on the inclusion of person served into the society is required)*

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
The social service provider has some results that gives an indication on inclusion of persons served into the society	The social service provider has results, based on relevant indicators that clearly show that person served are included into the society.	The organisation has reliable and tangible data and information that gives a clear understanding of the achieved results of on including persons served into the society.	The organisation has identified trends and compares the results on including person served into the society with other social service providers and/or other organisations in national and/or an international context.	The organisation has implemented improvements as result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

Criteria 6

The social service provider demonstrates Corporate Social Responsibility through its commitment to sustainable activities contributing to society.

- Indicator: 9. Social Service Provider operates concrete commitment and concrete practices of Corporate Social Responsibility.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
The social service provider shows inspiring and energetic leadership with concrete commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) through sustainable activities which contribute to society.	The social service provider shows inspiring and energetic leadership with concrete commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) by sustainable activities which contribute to society. This commitment is relevant for all areas of the organisation.	The social service provider shows inspiring and energetic leadership with concrete commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) by sustainable activities which contribute to society. This commitment is relevant for all areas of the organisation. The service provider understands how successfully the approach has been implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of contributing to Corporate Social Responsibility	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative activities contributing to Corporate Social Responsibility as a result of learning activities.

2. Staff

- Social service providers lead and manage their staff to achieve the organisations objectives and to deliver person centred services. They are committed to employ qualified staff based on required knowledge, skills and competences. They promote diversity of staff in the workforce. Social service providers enhance a culture of staff engagement and staff well-being, development and continuous learning of all staff for the benefits of person served. They show compliance with health, safety and appropriate working conditions of its persons served and staff (including volunteers).

Criteria 7

The social service provider defines and implements a staff recruitment and retention policy that promotes the selection of qualified personnel based on required knowledge, skills and competences.

- Indicators:
 10. The social service provider has implemented a staff recruitment and retention policy and procedures (*Documentation of policy and procedures on staff recruitment and retention is required*).
 11. Employees of the organisation are aware of the recruitment and retention policy.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is a clear policy and procedure on staff recruitment and retention. This is "on the wall," but rarely used to direct recruitment and retention actions.	There is a clear policy and procedure on staff recruitment and retention. The policy is relevant and known by most people within the organisation.	There is a clear policy and procedure on staff recruitment and retention. The policy is relevant and known by most people within the organisation. The service provider understands how successfully the policy and procedures on staff recruitment and retention has been implemented and respected.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of staff recruitment and retention.	The social service provider implements successfully innovative ways of staff recruitment and retention as a result of learning activities

Criteria 8

The social service provider operates its service in compliance with mandatory national legislation for health and safety, providing appropriate working conditions, adequate and agreed staff levels and staff ratios, and measures for rewarding employees and volunteers.

- Indicators:
 12. The social service provider shows compliance with national legislation requirements for health and safety, appropriate working conditions, adequate and agreed staff levels and ratios.
 13. The social service provider has implemented measures for recognition for employees and volunteers.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is clear relevant evidence that demonstrates compliance with national legislation for health and safety and appropriate working conditions. There is a clear approach on practicing adequate and agreed staff levels and ratios and system of recognising employees and volunteers.	There is clear relevant evidence that demonstrates compliance with national legislation for health and safety and appropriate working conditions. There is a clear approach on practicing adequate and agreed staff levels and ratios and system of recognising employees and volunteers. Compliance with the national legislation is relevant for all areas of the organisation and most employees know the legislative requirements. Measures for recognition of employees and volunteers are implemented.	There is clear relevant evidence that demonstrates compliance with national legislation for health and safety and appropriate working conditions. There is a clear approach on practicing adequate and agreed staff levels and ratios and system of recognising employees and volunteers. Compliance with the national legislation is relevant for all areas of the organisation and most employees know the legislative requirements. The service provider understands how successfully the legislative requirements and the measures for recognition have been implemented and complied.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of complying with mandatory legislation for health and safety.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative ways of complying with mandatory legislation for health and safety as a result of learning activities.

Criteria 9

The social service provider implements measures for staff development based on a plan for personal growth, continuous learning and development.

- Indicators:
 14. The social service provider has implemented a development plan for employees based on needs. *(Documentation of the staff development plan is required).*
 15. The social service provider reviews the development plan with the employees on regular basis.
 16. The social service provider has results of effectiveness of employees' personal growth, continuous learning and development. *(Documentation of results on personal growth, continuous learning and development in required)*

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is a clear approach for staff development. The development plan is based on employees' needs. A review of the plan is carried out on ad-hoc basis.	There is a clear approach for staff development. The development plan is based on employees' needs. Most employees are aware of the content of the plan. All plans are subject to review.	There is a clear approach for staff development. The development plan is based on employees' needs. Most employees are aware of the content of the plan. All plans are subject to review. The social service provider understands how successfully the development plan has been implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of promoting employees' development, personal growth and continuous learning.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative ways of promoting employees' development personal growth and continuous learning as a result of learning activities.
Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There are some indications of results of staff development but information is collected randomly.	The results of employees' development are measured with relevant indicators.	The results of employees' development are measured with relevant indicators. The social service provider understands the achieved results.	The social service provider has identified trends and compares the results of the employees' development with other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.	The social service provider has successfully implemented the improvements to the employees' development as a result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

Criteria 10

The social service provider defines and implements requirements for competence in the identified roles and functions of staff and evaluates them on an annual basis.

- Indicators:
 17. The Social Service provider has implemented the competency requirement, roles and responsibilities for each function in the organisation (*Documentation of competency requirement, roles and responsibilities for each function is required*).
 18. The social service provider has evaluated competence requirements, roles and responsibilities of staff on annual basis.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
Descriptions for some key roles exist and are well defined. The descriptions of roles and responsibilities are clear.	Descriptions for all roles and functions exist. The key positions are well defined and all employees have job descriptions. The descriptions of roles and responsibilities are clear and employees are aware of them.	Descriptions for all roles and functions exist. The key positions are well defined and all employees have job descriptions. The descriptions of roles and responsibilities are clear and employees are aware of them. The social service provider understands how successfully the roles and responsibilities have been implemented and understood by staff.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of identifying and reviewing the competences of staff.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative way of identifying and reviewing the competences of staff as a result of learning activities.

Criteria 11

The social service provider recognises staff as a resource for feedback and engages staff in planning, in the development of services and in quality improvement.

- Indicator: 19. The social service provider has demonstrated measures for the involvement of staff in planning, service development and quality improvement.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is clear evidence of staff involvement in planning, service development and quality improvement. Opportunities to be involved in planning, service development and quality improvement are communicated.	There is clear evidence of staff involvement in planning, service development and quality improvement. Opportunities to be involved in planning, service development and quality improvement are communicated. Most employees know of these opportunities.	There is clear evidence that demonstrate staff involvement in planning, service development and quality improvement. Opportunities to be involved in planning, service development and quality improvement are communicated. Most employees know of these opportunities. The service provider understands how successfully the involvement of employees has been implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of involving staff in planning, service development and quality improvement.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative way of involving staff in planning, service development and quality improvement as a result of learning activities.

Additional EQUASS Excellence requirement:

- C. The social service provider has results on the engagement of staff. *(Documentation of results on engagement of staff is required)*

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
The social service provider has some results that give an indication on the engagement of staff.	The social service provider has results, based on relevant indicators that clearly show the engagement of staff	The organisation has reliable and tangible data and information that gives a clear understanding of the achieved results in engaging staff.	The organisation has identified trends and compares the results in engaging staff with other social service providers and/or other organisations in national and/or an international context.	The organisation has implemented improvements in engaging staff as result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

Criteria 12

The social service provider operates specific measures that enhance the motivation of staff.

- Indicator: 20. The social service provider has demonstrated measures for satisfying and motivating employees.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is clear relevant evidence for specific measures to satisfy and motivate employees.	There is clear evidence for specific measures to satisfy and motivate employees. The measures are applied with all employees.	There is clear evidence for specific measures to satisfy and motivate employees. The measures are applied with all employees. The social service understands how successfully these measures are implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways to satisfy and motivate employees.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative way to satisfy and motivate employees as a result of learning activities.

Additional EQUASS Excellence requirement:

- D. The social service provider has results on the motivation of staff.
(Documentation of results on engagement of staff is required)

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
The social service provider has some results that give an indication of the motivation of staff.	The social service provider has results, based on relevant indicators that clearly show the motivation of staff.	The organisation has reliable and tangible data and information that gives a clear understanding of the achieved results on the motivation of staff.	The organisation has identified trends and compared the results on motivating staff with other social service providers and/or other organisations in national and/or an international context.	The organisation has implemented improvements on motivating staff as result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

3. Rights

- Social Service Providers are committed to protect, promote and respect the rights of the person served in terms of equal opportunities, equal treatment and freedom of choice, self-determination and equal participation. This commitment is visible in the organisational values and in all elements of service development, service delivery of the social service provider. Social Service providers ensure that persons served understand and approve all their proposed individual interventions.

Criteria 13

The social service provider guarantees the rights of person served and these rights are outlined in a Charter of Rights that is based on international human rights conventions.

- Indicators:
 21. The social service provider has implemented a charter of rights for person served based on international human rights conventions (*Documentation of charter of rights for person served is required*).
 22. Employees are aware about the rights of person served and demonstrate respecting the rights of service users.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is a clear expression of rights of persons served that reflects human rights. The expression about rights is 'on the wall', but rarely used to direct actions.	There is a clear expression of rights of persons served that reflects human rights. The charter of rights are known and understood by persons served and employees of the organisation.	There is a clear expression of rights of persons served that reflects human rights. The charter of rights are known and understood by persons served and employees of the organisation. The service provider understands how successfully the rights of person served have been implemented and respected by employees.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of guaranteeing the rights of person served.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative ways of guaranteeing the rights of person served as a result of learning activities.

Criteria 14

The social service provider informs and supports persons served in understanding their rights in an accessible way.

- Indicator: 23. The social service provider ensures that the people served are aware of their rights.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is clear evidence of informing the persons served about their rights. This information is 'on the wall', Some persons served may be aware of this information.	There is clear evidence of informing persons served about their rights. This information is communicated in an accessible and understandable way for persons served. Persons served are aware of their fundamental rights.	There is clear evidence of informing person served about their rights. This information is communicated in an accessible and understandable way for persons served. Persons served are aware of their fundamental rights. The service provider understands how successfully the persons served have understood their rights.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of informing of the person served on their rights.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative way of informing the person served on their rights as a result of learning activities

Additional EQUASS Excellence requirement:

- E. The social service provider has results on implementing proposals made by persons served. (*Documentation of results on implementing proposals made by persons served is required*)

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
The social service provider has some results that give an indication of understanding and approving proposed individual interventions by persons served.	The social service provider has results, based on relevant indicators that clearly show that proposed individual interventions by persons served are understood and approved.	The organisation has reliable and tangible data and information that gives a clear understanding of the achieved proposed individual interventions.	The organisation has identified trends and compares the results in understanding and approving proposed individual interventions by persons served with other social service providers and/or other organisations in national and/or an international context.	The organisation has implemented improvements in understanding and approving proposed individual interventions by person served as result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

Criteria 15

The social service provider respects that person served freely pursue personal goals and aspirations in line with their choices, needs and abilities.

- Indicator: 24. The social service provider supports the persons served in pursuing their personal goals.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is clear evidence that persons served are freely allowed to pursue their personal goals and aspirations. The information about the rights of person served is 'on the wall'.	There is clear evidence that persons served are freely allowed to pursue their personal goals and aspirations. They pursue their personal goals and aspirations in practice.	There is clear evidence that that persons served freely pursue their personal goals and aspirations. They pursue their personal goals and aspiration in practice. The service provider understands how successfully the approach has been implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of facilitating the persons served to pursue their personal goals.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative ways of facilitating the persons served to pursue their personal goals as a result of learning activities

Criteria 16

The social service provider evaluates its performance in promoting and practicing the rights of person served in all areas of the organisation.

- Indicator: 25. The social service provider has results on promoting and respecting the rights of person served. (*Document on results on promoting and practicing the rights of person served is required*)

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There are some performance results on promoting and respecting the rights of person served, which are collected randomly.	Performance results on promoting and respecting the rights of person served are measured with relevant indicators.	Performance results on promoting and respecting the rights of person served are measured with relevant indicators. The social service provider understands the achieved results.	The social service provider has identified trends and compares the results of promoting and respecting the rights of person served with other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.	The social service provider has successfully implemented the improvements of promoting and respecting the rights of person served as a result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

Criteria 17

The social service provider has an accessible complaint management system that registers and responds to complaints from persons served, purchasers and other relevant stakeholders.

- Indicators:
 - 26. The social service provider has implemented an accessible complaint management system. (*Documentation of complaint management system is required*)
 - 27. The complaint management system responds to all complaints.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is a clear system of being responsive to complaints. The system is 'on the wall'. Complaints by persons served, funders and other relevant stakeholders are responded to randomly.	There is a clear system of being responsive to complaints. Person served, staff, funders and other relevant stakeholders are familiar with the complaint procedures. Complaints are collected and registered. All complaints are responded to.	There is a clear system of being responsive to complaints. Person served, staff, funders and other relevant stakeholders know the complaint procedures. Complaints are collected and registered. All complaints are responded to. The social service provider understands how successfully the procedures are implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of managing complaints.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative ways of managing complaints as a result of learning activities.

4. Ethics

- Social service providers operate on the basis of ethical guidelines that respects dignity and wellbeing of staff, persons served and their families or care givers. They provide service based on trust, confidentiality, honesty to persons served. Social service providers promote protection of persons served from abuse and misconduct.

Criteria 18

The social service provider promotes ethical behaviour and wellbeing for staff, persons served and their families or caregivers.

- Indicators:
 28. The social service provider has implemented a policy on ethics and wellbeing for all. (*Documentation on policy on ethics and wellbeing is required*)
 29. Employees, persons served and their families or caregivers demonstrate how they act according to the organisation policy on ethics and wellbeing for all.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is a clear written expression of policy on ethics and wellbeing for all. The expression is 'on the wall', but rarely used to direct actions or govern behaviour.	There is a clear written expression of policy on ethics and wellbeing for all. The policy is known and understood by all.	There is a clear written expression of policy on ethics and wellbeing for all. The policy is known and understood by all. The provider understands how successfully this policy has been implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of promoting the wellbeing for staff, persons served and their families or caregivers.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative way of promoting the wellbeing for staff, persons served and their families or caregivers as a result of learning activities.

Criteria 19

The social service provider defines and implements its guidelines on ethics, which ensures that the dignity of the persons served is respected.

- Indicators:
 - 30. The social service provider has implemented a Code of Ethics to ensure the dignity of person served and to govern staff behaviour in service delivery. (*Documentation of Code of Ethics is required*)
 - 31. Social service provider ensures that staff, person served and families are aware of the Code of Ethics and act accordingly.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is a clear written code of ethics. This is 'on the wall', but rarely used to govern behaviour of staff.	There is a clear written code of ethics. This is known and understood by all.	There is a clear written code of ethics. This is known and understood by all. The provider understands how successfully the code has been implemented and respected by all.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of promoting the respect of the dignity of the persons served.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative way of promoting the respect of the dignity of the persons served as a result of learning activities.

Criteria 20

The social service provider facilitates access to services and resources in a non-discriminatory and transparent manner.

- Indicators:
 - 32. The social service provider ensures access to advocates and/or supporting persons
 - 313 The social service provider demonstrates non-discrimination around access to services.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is a clear approach on facilitating access to services and supporting persons. The approach is 'on the wall', but rarely used by staff and not known by persons served. There is some evidence of a system of non-discrimination around access to services.	There is a clear approach on facilitating access to services and supporting persons. There is clear evidence on non-discrimination. The approaches are known and understood by many within the organisation.	There is a clear approach on facilitating access to services and supporting persons. There is clear evidence on non-discrimination. The approaches are known and understood by many within the organisation. The provider understands how successfully these approaches have been implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of providing access to services and resources.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative ways of providing access to services and resources as a result of learning activities.

Criteria 21

The social service provider ensures services operate in a safe working environment to ensure the physical security of persons served, their families and caretakers.

- Indicator: 34. The social service provider has implemented a health and safety plan. *(Documentation of health and safety plan is required)*

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is a clear written plan for health and safety for staff and persons served. This plan is "on the wall," but rarely monitored to enhance a safe environment.	There is a clear written plan for health and safety for staff and persons served. This plan is known and understood by many within the organisation.	There is a clear written plan for health and safety for staff and persons served. This plan is known and understood by many within the organisation. The provider understands how successfully the plan has been implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of creating a safe environment to ensure the physical security of persons served.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative way of creating a safe environment to ensure the physical security of persons served as a result of learning activities.

Criteria 22

The social service provider operates mechanisms that prevent the physical, mental and financial abuse of the person served

- Indicator: 35. The social service provider has implemented procedures that prevent the physical, mental and financial abuse of persons served. *(Documentation of procedures that prevent the physical, mental and financial abuse is required)*

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is a clear written procedure for preventing the physical, mental and financial abuse of persons served. The procedures are "on the wall," but rarely used for monitoring prevention and evaluation.	There is a clear written procedure for preventing the physical, mental and financial abuse of persons served. The procedures are known and understood by many within the organisation.	There is a clear written procedure for preventing the physical, mental and financial abuse of persons served. The procedures are known and understood by many within the organisation. The service provider understands how successfully these procedures have been implemented and respected.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of preventing the physical, mental and financial abuse of the persons served.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative ways of preventing the physical, mental and financial abuse of the persons served as a result of learning activities.

Additional EQUASS Excellence requirement:

F. The social service provider has results on protecting the persons served from abuse and misconduct. *(Documentation of results on protecting the persons served from abuse and misconduct is required)*

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
The social service provider has some results that give an indication of protecting the persons served from abuse and misconduct	The social service provider has results, based on relevant indicators that clearly show that the persons served are protected from abuse and misconduct	The organisation has reliable and tangible data and information that gives a clear understanding of the achieved results on protecting the persons served from abuse and misconduct	The organisation has identified trends and compares the results on protecting the persons served from abuse and misconduct with other social service providers in national and/or an international context.	The organisation has implemented improvements on protecting the persons served from abuse and misconduct as result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

Criteria 23

The social service provider defines, monitors and evaluates a set of principles, values and procedures that govern behaviour in service delivery containing aspects of confidentiality, accuracy, privacy and integrity.

- Indicators:
 - The social service provider has implemented procedures to ensure the confidentiality of sensitive information, the accuracy of records, privacy, dignity and physical integrity of person served. *(Documentation of procedures for ensuring confidentiality, the accuracy of records, privacy, dignity and physical integrity of person served is required)*
 - The social service provider has reviewed its procedures for the confidentiality of information, accuracy of records, privacy, dignity and physical integrity of the person served on regular basis.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is a clear written procedure for confidentiality, accuracy, privacy and integrity of persons served. The procedures are "on the wall," but rarely used for ensuring and governing behaviour in the delivery of services.	There is a clear written procedure for confidentiality, accuracy, privacy and integrity of persons served. These procedures are known and understood by many within the organisation.	There is a clear written procedure for confidentiality, accuracy, privacy and integrity of persons served. These procedures are known and understood by the organisation. The service provider understands how successfully these procedures has been implemented and respected.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of ensuring the confidentiality, privacy and integrity of persons served.	The social services provider has successfully implemented innovative way of ensuring the confidentiality, privacy and integrity of persons served as a result of learning activities.

Additional EQUASS Excellence requirement:

- G. The social service provider has results on respecting the confidentiality of information of person served. (*Documentation of results on respecting the confidentiality of information of person served is required*)

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
The social service provider has some results that give an indication that information of person served is respected and treated in a confidential way	The social service provider has results, based on relevant indicators that clearly show that information of person served is respected and treated in a confidential way	The organisation has reliable and tangible data and information that gives a clear understanding of respecting the confidentiality of information of person served	The organisation has identified trends and compares the results on respecting the confidentiality of information of person served with other social service providers in national and/or an international context.	The organisation has implemented improvements in respecting the confidentiality of information of person served as result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

5. Partnership

- Social service providers operate in partnership with relevant stakeholders to support the organisation achieve its vision and mission. The partnerships support the reliable sequence of comprehensive services and person-centred outcomes. The partnerships contribute to the inclusion of persons served into society.

Criteria 24

The social service provider works in partnership with relevant stakeholders to ensure a continuum of comprehensive services and inclusion of person served.

- Indicator: 38. The social service provider demonstrates the use of partnerships ensuring a continuum of comprehensive services and inclusion of person served.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is a clear approach on partnerships and cooperation with for-profit, and/or non-profit organisations or public sector organisations. The approach is focused on creating a continuum of services and the inclusion of persons served.	There is a clear approach on partnerships and cooperation with for-profit, and/or non-profit organisations or public sector organisations. The approach is focused on creating a continuum of services and the inclusion of persons served. All relevant parts of the organisation are engaged in partnerships.	There is a clear approach on partnerships and cooperation with for-profit, and/or non-profit organisations or public sector organisations. The approach is focused on creating a continuum of services and the inclusion of persons served. All relevant parts of the organisation are engaged in partnerships. The social service provider understands how successfully the organisation works in its partnerships.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of creating partnerships to ensure comprehensive services and inclusion of persons served.	The social services provider has successfully implemented innovative ways of creating partnerships to ensure comprehensive services and inclusion of persons served as a result of learning activities.

Additional EQUASS Excellence requirement:

- H. The social service provider has results on partnerships that support the continuum of comprehensive services.
(Documentation of results on partnerships that support the continuum of comprehensive services is required)

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
The social service provider has some results on partnerships that support the continuum of comprehensive services	The social service provider has results, based on relevant indicators that clearly show that partnerships support the continuum of comprehensive services	The organisation has reliable and tangible data and information that gives a clear understanding of the achieved results on partnerships that support the continuum of comprehensive services.	The organisation has identified trends and compares the results on partnerships that support the continuum of comprehensive services with other social service providers and/or other organisations in national and/or an international context.	The organisation has implemented improvements on partnerships that support the continuum of comprehensive services as result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

Criteria 25

The social service provider evaluates the results and benefits of its partnership for the person served and for the organisation

- Indicator: 39. The social service provider has relevant tangible results and benefits of its partnership for persons served and for the organisation. *(Document of results and benefits of its partnership is required)*

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is some concrete information on the results of collaborating with organisations. The evaluation is focused on results of collaboration in service development, inclusion of persons served and ensuring a continuum of services.	There is some concrete information on the results of collaborating with organisations. The service provider has clear indicators for the results of its partnership. The evaluation shows results of partnership on inclusion of persons served and ensuring a continuum of services.	There is some concrete information on the results of collaborating with organisations. The service provider has clear indicators for the results of its partnership. The evaluation shows results of partnership on inclusion of persons served and ensuring continuum of services. The social service provider has reliable and tangible data and understands the achieved results of its partnerships.	The social service provider has identified trends and compares the results of its partnerships with other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.	The social service provider has successfully implemented improvements of partnerships as a result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

6. Participation

- Social Service providers ensure the full participation and active inclusion of person served and representation at all levels of the organisation and within the community. They involve persons served as active participants in decision-making in the service team. In pursuit of more equal participation and inclusion, social service providers support the empowerment of the persons served. They support advocacy to promote equal opportunities of and participation for persons served.

Criteria 26

The social service provider is responsive to and supports the person served in expressing individual contributions, opinions and views.

- Indicator: 40. The social service provider provides opportunities for the person served to express their opinions and views.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is a clear approach for persons served to express their opinions and views. The approach is 'on-the wall'. Feedback from the persons served is randomly collected.	There is a clear approach for persons served to express their opinions and views. The approach is understood and exercised in all areas of the organisation.	There is a clear approach for persons served to express their opinions and views. The approach is understood and exercised in all areas of the organisation. The social service provider understands how successfully the approach has been implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative opportunities for the persons served to express their opinions and views.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative opportunities for the persons served to express their opinions and views as a result of learning activities.

Criteria 27

The social service provider includes persons served as active participants in service planning, service delivery and evaluation of the services.

- Indicators:
 41. The social service provider has implemented a policy and procedures for including persons served as active participants in service planning, delivery and evaluation. *(Documentation of policy and procedures for including persons served is required)*
 42. The social service provider has results of including person served as active participant in service planning, in service delivery and in the evaluation of services. *(Documentation on results of including person served is required)*

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is a clear policy and procedures for including persons served as active participant in service planning, delivery and evaluation. The policy and procedures are 'on the wall', but rarely used in practice.	There is a clear policy and procedures for including persons served as active participant in service planning, delivery and evaluation. The procedures are relevant for all areas of the organisation and known by most of the persons served and staff.	There is a clear policy and procedures for including persons served as active participant in service planning, delivery and evaluation. The procedures are relevant for all areas of the organisation and known by most of the persons served and staff. The service provider understands how successfully the policy and procedures have been implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of including person served in service planning, delivery and evaluation.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative ways of including person served in service planning, delivery and evaluation.
Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There are limited results of involving persons served in service planning, delivery and evaluation. These results are collected randomly.	There are results of involving persons served in service planning, delivery and evaluation. These results are measured with relevant indicators.	There are results of involving persons served in service planning, delivery and evaluation. These results are measured with relevant indicators. The social service provider has reliable and tangible data and understands the achieved results of the involvement of persons served.	The social service provider has identified trends and compares the results of the involvement of persons served with other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.	The social service provider has implemented improvements for involving person served as a result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

Criteria 28

The social service provider reviews and reflects annually on the participation of persons served, based on their input.

- Indicator:
 43. The social service provider demonstrates how it has reviewed and reflected on the participation of person served.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is some evidence that reviews take place on how persons served participate. The review is carried out on an ad-hoc basis.	Review activities on how persons served participate take place on a regular basis.	Review activities on how persons served participate take place on a regular basis. The social service provider understands how successfully the participation of persons served has been implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways to review how persons served participate.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative ways to review how persons served participate, as a result of learning activities.

Additional EQUASS Excellence requirement:

- I. The social service provider has results on the practice of participation on an annual basis. (*Documentation of results on the practice of participation is required*)

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
The social service provider has some results of the practice of participation of persons served.	The social service provider has clear results of the practice of participation of persons served based on relevant indicators.	The organisation has reliable and tangible data and information that gives a clear understanding on the practice of participation of person served.	The organisation has identified trends and compares the practice of participation of person served with other social service providers and/or other organisations in national and/or an international context.	The organisation has implemented improvements in the practice of participation as result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

Criteria 29

The social service provider implements specific measures for staff and service users to understand, enhance and improve the empowerment of person served.

- Indicators:
 - 44. The social service provider has defined and implemented the concept of empowerment for persons served. *(Documentation of a defined concept of empowerment is required)*
 - 45. The social service provider can show tangible results of empowering person served. *(Documentation on tangible results of empowering persons served is required)*

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is a clear written expression of the concept of empowerment of persons served. There is a limited understanding of this concept.	There is a clear written expression of the concept of empowerment of persons served. This concept is understood by most employees and persons served. Specific measures for empowering persons served are implemented.	There is a clear written expression of the concept of empowerment of person served. This concept is understood by most employees and persons served. Specific measures for empowering persons served are implemented. The service provider understands how successfully the concept has been implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of empowering the persons served.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative ways of empowering the persons served as a result of learning activities.
Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There are some results on the empowerment of persons served. Results are collected randomly.	There are results on the empowerment of persons served. Results are measured with relevant indicators.	There are results on the empowerment of persons served. Results are measured with relevant indicators. The social service provider has reliable and tangible data and understands the achieved results.	The social service provider has identified trends and compares the results of empowering the persons served with other social service providers and/or other organisations in national and/or international context.	The social service provider has implemented improvements on empowering the persons served as a result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

Criteria 30

The social service provider implements specific measures for staff and person served to understand and establish an empowering environment.

- Indicators:
 - 46. The social service provider has established the conditions for creating an empowering environment.
 - 47. The employees and persons served understand how an empowering environment is facilitated.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is clear evidence of an established empowering environment. There is a limited understanding of the conditions of an empowering environment by staff and persons served.	There is clear evidence of an established empowering environment. The conditions to facilitate empowerment is understood by most employees and persons served.	There is clear evidence of an established empowering environment. The conditions to facilitate empowerment is understood by most employees and persons served. The service provider understands how successfully the empowering environment is implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of creating an empowering environment.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative ways of creating an empowering environment as a result of learning activities.

Additional EQUASS Excellence requirement

- J. The social service provider has results on the creation of an empowering environment. (*Documentation of the creation of an empowering environment is required*)

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There are some results of an empowering environment to facilitate the empowerment of person served.	There are results an empowering environment that facilitates the empowerment of person served. Results of the empowering environment are measured with relevant indicators.	There are results an empowering environment that facilitates the empowerment of person served. Results of the empowering environment are measured with relevant indicators. The social service provider has reliable and tangible data and understands the achieved results of the empowering environment.	The social service provider has identified trends and compares the results of the empowering environment with other social service providers and/or other organisations in national and/or an international context.	The social service provider has implemented improvements of the empowering environment a as result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

7. Person Centred Approach

- Social service providers provide services are driven by the needs, expectations and capacity of persons served. Services delivered take into account the physical and social environment of the persons served. These services aim to improve the quality of life of the persons served. Social service providers respect the individuals' contribution by involving the persons served in self-assessment, planning, service delivery, feedback and evaluation.

Criteria 31

The social service provider delivers services that are responsive to individual choices, needs and abilities of the persons served in line with organisation's mission, vision and values.

- Indicators:
 - 48. The social service provider supports persons served to express their needs, expectations and choices.
 - 49. The social service provider delivers services based on the needs and expectations of the persons served.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is clear evidence that the social service provider supports the persons served to express their needs. Services are based on their needs and abilities.	There is clear evidence that the social service provider supports the persons served to express their needs. Services are based on their needs and abilities. The responsiveness to choice, needs and abilities in service provision is understood by many within the organisation.	There is clear evidence that the social service provider supports persons served to express their needs. Services are based on their needs and abilities. The responsiveness to choice, needs and abilities in service provision is understood by many within the organisation. The social service provider understands how successfully these have been addressed.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of delivering services based on the needs of persons served	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative ways of delivering services based on the needs of persons served as a result of learning activities.

Additional EQUASS Excellence requirement:

K. The social service provider has results of assessing needs, expectations and the capacity of persons served. *(Documentation of results of assessing needs, expectations and the capacity of person served is required)*

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
The social service provider has some results on assessing needs, expectations and the capacity of person served.	The social service provider has clear results on assessing needs, expectations and the capacity of person served, based on relevant indicators.	The organisation has reliable and tangible data and information that gives a clear understanding of the achieved results of assessing needs, expectations and the capacity of person served.	The organisation has identified trends and compares the results on assessing needs, expectations and the capacity of person served with other social service providers in national and/or an international context.	The organisation has implemented improvements in assessing needs, expectations and the capacity of person served as result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

Criteria 32

The social service provider has a clear concept of Quality of Life for Person Served and implements activities, which are based on a needs assessment of the person served, with the aim of improving their quality of life.

- Indicators:
 - 50. The social service provider has defined and implemented the concept of Quality of Life for persons served. *(Documentation of defined the concept of Quality of Life is required)*
 - 51. The social service provider has tangible results of the activities that improve the quality of life of person served. *(Document of results of improving quality of life of person served is required)*

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is a clear organisational written expression for understanding / interpreting the concept of quality of life for persons served. This concept is 'on the wall'.	There is a clear organisational written expression for understanding / interpreting the concept of quality of life for person served. This is understood by many within the organisation.	There is a clear organisational written expression for understanding / interpreting the concept of quality of life for person served. This concept is understood by many within the organisation. The service provider understands how successfully employees have implemented this concept.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative approaches to the quality of life concept for persons served.	The social service provider has successfully implemented an innovative approach to the quality of life concept for persons served as a result of learning activities.
Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5

There are limited results on improving the quality of life of persons served. These results are collected randomly.	There are results on improving the quality of life persons served. These results are measured with relevant indicators.	There are results on improving the quality of life of persons served These results are measured with relevant indicators. The social service provider has reliable and tangible data and understands the achieved results.	The social service provider has identified trends and compares the results of the achieved results with other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.	The social service provider has implemented improvements in the quality of life of persons served as a result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.
---	---	--	---	--

Criteria 33

The social service provider documents and reviews the planning and delivery of services based on the identification of individual needs, expectations and changing circumstances of persons served in an Individual Plan.

- Indicators:
 - 52. The service provider has implemented an Individual Plan for each person served that records needs, expectations, services and results of person served. (*Documentation of Individual Plan is required*)
 - 53. The Individual Plan of the person served is reviewed and updated regularly.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is clear evidence that each person served has an individual plan. These are reviewed and updated randomly.	There is clear evidence that each person served has an individual plan. All plans are subject to regular review. This approach is implemented in all relevant areas of the organisation.	Persons served have an individual plan that is based on individual needs and expectations. This approach is implemented in all relevant areas of the organisation. All plans are subject to regular review. The social service provider understands how successfully this approach has been implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative approaches to individual planning.	The social service provider has successfully implemented an innovative approach to individual planning as a result of the learning activities.

Criteria 34

The social service provider takes into account the physical and social environment of the person served when developing, delivering and evaluating the services provided to the persons served.

- Indicator: 54. The social service provider delivers services that address the physical and social needs of the person served.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is clear evidence that services are adapted to address the physical and social needs of the persons served. The evidence is collected on ad-hoc basis.	There is clear evidence that services are adapted to address the physical and social needs of the persons served. The adaptation of services is implemented within all relevant areas of the organisation.	There is clear evidence that services are adapted to address the physical and social needs of the persons served. The adaptation of services is implemented within all relevant areas of the organisation. The social service provider understands how successfully the adaptations have been understood and implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative approaches of adapting services to the physical and social needs of persons served.	The social service provider has successfully implemented an innovative approach of adapting services to the physical and social needs of persons served as a result of learning activities.

Criteria 35

The social service provider involves the persons served in the design and reviewing the Individual Plan to ensure his / her individual contribution is part of the plan.

- Indicators: 55. The social service provider has implemented procedures for involving persons served in creating and reviewing their Individual Plan. *(Documentation of procedures for involving persons served is required)*
56. The social service provider has tangible results of their actions to involve person served in their Individual Plan. *(Documentation of results of involving person served is required)*

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There are clear procedures for persons served to be involved in creating and reviewing the individual plan. The procedures are 'on-the wall'. Reviews of persons served are randomly collected.	There are clear procedures on involving persons served in creating and reviewing the individual plan. The approach to involve persons served is applied in all relevant areas of the organisation.	There are clear procedures on involving persons served in creating and reviewing the Individual Plan. The approach to involve persons served is applied in all relevant areas of the organisation. The social service provider understands how successfully this approach has been implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative approaches to involve persons served in the creation and the review of their individual plan.	The social service provider has successfully implemented an innovative approach to involve persons served in the creation and the review of their individual plan as a result of learning activities.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There are limited results on involving persons served in their individual plans. These results are collected randomly.	There are results on involving persons served in their individual plans. These results are measured with relevant indicators.	There are results of involving persons served in their individual plans. These results are measured with relevant indicators. The social service provider has reliable and tangible data and understands the achieved results.	The social service provider has identified trends and compares the results of involving person served in their individual plans with other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.	The social service provider has implemented improvements to the results of involving person served in their individual plans after comparing with other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

8. Comprehensiveness

- Social service providers ensure that the person served has access to a continuum of holistic and community based services. They are committed to providing services that span from early intervention to support and follow up. The services should be delivered in a coordinated way and through a multi-disciplinary team approach or in a multi-agency setting.

Criteria 36

The social service provider ensures that the person served can access a continuum of services that span from early intervention to support and follow up, responding to changing requirements over time.

- Indicators:
 - 57. The social service provider delivers a continuum of services.
 - 58. The social service provider has results of evaluating the continuum of services. *(Documentation of results of continuum of services is required)*

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There are clear measures for ensuring a continuum of services. The measures are taken on an ad-hoc basis.	There are clear measures for ensuring a continuum of services. These measures are implemented within all relevant areas of the organisation.	There are clear measures for ensuring a continuum of services. The measures are implemented within all relevant areas of the organisation. The social service provider understands how successfully these measures have been implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of offering a continuum of services.	The social service provider has successfully implemented an innovative way of offering a continuum of services as a result of learning activities.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There are limited results on evaluating how reliable the continuum of services is. These results are collected randomly.	There are results on evaluating how reliable the continuum of services is. These results are measured with relevant indicators.	There are results on evaluating how reliable the continuum of services is. These results are measured with relevant indicators. The social service provider has reliable and tangible data and understands the achieved results of the improvements.	The social service provider has identified trends and compares the results from evaluating the continuum of services with other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.	The social service provider has implemented improvements in delivering a continuum of services as a result of comparing with other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

Criteria 37

The social service provider operates services from a holistic approach based on the needs and expectations of the person served, family or care givers.

- Indicator: 59. Services are based on the holistic assessment of needs and expectations of person served, family and caregivers that takes account of the persons' life situation and environment.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is a clear system to assess holistically the needs and expectations of persons served, their family and caregivers. The system is 'on the wall' and poorly understood and rarely used in practice.	There is a clear system to assess holistically the needs and expectations of persons served, their family and caregivers. The system is understood by many and implemented in all areas of the organisation.	There is a clear system to assess holistically the needs and expectations of persons served, their family and caregivers. The system is understood by many and implemented in all areas of the organisation. The social service provider understands how successfully the system is implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of offering holistic services to persons served.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative ways of offering holistic services to persons served as a result of learning activities.

Additional EQUASS Excellence requirement:

- L. The social service provider has results on holistic services.
(Documentation of results on holistic services is required)

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
The social service provider has some results that give an indication the results of holistic services.	The social service provider has results, based on relevant indicators that clearly show the results of holistic services.	The organisation has reliable and tangible data and information that gives a clear understanding of the achieved results of holistic services.	The organisation has identified trends and compares the results of holistic services with other social service providers in national and/or an international context.	The organisation has implemented improvements in the results of holistic services as result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

Criteria 38

The social service provider identifies and reviews the service delivery activities, and monitors and maintains control over their quality.

- Indicators:
 - 60. The social service provider has implemented its key delivery activities. (Documentation of key delivery activities is required)
 - 61. The social service provider monitors the performance of the key service delivery activities on regular basis.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
Key delivery activities are clearly described. The description is 'on the wall'. Monitoring takes place on an ad-hoc basis. There is a limited understanding by staff.	All key delivery activities are clearly described. The monitoring is implemented within all areas of the organisation. There is a common understanding by staff.	All key delivery activities are clearly described. The monitoring is implemented within all areas of the organisation. There is a common understanding by staff. The social service provider understands how successfully the approaches have been implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of monitoring the quality of services delivered.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative ways of monitoring the quality of the delivered services as a result of learning activities.

Criteria 39

The social service provider delivers services to the persons served in a community based setting and in line with the provider's vision and mission.

- Indicators:
 - 62. The social service provider demonstrates that it delivers services in a community based setting.
 - 63. The social service provider demonstrates that key service activities are delivered in line with its vision and mission.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is some evidence that services are delivered in a community-based setting. Key services are in line with the organisation's mission.	Services are delivered in line with the organisation's mission and vision, in all relevant areas of the organisation and in a community-based setting.	Services in all relevant areas of the organisation are delivered in a community-based setting and in line with the organisation's mission. The social service provider understands how successfully this approach has been implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways to deliver services in a community-based setting.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative ways to deliver services in a community-based setting as a result of learning activities.

Additional EQUASS Excellence requirement:

M. The social service provider has results on community-based services. (Documentation of results on community-based services is required)

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
The social service provider has some results that give an indication of the achievements on community-based services.	The social service provider has results, based on relevant indicators that clearly show the achievements on community-based services.	The organisation has reliable and tangible data and information that gives a clear understanding of the achieved results on community based services.	The organisation has identified trends and compares the results on community-based services with other social service providers in national and/or an international context.	The organisation has implemented improvements in results on community-based services as result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

Criteria 40

The social service provider delivers services to the persons served in a coordinated way.

- Indicator: 64. The social service provider shows evidence that the activities are coordinated and delivered in a continuum.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is a clear system for coordinating services for persons served. This system is 'on the wall'.	There is a clear system for coordinating services to persons served. This system is implemented in all areas of the organisation.	There is a clear system for coordinating services to persons served. This system is implemented in all areas of the organisation. The social service provider understands how successfully the system has been implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore new ways of coordinating services for persons served.	The social service provider has successfully implemented new ways of coordinating services for persons served as a result of learning activities.

Criteria 41

The social service provider delivers services to the persons served in a multi-disciplinary or multi-agency setting.

- Indicator: 65. The social service provider demonstrates that services are delivered in a multidisciplinary way.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is some evidence of a multidisciplinary approach. This approach is 'on the wall' and understood by some staff.	There is clear evidence of a multidisciplinary approach. This approach is implemented in the organisation and understood by all employees.	There is clear evidence of a multidisciplinary approach. This approach is implemented in the organisation and understood by all employees. The social service provider understands how successfully the approach has been implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways to deliver services to the persons served in a multidisciplinary way.	The social service provider has successfully implemented an innovative way to deliver services to the persons served in a multidisciplinary way as a result of learning activities.

9. Result Orientation

- Social service providers aim to achieve planned results, benefits and best value for persons served and relevant stakeholders (including funders). They demonstrate the achievements of the organisation and persons served, in line with their mission and their core activities. Service impacts are measured and monitored, and are an important element of continuous improvement, transparency and accountability processes.

Criteria 42

The social service provider identifies its business and service results and has formal periodic and independent reviews.

- Indicators:
 - 66. The social service provider has identified and records its business and service results. *(Documentation of business and service results is required)*
 - 67. The financial results have been periodically validated by independent review to ensure financial continuity & sustainability. *(Documentation of independent review is required)*

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There are some results that give an indication of the social service provider's achievements. An independent body has not validated the financial results.	The social service provider has systematically recorded its business and service results based on clear and relevant indicators. The results are relevant for the organisation. An independent body has validated the financial results.	The social service provider has systematically recorded its business and its service results based on clear and relevant indicators. The results are relevant for the organisation. An independent body has validated the financial results. The social service provider understands its results in the national context.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways to identify its business, service and financial results.	The social service provider has successfully implemented an innovative way to identify its business, service and financial results as a result of learning activities.

Additional EQUASS Excellence requirement:

N. The social service provider has tangible organisational results.
(Documentation of tangible organisational results is required)

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
The social service provider has some results that give an indication of organisational results.	The social service provider has organisational results, based on relevant indicators that clearly show the performance of the organisation.	The organisation has reliable and tangible data and information that gives a clear understanding of the organisational results.	The organisation has identified trends and compares the organisational results with other social service providers in national and/or an international context.	The organisation has implemented improvements on organisational results as result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

Additional EQUASS Excellence requirement:

O. The social service provider has tangible service results.
(Documentation of tangible service results is required)

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
The social service provider has some results that gives an indication for results for stakeholders.	The social service provider has results, based on relevant indicators that clearly show tangible results for relevant stakeholders.	The organisation has reliable and tangible data and information that gives a clear understanding of the achieved results for relevant stakeholders.	The organisation has identified trends and compares the results for relevant stakeholders with other social service providers in national and/or an international context.	The organisation has implemented improvements on results for relevant stakeholders as result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

Criteria 43

The social service provider records results, outcomes and benefits of services for person served on individual and collective bases.

- Indicator: 68. The social service provider has identified the outcomes and benefits to the person served on an individual and collective basis. *(Documentation of outcomes and benefits to the person served on a collective basis is required)*

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There are some results on outcomes and benefits of the provided services available which give some indication of the current achievements.	The social service provider has the outcomes and benefits of the provided services on an individual and collective basis. These results are based on clear and relevant indicators.	The social service provider has the outcomes and benefits of the provided services on an individual and collective basis. These results are based on clear and relevant indicators. The social service provider has reliable and tangible data and understands the achieved results of the services.	The social service provider has identified trends and compares the results of outcomes and benefits with other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.	The social service provider has successfully achieved improved outcomes and benefits as a result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

Criteria 44

The social service provider evaluates results and benefits for persons served, in line with its mission, in order to determine ways to improve and give best value for persons served, funders and other relevant stakeholders.

- Indicator: 69. The social service provider has implemented actions for improving services after evaluating outcomes, results and benefits.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is some evidence of improvement actions. The actions are carried out on an ad hoc basis.	There is a systematic implementation of improvement actions based on results evaluation. These improvement actions are implemented in all relevant areas of the organisation.	There is a systematic implementation of improvement actions based on results evaluation. These improvement actions are implemented in all relevant areas of the organisation. The social service provider understands the results of the improvement actions.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways to improve services based on evaluating outcomes.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative ways to improve services based on evaluating outcomes as a result of learning activities.

Additional EQUASS Excellence requirement:

- P. The social service provider has results of best value for relevant stakeholders.
(Documentation of results of best value for relevant stakeholders is required)

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
The social service provider has some results that gives an indication for results for stakeholders.	The social service provider has results, based on relevant indicators that clearly show tangible results for relevant stakeholders.	The organisation has reliable and tangible data and information that gives a clear understanding of the achieved results for relevant stakeholders.	The organisation has identified trends and compares the results for relevant stakeholders with other social service providers in national and/or an international context.	The organisation has implemented improvements on results for relevant stakeholders as result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

Criteria 45

The social service provider measures the satisfaction of persons served and all relevant stakeholders by internal and/or external evaluation.

- Indicator: 70. The social service provider has recorded an overview of satisfaction of person served and other relevant stakeholder.
(Documentation of satisfaction of person served and other relevant stakeholders is required)

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There are some results that give an indication of the satisfaction levels of persons served and other relevant stakeholders.	The social service provider has results that show the satisfaction levels of persons served and other stakeholders. The results are based on clear and relevant indicators.	The social service provider has results that show the satisfaction levels of person served and other stakeholders. The results are based on clear and relevant indicators. The social service provider has reliable and tangible data and understands this data.	The social service provider has identified trends and compares the satisfaction level results of persons served and all relevant stakeholders with other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.	The social service provider has successfully improved the satisfaction levels of persons served and all relevant stakeholders as a result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

Criteria 46

The social service provider provides accessible and easily understandable information on records of results, outcomes, including results of surveys.

- Indicator: 71. The social service provider can demonstrate that information about results are understood by person served, staff and other relevant stakeholders. (Documentation on perceived information on results of stakeholders is required)

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There are some results that indicate that persons served, staff and other relevant stakeholders are informed.	The social service provider has results that show that persons served, staff and other relevant stakeholders are informed. These results are based on clear and relevant indicators.	The social service provider has results that show that persons served, staff and other relevant stakeholders are informed. These results are based on clear and relevant indicators. The social service provider has reliable and tangible data and knows how this information is understood.	The social service provider has identified trends and compares the results of comprehension levels of persons served and all relevant stakeholders with other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.	The social service provider has successfully implemented improvements in providing accessible and easily understandable information to persons served and all relevant stakeholders, as result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

Criteria 47

The social service provider actively disseminates organisation performance on business and service results among its staff, person served and all relevant stakeholders.

- Indicator: 72. The social service provider demonstrates ways of disseminating information about the performance of the organisation.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is a clear system to inform persons served, staff and stakeholders about business and service results. The approach is 'on the wall'.	There is a clear system to inform persons served, staff and stakeholders about business and service results. The approach is implemented in all relevant areas of the organisation.	There is a clear system to inform persons served, staff and stakeholders about business and service results. The approach is implemented in all relevant areas of the organisation. The social service provider understands how successfully this system has been implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative ways of disseminating organisation performance on business and service results.	The social service provider has successfully implemented innovative ways of disseminating organisation performance on business and service results as a result of learning activities

10. Continuous Improvement

- Social service providers are committed to continuous learning and continuously improving their services and their results. They are proactive in meeting future needs of persons served, staff, funders and stakeholders using evidence-based information for developing and improving delivered social services. They operate systems to compare service performance and continuous improvement.

Criteria 48

The social service provider defines and implements a system of continuous improvement of results of services, way of working and learning.

- Indicator: 73. The social service provider has implemented a system of continuous improvement and learning. (*Documentation of system of continuous improvement and learning is required*)

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is a clear system for continuous improvement and learning. The system is 'on the wall'.	There is a clear and understandable system of continuous improvement and learning. This system is characterised by a cyclic manner. The system is implemented in all areas of the organisation, and known and used by management and staff.	There is a clear and understandable system of continuous improvement and learning. This system is characterised by a cyclic manner. The system is implemented in all areas of the organisations, and known and used by management and staff. The social service provider understands how successfully this system is implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative systems for continuous service improvement, and ways of working and learning.	The social service provider has successfully implemented an innovative system on continuous service improvement, and ways of working and learning, as a result of learning activities.

Additional EQUASS Excellence requirement:

Q. The social service provider has tangible results of improving services. *(Documentation of tangible results of improving services is required)*

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
The social service provider has some results that give an indication of improving services.	The social service provider has results, based on relevant indicators that clearly show improved services.	The organisation has reliable and tangible data and information that gives a clear understanding of the improved services.	The organisation has identified trends and compares the results of the improved services with other social service providers in national and/or an international context.	The organisation has implemented improvements of the services as result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

Additional EQUASS Excellence requirement:

R. The social service provider has tangible improved results. *(Documentation on tangible improved results is required)*

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
The social service provider has some results that give an indication of improved results.	The social service provider has results, based on relevant indicators that clearly show tangible improved results.	The organisation has reliable and tangible data and information that gives a clear understanding of the tangible improved results.	The organisation has identified trends and compares the results of tangible improved results with other social service providers in national and/or an international context.	The organisation has implemented improvements on results as result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.

Criteria 49

The social service provider operates mechanisms, which provide information to understand of future needs of persons served, staff, funders and stakeholders.

- Indicator: 74. The social service provider demonstrates that it uses information about the future needs of persons served and stakeholders to develop and improve its services.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There is a clear approach to identify stakeholders' future needs in order to develop and improve services. This approach is 'on the wall' and used randomly.	There is a clear approach to identify stakeholders' future needs in order to develop and improve services. This approach is implemented within all relevant areas of the organisation.	There is a clear approach to identify stakeholders' future needs in order to develop and improve services. This approach is implemented within all relevant areas of the organisation. The social service provider understands how successfully it has been implemented.	The social service provider initiates learning activities to explore innovative approaches to understanding the future needs of persons served, staff, funders and stakeholders.	The social service provider has successfully implemented an innovative approach to understanding the future needs of persons served, staff, funders and stakeholders as a result of learning activities.

Criteria 50

The social service provider initiates improvement initiatives by comparing and exchanging performances on approaches, results of services, activities and outcomes of person served.

- Indicator: 75. The social service provider can demonstrate it has compared approaches, methods of implementation and results with other social service providers. *(Documentation of the comparison is required)*

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
There are some improved approaches, methods and outcomes as a result of comparing other service providers	The social service provider has tangible improved approaches, methods and outcomes as a result of comparing other service providers. This comparison is based on clear and relevant indicators.	The social service provider has tangible improved approaches, methods and outcomes as result of comparing other social service providers. The social service provider understands the impact on its services based on reliable and tangible data.	The social service provider has identified trends from its comparison of approaches, methods and outcomes with other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.	The social service provider has successfully implemented improvements based on its analysis of trends in approaches, methods and outcomes, as result of comparing other social service providers and/or other organisations in a national and/or international context.