

# Cross reference vEQF – EQUASS

Cross reference study between the Voluntary European Quality Framework for Social Services (VEQF for SS) and the requirements of the European Quality in Social Service certification programs (EQUASS 2012)



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## Introduction

This document describes the results and details of cross reference study based on the content details of the Voluntary European Quality Framework for Social Services (VEQF for SS) (Social Protection Committee, 2010) compared with the content details of the certification programs of the European Quality in Social Services (EQUASS). The elements and details of reference framework, VEQF for SS, are put into the left column. In the right column relevant information from the EQUASS certification programs are provided with similar content. The reference made to the EQUASS certification programs is made on the level of the criteria. The EQUASS criteria are relevant for both EQUASS certification programs: the Assurance level and Excellence level. In all cases the underlying indicators of the assurance program are additional relevant information for compliance.



## Overarching quality principles for social service provision:

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| <p><b>Available:</b><br/>Access to a wide range of social services should be offered so as to provide users with an appropriate response to their needs as well as, when possible, with freedom of choice among services within the community, at a location which is most beneficial to the users and, where appropriate, to their families.</p> | <p><b>Availability</b><br/>EUQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):</p> <p><b>Range of services:</b><br/>Criterion 4: The social service provider informs all stakeholders about the offered programmes and services available.<br/>Criterion 38: The social service provider ensures that the person served can access a continuum of services that span from early intervention to support and respond to changing requirements over time.</p> <p><b>Response to needs:</b><br/>Criterion 32: The social service provider selects programmes which are based on a needs assessment at the location which is most convenient for the person served, family and care takers.<br/>Indicator 64: The social service provider offers its services at the most convenient location for persons served, families and carer's.</p> <p><b>Freedom of choice:</b><br/><b>EUQUASS Principle of 'Rights':</b><br/>Organisations providing social services are committed to protecting and promoting the rights of the person served in terms of equal opportunities, equal treatment and freedom of choice, self-determination and equal participation. Organisations providing social services are ensuring informed consent and adopting non-discrimination and positive actions within their own services. This commitment is apparent in all elements of service development and delivery and in the values of the social service provider.</p> <p>Criterion 18: The social service provider respects the fundamental right to self-</p> |

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|  | <p>determination of the person served. They freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.</p> <p><b>Location beneficial to users:</b><br/> <b>EUQUASS principle Person centred approach:</b><br/>           Organisations providing social services operate processes aiming at the improvement of quality of life of persons served that are driven by the needs of both the persons served and potential beneficiaries. They respect the individual's contribution by engaging them in self - assessment, service-user feedback and evaluation and that value personal as well as service goals taking into account the physical and social environment of the person served. All processes are subject to regular review.</p> <p>Criterion 32: The social service provider selects programmes which are based on a needs assessment at the location which is most convenient for the person served, family and care takers</p> |
| <p><b>Accessible:</b><br/>           Social services should be easy to access by all those who may require them. Information and impartial advice about the range of available services and providers should be accessible to all users. People with disabilities should be ensured access to the physical environment in which the service provision takes place, to adequate transport from and to the place of service provision, as well as to information and communication (including information and communication technologies).</p> | <p><b>Accessibility:</b><br/>           EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):<br/> <b>Easy to access:</b><br/>           Criterion 17: The social service provider has accessible complaint management system that registers feedback on performance from persons served, purchasers and other relevant stakeholders.<br/>           Criterion 19: The social service provider facilitates the person served in choosing and having access to advocates and/or supporting persons.<br/>           Criterion 38: The social service provider ensures that the person served can access a continuum of services that span from early intervention to support and respond to changing requirements over time.<br/>           Criterion 39: The social service provider</p>   |

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|   | <p>develops a seamless continuum of services and reduces barriers in a multi-disciplinary or multi-agency setting.</p> <p><b>Information and communication:</b><br/>Criterion 4: The social service provider informs all stakeholders about the offered programmes and services available.</p> <p>Indicator 7: Information is available on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. development of programmes and services</li> <li>b. processes and procedures</li> <li>c. performance of the organisation</li> <li>d. upcoming relevant events</li> </ul> <p>opportunities for involvement of persons served</p> <p>Criterion 24: The social service provider defines, documents, monitors and evaluates procedures for assuring confidentiality of data regarding the persons served and the service provided to them.</p> <p>Criterion 39: The social service provider develops a seamless continuum of services and reduces barriers in a multi-disciplinary or multi-agency setting.</p> <p>Indicator 77: The organisation identifies and reports barriers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. to the seamless continuum of programmes on annual basis</li> <li>b. on access to programs and services on annual basis</li> </ul> <p>Criterion 46: The social service provider provides accessible and easily understandable records on outcome, including personal perception and achievements</p> <p><b>Transport:</b> Reference is made on page 30: <i>"The service involves considering the entire person as a complex system rather than focusing only on particular parts of the person or systems. Person served will view</i></p> |

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|   | <p><i>outcomes from a holistic perspective, covering - for instance - housing, transport, employment, income and benefits, and broader issues around discrimination and equality.”</i> Criterion 40: The social service provider operates services from a holistic approach based on the needs and expectations of the person served with the aim of improving the quality of life for the person served</p>  |
| <p><b>Affordable:</b><br/>Social services should be provided to all the persons who need them (universal access) either free of charge or at a price which is affordable to the individual.</p> | <p><b>EUQUASS principle of Person centred approach:</b><br/>Organisations providing social services operate processes aiming at the improvement of quality of life of persons served that are driven by the needs of both the persons served and potential beneficiaries. They respect the individual’s contribution by engaging them in self - assessment, service-user feedback and evaluation and that value personal as well as service goals taking into account the physical and social environment of the person served. All processes are subject to regular review.</p> <p>EUQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):<br/>No 33. The social service provider offers programmes consistent with the identified needs of its customers and objectives for the programme.<br/>No 34. The social service provider operates individual processes that are driven by the needs of the persons served.</p> <p>Indicator 67: The social service provider delivers services based on the needs of the persons served.</p> <p><b>Note: The issue of affordability (services free of charge and/or affordable prices) is not explicitly addressed in the EUQUASS criteria and/or indicators.</b></p> |
| <p><b>Person-centred:</b><br/>Social services should address in a</p>   | <p><b>EUQUASS principle Person Centred Approach:</b><br/>Organisations providing social services</p>  |

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| <p>timely and flexible manner the changing needs of each individual with the aim of improving their quality of life as well as of ensuring equal opportunities. Social services should take into account the physical, intellectual and social environment of the users and should be respectful of their cultural specificities. Furthermore, they should be driven by the needs of the users and, when appropriate, of the related beneficiaries of the service provided.</p> | <p>operate processes aiming at the improvement of quality of life of persons served that are driven by the needs of both the persons served and potential beneficiaries. They respect the individual's contribution by engaging them in self - assessment, service-user feedback and evaluation and that value personal as well as service goals taking into account the physical and social environment of the person served. All processes are subject to regular review.</p> <p><b>EUQUASS Criterion (including underlying indicators):</b></p> <p><b>Tailor-made services</b></p> <p>Criterion 33: The social service provider offers programmes consistent with the identified needs of its customers and objectives for the programme.</p> <p>Criterion 34: The social service provider operates individual processes that are driven by the needs of the persons served.</p> <p>Criterion 35: The social service provider documents the planning of services based on the identification of individual needs and expectations of persons served in an Individual Plan.</p> <p><b>Proximity</b></p> <p>Criterion 31: The social service provider selects programmes which are based on a needs assessment at the location which is most convenient for the person served, family and care takers</p> |
| <p><b>Comprehensive:</b></p> <p>Social services should be conceived and delivered in an integrated manner which reflects the multiple needs, capacities and preferences of the users and, when appropriate, their families and carers, and which aims to improve their well-being.</p>  | <p><b>EUQUASS principle Comprehensiveness:</b></p> <p>Organisations providing social services ensure that the person served can access a continuum of holistic and community based services, which value the contribution of all persons served and potential partners including the local community, employers and other stakeholders and that span from early intervention to support and follow up. The services should be delivered through a multi -disciplinary team approach or multi -agency partnership with other service providers and employers.</p>   |

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|   | <p>EQUASS Criteria (including underlying indicators):</p> <p><b>Holistic approach</b><br/>Criterion 40: The social service provider operates services from <b>a holistic approach</b> based on the needs and expectations of the person served with the aim of improving the quality of life for the person served.</p> <p><b>Promotion of quality of life</b><br/>Criterion 40: The social service provider operates services from a holistic approach based on the needs and expectations of the person served with the aim of <b>improving the quality of life</b> for the person served.<br/>Criterion 41: The social service provider identifies the needed competences, skills and support for staff to enhance the quality of life for person served.</p> <p><b>Seamless provision of services</b><br/>Criterion 37: The social service provider reviews this delivery process and maintains control over the delivery of the service.<br/><br/>Criterion 38: The social service provider ensures that the person served can access a continuum of services that span from early intervention to support and respond to changing requirements over time.<br/><br/>Criterion 39: The social service provider develops a seamless continuum of services and reduces barriers in a multi-disciplinary or multi-agency setting.</p> <p><b>Access to multi-disciplinary supports and services</b><br/>Criterion 39: The social service provider develops a seamless continuum of services and reduces barriers in a multi-disciplinary or multi-agency setting.</p> |
| <p><b>Continuous:</b><br/>Social services should be organised so as to ensure continuity of service delivery for the duration of the need and, particularly when responding to developmental and long-term needs,</p> | <p><b>EUQUASS principle Comprehensiveness:</b><br/>Organisations providing social services ensure that the person served can access a continuum of holistic and community based services, which value the contribution of all persons served and potential partners</p>   |

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| <p>according to a life-cycle approach that enables the users to rely on a continuous, uninterrupted range of services, from early interventions to support and follow up, while avoiding the negative impact of disruption of service.</p>  | <p>including the local community, employers and other stakeholders and that span from early intervention to support and follow up. The services should be delivered through a multi -disciplinary team approach or multi -agency partnership with other service providers and employers.<br/>EQUASS criterion (including underlying indicators):<br/><b>Seamless provision of services</b><br/>Criterion 39: The social service provider develops a seamless continuum of services and reduces barriers in a multi-disciplinary or multi-agency setting.</p> <p>Criterion 38: The social service provider ensures that the person served can access a continuum of services that span from early intervention to support and respond to changing requirements over time.</p>  |
| <p><b>Outcome-oriented:</b><br/>Social services should be focused primarily on the benefits for the users, taking into account, when appropriate, the benefits for their families, informal carers and the community. Service delivery should be optimised on the basis of periodic evaluations which should inter alia channel into the organisation feedback from users and stakeholders.</p> | <p><b>EQUASS principle Result orientation:</b><br/>Organisations providing social services are aiming for results, in terms of both how they are perceived, on achievements they have made and on the benefits they are providing to the persons served, their family members, carers, employers, other stakeholders and the general community. They also aspire to the achievement of best value for their purchasers and funders. Service impacts are measured, monitored, and are an important element of continuous improvement, transparency and accountability processes.<br/>EQUASS-criteria (including underlying indicators):<br/><b>Benefits for service users</b><br/>Criterion 44: The social service provider evaluates its business results in order to determine best value for purchasers and funders (<i>'best value'</i> can also be expressed in relation to the increased quality of life offered to the person being served).<br/>Criterion 43: The social service provider identifies and registers the outcomes and benefits for person served of the receive services on individual and collective basis.</p> |

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|   | <p><b>Records of outcomes</b></p> <p>Criterion 45. The social service provider evaluates the individual and collective satisfaction of persons served and other stakeholders by internal and/or external evaluation.</p> <p>Criterion 46: The social service provider provides accessible and easily understandable records on outcome, including personal perception and achievements.</p> <p><b>Reviewing results</b></p> <p>Criterion 42: The social service provider identifies its business results and provides formal periodic and independent review and procedures to achieve the targeted results.</p> <p><b>Transparency of results</b></p> <p>Criterion 46: The social service provider provides accessible and easily understandable records on outcome, including personal perception and achievements</p> |



## Quality principles for the relationships between service providers and service users.

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| <p><b>Respect for users' rights:</b><br/>Service providers should respect the fundamental rights and freedoms as outlined in national, European and international human rights instruments, as well as the dignity of the users. Moreover, they should promote and implement the users' rights in terms of equal opportunities, equal treatment, freedom of choice, self-determination, control of their own lives and respect for their private lives. Appropriate services should be provided without discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. Physical, mental and financial abuse of vulnerable users should be prevented and adequately sanctioned</p> | <p><b>EQUASS principle Rights:</b><br/>Organisations providing social services are committed to protecting and promoting the rights of the person served in terms of equal opportunities, equal treatment and freedom of choice, self-determination and equal participation. Organisations providing social services are ensuring informed consent and adopting non-discrimination and positive actions within their own services. This commitment is apparent in all elements of service development and delivery and in the values of the social service provider.<br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):</p> <p><b>Freedom of choice</b><br/>Criterion 19: The social service provider facilitates the person served in choosing and having access to advocates and/or supporting persons.</p> <p><b>Self-determination</b><br/>Criterion 18: The social service provider respects the fundamental right to self-determination of the person served. They freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.</p> <p><b>Non-discrimination</b><br/>Criterion 16: The social service provider informs the person served about his/her rights and duties especially to equal treatment on grounds of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation before receiving the services.</p> <p><b>Charter of Rights</b><br/>Criterion 15: The social service provider assures the rights of persons served outlined in a Charter of Rights that is based on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of the Council of Europe and other international</p> |

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| <p>Criteria 1:<br/>providing potential and actual users of social services and, when appropriate, their families, with clear, accurate and accessible information, adapted to the specificities of each target group, notably about the types, availability, extent and limitations of the service provided. Information should also include independent evaluation and quality assessment reports;</p> | <p>human rights conventions, especially those elaborated under the United Nations</p> <p><b>In EQUASS Principle of rights:</b><br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):<br/>Criterion 16. The social service provider informs the person served about his/her rights and duties especially to equal treatment on grounds of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation before receiving the services.</p> <p><b>In EQUASS principle of Participation</b><br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):<br/><b>Person served is actively involved in decision-making and evaluation</b><br/>Criterion 28: The social service provider includes persons served as active participants in planning and have set up appraisal made up of on-going of an on-going structured dialogue process in the management of the service, including the definition of the needs, the definition of the services, as well as of the evaluation of quality.</p> |
| <p>Criteria 2:<br/>Ensuring access of people with disabilities to means of information and communication adapted to their needs</p>   | <p><b>In EQUASS Principle Persons Centred Approach:</b></p> <p>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):<br/>Criterion 32. The social service provider selects programmes which are based on a needs assessment at the location which is most convenient for the person served, family and care takers.<br/>Criterion 35. The social service provider documents the planning of services based on the identification of individual needs and expectations of persons served in an Individual Plan.</p> <p><b>In EQUASS principle Result orientation:</b><br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):<br/><b>Records of outcomes</b></p>   |

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|  | <p>Criterion 46: The social service provider provides accessible and easily understandable records on outcome, including personal perception and achievements</p>  |
| <p>Criteria 3:<br/>implementing transparent, accessible and user-friendly advice and complaint procedures for users</p>  | <p><b>In EQUASS principle Rights:</b><br/>EUQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):<br/><b>Complaint management</b><br/>Criterion 17: The social service provider has accessible complaint management system that registers feedback on performance from persons served, purchasers and other relevant stakeholders.</p>   |
| <p>Criteria 4:<br/>setting up regulatory frameworks and control mechanisms to avoid physical, psychological or financial abuse and to ensure compliance with health and safety rules</p>   | <p><b>In EUQUASS Principle Ethics:</b><br/>EUQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):<br/><b>Ensuring safety and security</b><br/>Criterion 20. The social service provider defines and documents its policy on ethics that respects and assures the dignity of the persons served, protects them from undue risk and promotes social justice.<br/>Criterion 21: The social service provider operates mechanisms that prevent the physical, mental and financial abuse of persons served.<br/>Criterion 22: The social service provider provides services in a safe system of working within a safe environment to ensure the physical security of persons served, their families and caretakers.</p> |
| <p>Criteria 5:<br/>providing workers and volunteers involved in service delivery with adequate training in rights-based, person-centred service provision of everyday care, in avoidance of discrimination and in awareness of the specificities of the groups of people they provide services to;</p> | <p><b>In EUQUASS Principle staff:</b><br/>EUQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):<br/>Criterion 11: The social service trains all staff based on a plan for learning and development and evaluates the effectiveness of the training.<br/>Indicator 21: The plan for staff qualification, staff development and staff support is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documented</li> <li>• evaluated on annual basis</li> </ul> <p>Indicator 22: The social service provider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrates records from all training</li> </ul>   |

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|  | <p>activities of staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>evaluates the effectiveness of the training activities (based on feedback from staff and other stakeholders)</li> </ul> <p>Criterion 12. The social service provider applies requirements for competence in the identified roles and functions of staff and evaluates them on annual basis.</p> <p><b>In EUQUASS Principle Rights:</b><br/><i>Staff members should aware of the rights of person served and they should be trained appropriately in the understanding of the characteristics of the populations they serve and in respecting human rights.</i></p> <p>Criterion 15: The social service provider assures the rights of persons served outlined in a Charter of Rights that is based on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of the Council of Europe and other international human rights conventions, especially those elaborated under the United Nations.</p> |
| <p>Criteria 6:<br/>promoting users' inclusion in the community;</p>  | <p><b>In EUQUASS Principle Leadership:</b><br/>EUQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):</p> <p>Criterion 7: The social service provider demonstrates organisation's success in satisfying the needs and expectations of the society.</p> <p>Criterion 8: The social service provider demonstrates organisation's social responsibility through activities contributing to the society.</p>  |
| <p>Criteria 7:<br/>ensuring confidentiality and security of data regarding users and services provided to them, within a system which allows data to be shared, when appropriate, between different service providers involved while fully complying with the data protection legislation.</p> | <p><b>In EUQUASS Principle Ethics:</b><br/>EUQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):</p> <p><b>Ethical code for professionals</b></p> <p>Criterion 23: The social service provider defines, documents, monitors and evaluates a set of principles, values and procedures that govern behaviour in service delivery containing aspects of confidentiality, accuracy, privacy and integrity.</p> <p>Criterion 24: The social service provider defines, documents, monitors and evaluates</p>   |

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|   | <p>procedures for assuring confidentiality of data regarding the persons served and the service provided to them.</p>  |
| <p><b>Participation and empowerment:</b><br/>Service providers should encourage the active involvement of the users, and, when appropriate, of their families or trusted persons and of their informal carers in the decisions regarding the planning, delivery and evaluation of services. The service provision should empower users to define their personal needs and should aim to strengthen or maintain their capacities while retaining as much control as possible over their own lives.</p> | <p><b>EUQUASS principle Participation:</b><br/>Organisations providing social services promote the participation and inclusion of person served at all levels of the organisation and within the community. Social service providers involve service users as active members of the service team. In pursuit of more equal participation and inclusion, social service providers should facilitate the empowerment of the persons served. They work in consultation with representative bodies and groups to support advocacy, the removal of barriers, public education and active promotion of equal opportunities.</p>  |
| <p>Criteria 1:<br/>Ensuring involvement of the users and when appropriate, of their representatives, their families or trusted persons and their informal carers in the planning, development, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of service, when necessary by providing adequate means, including supported decision-making and advocacy</p>   | <p><b>In EUQUASS principle Participation:</b><br/>EUQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):<br/>Criterion 28: The social service provider includes persons served as active participants in planning and have set up appraisal made up of on-going of an on-going structured dialogue process in the management of the service, including the definition of the needs, the definition of the services, as well as of the evaluation of quality.<br/>Indicator 58: The social service provider reviews the measures, activities and policy for participation of persons served or representatives of persons served on an annual basis.<br/><b>In EUQUASS Principle of Partnership:</b><br/>Indicator 59;<br/>The social service provider has partnerships with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• social partners in the delivery of services for the persons served</li> <li>• funding agencies in the delivery of services for the persons served</li> <li>• organisations of persons served in the delivery of services for the persons</li> </ul> |

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|  | served (if applicable)  |
| <p>Criteria 2:<br/>Establishing periodical review of users' satisfaction with the services provided.</p> | <p><b>In the EUQUASS Principle Participation:</b><br/>EUQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):<br/>Criterion 29: The social service provider institutes an annual evaluation of participation of persons served both on individual and/or group basis.</p> <p><b>In EUQUASS principle Result orientation</b><br/>Organisations providing social services are aiming for results, in terms of both how they are perceived, on achievements they have made and on the benefits they are providing to the persons served, their family members, carers, employers, other stakeholders and the general community. They also aspire to the achievement of best value for their purchasers and funders. Service impacts are measured, monitored, and are an important element of continuous improvement, transparency and accountability processes.<br/>EUQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):</p> <p><b>a. Benefits for service users</b><br/>Criterion 45: The social service provider evaluates the individual and collective satisfaction of persons served and other stakeholders by internal and/or external evaluation.<br/>Indicator 89: The social service provider measures the satisfaction of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• its persons served</li> <li>• its purchasers</li> <li>• its funding bodies</li> </ul> <p>Criterion 43: The social service provider identifies and registers the outcomes and benefits for person served of the receive services on individual and collective basis.</p> |

## Quality principles for the relationships between service providers, public authorities, social partners and other stakeholders.

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| <p><b>Partnership:</b><br/>The development of social service provision requires the active involvement and cooperation of all stakeholders from both the public and the private sectors: local authorities, service users, their families and informal carers, users' organisations, service providers and their representative organisations, social partners and civil society organisations operating in the local community. This partnership is essential for the creation of a continuum of social services that respond to local needs, for the effective use of resources and expertise, as well as for achieving social cohesion.</p> | <p><b>EQUASS Principle Partnership</b><br/>Organisations providing social services operate in partnership with public and private sector agencies, employers' and workers' representatives, funders and purchasers, organisations of person served, local groups, families and carers to create a continuum of services and achieve more effective service impacts and a more open and inclusive society.</p>   |
| <p><b>Criteria 1:</b><br/>Establishing synergies between all stakeholders in the community, concerning policymaking, needs identification, planning, development, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of services so as to ensure the continuity of social service provision for the duration of the need, to facilitate users' access to a comprehensive range of social services and to ensure that the service contributes to an inclusive society;</p>   | <p>In the EQUASS Principle Partnership:<br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):<br/><b>Partnership</b><br/>Criterion 26; The social service provider works in partnership with other organisations in the provision of services.<br/>Indicator 51: The social service provider has partnerships with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• social partners in the delivery of services for the persons served</li> <li>• funding agencies in the delivery of services for the persons served</li> <li>• organisations of persons served in the delivery of services for the persons served (if applicable)</li> </ul> <p>Criterion 27; The social service provider works in partnership with persons served, purchasers and other stakeholders in the development of services.</p> |
| <p><b>Criteria 2:</b><br/>Promoting proximity of service needed</p>  | <p><b>In EQUASS principle Person centred:</b><br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying</p>   |

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| to the users;   | <p>indicators):</p> <p><b>Proximity</b></p> <p>Criterion 32: The social service provider selects programmes which are based on a needs assessment at the location which is most convenient for the person served, family and care takers</p> <p>Indicator 64: The social service provider offers its services at the most convenient location for persons served, families and carer's.</p>  |
| <p><b>Criteria 3:</b></p> <p>Supporting coordination among service providers so as to achieve a comprehensive and integrated delivery of social services.</p>   | <p><b>In the EQUASS Principle Partnership:</b></p> <p>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):</p> <p>Criterion 26: The social service provider works in partnership with other organisations in the provision of services.</p> <p><b>In EQUASS principle Comprehensiveness:</b></p> <p>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):</p> <p><b>Seamless provision of services</b></p> <p>Criterion 39: The social service provider develops a seamless continuum of services and reduces barriers in a multi-disciplinary or multi-agency setting.</p> |
| <p><b>Good governance:</b></p> <p>Social services should operate on the basis of openness and transparency, respect for the European, national, regional and local legislation, efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability in relation to organisational, social and financial performance of service delivery. Service provision should be based on the coordination of the relevant public authorities, social partners and stakeholders in the design, proper financing (including resources prioritisation within the available budget) and delivery of the service.</p> | <p><b>EQUASS principle Leadership:</b></p> <p>Organisations providing social services demonstrate leadership within the social sector internally by good governance and within the wider community by promoting positive images, challenging low expectations, encouraging best practice, enabling more effective use of resources, inspiring innovation, and aiding the creation a more open and inclusive society.</p>   |

| Voluntary European Quality Framework for SS  | European Quality in Social Services (EQUASS 2012)   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Criteria 1:</b><br/>Clearly defining roles, responsibilities and interrelations between the actors involved in planning, development, financing, delivery, support, monitoring and evaluation of service;</p>                    | <p><b>In EQUASS principle Ethics:</b><br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):<br/><b>Role and responsibilities</b><br/>Criterion 25: The social service provider defines the roles and responsibilities, authorities and the interrelation of all personnel who manage, design, deliver, support and evaluate the service provision to person served.</p>  |
| <p><b>Criteria 2:</b><br/>Ensuring regular planning and review processes and putting in place mechanisms for systematic continuous improvement;</p>  | <p><b>In EQUASS Principle Leadership:</b><br/>Criterion 5. The social service provider management establishes and documents an annual planning and review process.<br/>Criterion 6. The plan includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• annual outcomes / targets</li> <li>• the activities to be undertaken in achieving the annual targets</li> <li>• monitoring of the performance of the organisation in meeting its annual targets</li> <li>• time-scales and procedures for review and revision</li> </ul> <p><b>In EQUASS principle Continuous Improvement:</b><br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):<br/><b>Systematic Quality Improvement</b><br/>Criterion 48: The social service provider has a standard procedure for continuous improvement on the basis of an improvement cycle.</p> |
| <p><b>Criteria 3:</b><br/>Collecting periodic feedback on the efficiency and effectiveness of service provision from users, funders and other stakeholders as well as from potential users who might be excluded from the service;</p> | <p><b>In EQUASS principle Leadership:</b><br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):<br/><b>Collection of feedback</b><br/>Criterion 3: Persons served, family members and service user organisations are able to give feedback on their individual and collective experience of programmes and services.<br/><b>In EQUASS Principle Result Orientation:</b><br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying</p>  |

| Voluntary European Quality Framework for SS   | European Quality in Social Services (EQUASS 2012)   |
|---|---|
|   | <p>indicators):</p> <p>Criterion 44. The social service provider evaluates its business results in order to determine best value for purchasers and funders ('best value' can also be expressed in relation to the increased quality of life offered to the person being served).</p>   |
| <p><b>Criteria 4:</b><br/>Establishing regular independent review of procedures, outcomes and users' satisfaction, and publishing their results;</p>  | <p><b>In EQUASS principle Result orientation:</b><br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):</p> <p><b>Accountability and transparency</b><br/>Criterion 42: The social service provider identifies its business results and provides formal periodic and independent review and procedures to achieve the targeted results.<br/>Criterion 43: The social service provider identifies and registers the outcomes and benefits for person served of the receive services on individual and collective basis.</p>   |
| <p><b>Criteria 5:</b><br/>Implementing transparent, accessible and user-friendly advice and complaint procedures for users</p>  | <p><b>In EQUASS principle Rights:</b><br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):</p> <p><b>Complaint management</b><br/>Criterion 15: The social service provider has accessible complaint management system that registers feedback on performance from persons served, purchasers and other relevant stakeholders.</p>  |
| <p><b>Criteria 6:</b><br/>Organising participatory forums involving service users and their networks, public authorities, social partners, civil society organisations and other stakeholders in the assessment of the service providers' performance within the given policy context</p> | <p><b>In EQUASS principle of Leadership:</b><br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):</p> <p><b>Collection of feedback</b><br/>Criterion 3: Persons served, family members and service user organisations are able to give feedback on their individual and collective experience of programmes and services.</p> <p><b>In EQUASS Principle of Participation:</b><br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):<br/>Criterion 28. The social service provider includes persons served as active participants in planning and have set up appraisal made up of on-going of an on-going structured dialogue process in the</p> |

| Voluntary European Quality Framework for SS | European Quality in Social Services (EQUASS 2012)  |
|---|--|
|   | <p>management of the service, including the definition of the needs, the definition of the services, as well as of the evaluation of quality.</p> <p><b>EQUASS principle of Partnership:</b><br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):<br/>Indicator 51:<br/>The social service provider has partnerships with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• social partners in the delivery of services for the persons served</li> <li>• funding agencies in the delivery of services for the persons served</li> <li>• organisations of persons served in the delivery of services for the persons served (if applicable)</li> </ul> |



## Quality principles for human and physical capital.

| Voluntary European Quality Framework for SS   | European Quality in Social Services 2012   |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Good working conditions and working environment/Investment in human capital:</b><br/>Social services should be provided by skilled and competent workers under decent and stable working conditions and according to a manageable workload. Workers' rights should be respected in particular with regard to the principles of confidentiality, deontology and professional autonomy inherent to social services relations. Adequate skills and a supporting environment should also be ensured to volunteers and informal carers.</p> <p><b>Criteria 1:</b><br/>Ensuring full respect of decent work principles in the sector, including non-discrimination, social protection, health and safety protection, social dialogue, decent wages as well as gender equality and, in particular, equal pay for work of equal value</p> <p><b>Criteria 2:</b><br/>Identifying skills needs and defining career profiles</p> | <p><b>EQUASS principle of staff:</b><br/>Organisations providing social services lead and manage their personnel and their performance to achieve the organisations business objectives and the delivery of a person centred services. They are committed to the employment and promotion of qualified personnel based on required knowledge, skills and competences. They promote a culture of engagement, development and continuous learning of staff and professionals for the benefits of person served and other stakeholders. The organisation provides health, safety, well - being and appropriate working conditions of its personnel.</p> <p><b>In EQUASS Principle Staff:</b><br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):</p> <p><b>Working conditions</b><br/>Criterion 10: The social service provider operates in compliance with mandatory national legislation, providing appropriate working conditions; adequate and agreed staff level and staff ratio, and appropriate rewarding for staff and volunteers.<br/>Indicator 19: The social service provider has documented</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Its policies in compliance with the employment legislative framework.</li> <li>• its policy for showing recognition to:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. staff</li> <li>2. Volunteers (if applicable).</li> </ol> </li> </ul> <p>Indicator 20: The social service provider evaluates the working conditions of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• management</li> <li>• staff</li> <li>• Volunteers (if applicable).</li> </ul> <p><b>In EQUASS principle Staff:</b><br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):</p> |

| Voluntary European Quality Framework for SS  | European Quality in Social Services 2012  |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Criteria 3:</b><br/>Promoting recruitment and retention policies that enable the selection of qualified workers with required knowledge, skills and competence;</p> <p><b>Criteria 4:</b><br/>Establishing partnerships between education systems and service providers to include traineeships during studies and mentoring schemes by experienced workers</p> <p><b>Criteria 5:</b><br/>Establishing training programmes, life-long learning schemes, mentoring by experienced workers and competences certification for workers as well as, where appropriate, for volunteers and informal carers, on the necessary professional and interpersonal skills, as well as on accessibility and on assistive</p> | <p><b>Training and development of staff</b><br/>Staff members are trained appropriately in the understanding of the characteristics of the populations they serve and in respecting human rights.<br/>Criterion 11. The social service trains all staff based on a plan for learning and development and evaluates the effectiveness of the training.<br/>Criterion 12: the social service provider applies requirements for competence in the identified roles and functions of staff and evaluates them on annual basis.<br/>Indicator 23: The competence requirements for staff has been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identified</li> <li>• specified</li> <li>• documented</li> <li>• evaluated on an annual basis</li> </ul> <p><b>In EQUASS principle Staff:</b><br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):<br/><b>Skilled professionals</b><br/>Criterion 9: The social service provider has a staff recruitment and retention policy that promotes the selection of qualified personnel based on required knowledge, skills and competences.<br/><b>The element of partnerships between education systems and service providers to include traineeships during studies and mentoring schemes by experienced workers is not specifically addressed in the European Quality in Social Services (EQUASS 2012)</b><br/><b>In the EQUASS principle Staff:</b><br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators)::<br/><b>Training and development of staff</b><br/>Criterion 12: The social service provider applies requirements for competence in the identified roles and functions of staff and evaluates them on annual basis.<br/><b>Volunteers</b><br/>Volunteers are given the training necessary</p> |

| Voluntary European Quality Framework for SS   | European Quality in Social Services 2012  |
|---|---|
| <p>technology</p> <p>Criteria 6:<br/>Involving users and social partners in the development of training programmes;</p> <p>Criteria 7:<br/>Promoting social dialogue at all levels with a view to encourage workers and trade unions to actively participate in the development, delivery and evaluation of services, involving</p> | <p>to ensure they can carry out their tasks and have appropriate supervision. The ethical code for professionals also applies to volunteers.</p> <p><b>In EQUASS principle Participation:</b><br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators)::<br/><b>Person served is actively involved in decision-making and evaluation</b><br/>Criterion 28: The social service provider includes persons served as active participants in planning and have set up appraisal made up of on-going of an on-going structured dialogue process in the management of the service, including the definition of the needs, the definition of the services, as well as of the evaluation of quality.</p> <p><b>In EQUASS principle Partnership:</b><br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators)::<br/><b>Partnership</b><br/>Organisations providing social services operate in partnership with public and private sector agencies, employers' and workers' representatives, funders and purchasers, organisations of person served, local groups, families and carers to create a continuum of services and achieve more effective service impacts and a more open and inclusive society.<br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):<br/>Criterion 26: The social service provider works in partnership with other organisations in the provision of services.<br/>Criterion 27: The social service provider works in partnership with persons served, purchasers and other stakeholders in the development of services.</p> <p><b>In EQUASS principle Partnership:</b><br/>Criterion 27: The social service provider works in partnership with persons served, purchasers and other stakeholders in the development of services.</p> <p><b>In EQUASS principle Staff:</b></p> |

| Voluntary European Quality Framework for SS   | European Quality in Social Services 2012   |
|---|--|
| <p>volunteers as appropriate</p> <p><b>Adequate physical infrastructure:</b><br/>Social services should be provided within adequate physical infrastructures respecting health and safety standards for users, workers and volunteers, accessibility standards following "Design for All" approaches as well as environmental requirements.</p> | <p>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):</p> <p><b>Volunteers</b><br/>Volunteering is address in the criteria of staff development, promoted and valued. Volunteers are given the training necessary to ensure they can carry out their tasks and have appropriate supervision. The ethical code for professionals also applies to volunteers. (see: Criteria 23 / indicator 46)</p> <p><b>In EQUASS principle Ethics:</b><br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators)::</p> <p><b>Ensuring safety and security</b><br/>Criterion 21. The social service provider operates mechanisms that prevent the physical, mental and financial abuse of persons served.<br/>Indicator 41; The social service provider has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• documented policies to prevent physical, mental and financial abuse of person served</li> <li>• procedures to prevent physical, mental and financial abuse of person served</li> </ul> <p>Indicator 42: The social service provider evaluates the effectiveness of its policy to prevent physical, mental and financial abuse of person served.<br/>Criterion 22: The social service provider provides services in a safe system of working within a safe environment to ensure the physical security of persons served, their families and caretakers.<br/>Indicator 43; the social service provider has documented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a health and safety plan for each of its service locations</li> <li>• procedures to ensure a safe environment and physical security of persons served</li> </ul> <p>Indicator 44: The social service provider identifies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• measures for ensuring health and safety for each of its service locations</li> <li>• improvements for ensuring health and</li> </ul> |

| Voluntary European Quality Framework for SS   | European Quality in Social Services 2012  |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Criteria 1:</b><br/>Ensuring that physical infrastructures are adequate and comply with health and safety standards for users, workers and volunteers and with environmental requirements</p> <p><b>Criteria 2:</b><br/>Promoting accessibility standards following "Design for All" approaches</p> | <p>safety on annual basis</p> <p>Indicator 20: The social service provider evaluates the working conditions of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• management</li> <li>• staff</li> <li>• Volunteers (if applicable).</li> </ul> <p><b>In EQUASS principle Staff:</b><br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):</p> <p><b>Ensuring safety and security</b></p> <p>Criterion 10: The social service provider operates in compliance with mandatory national legislation, providing appropriate working conditions; adequate and agreed staff level and staff ratio, and appropriate rewarding for staff and volunteers.</p> <p>Criterion 22: The social service provider provides services in a safe system of working within a safe environment to ensure the physical security of persons served, their families and caretakers.</p> <p><b>In the Principle Rights:</b><br/>Organisations providing social services promote the participation and inclusion of person served at all levels of the organisation and within the community. Social service providers involve service users as active members of the service team. In pursuit of more equal participation and inclusion, social service providers should facilitate the empowerment of the persons served. They work in consultation with representative bodies and groups to support advocacy, <b>the removal of barriers</b>, public education and active promotion of equal opportunities.</p> <p><b>In EQUASS Principle Comprehensiveness:</b><br/>Criterion 39: The social service provider develops a seamless continuum of services and reduces barriers in a multi-disciplinary or multi-agency setting.</p> <p>Indicator 77: The organisation identifies and reports barriers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to the seamless continuum of programmes on annual basis</li> <li>• On access to programs and services</li> </ul> |

| Voluntary European Quality Framework for SS  | European Quality in Social Services 2012  |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Criteria 3:</b><br/>Ensuring that all users, including people with disabilities, have easy access to the physical infrastructures in which the service provision takes</p> <p><b>Criteria 4:</b><br/>Place and to adequate means of transportation to and from them.</p> | <p>on annual basis.</p> <p><b>In EQUASS principle Comprehensiveness:</b><br/>EQUASS criteria (including underlying indicators):<br/>Criterion 38: The social service provider ensures that the person served can access a continuum of services that span from early intervention to support and respond to changing requirements over time.<br/>Criterion 39. The social service provider develops a seamless continuum of services and reduces barriers in a multi-disciplinary or multi-agency setting.<br/>Indicator 77: The organisation identifies and reports barriers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to the seamless continuum of programmes on annual basis</li> <li>• on access to programs and services on annual basis.</li> </ul> <p><b>In EQUASS principle Rights:</b><br/>Criterion 19: The social service provider facilitates the person served in choosing and having access to advocates and/or supporting persons.</p> <p><b>The element of transportation is not specifically addressed in the European Quality in Social Services scheme 2012.</b></p> |

## Overview of elements in the quality requirements of EQUASS 2012, which are NOT specifically addressed in the criteria of the VEQF for SS.

### 1. Governance

EQUASS criteria:

- The social service provider defines documents and implements its vision and mission values on service provision.
- The social service provider defines, documents, and implements its quality policy by determining long term quality goals, and its commitment to continuous improvement.
- The social service provider identifies performance indicators for measuring the results of the improvement actions.

### 2. Staff

EQUASS criteria:

- The social service provider recognises the staff as a resource for feedback on organisational performance, service development and staff development
- The social service provider has mechanisms in place to enhance satisfaction and motivation of staff

### 3. Empowerment of person served

EQUASS criteria:

- The social service provider operates specific instruments for **the persons served** to improve their personal empowerment and personal situation and that of their community
- The social service provider operates specific mechanisms for establishing an empowering environment.

### 4. Transparency of results

EQUASS criteria:

- The social service provider reviews the personal responsibility of all people involved in the service provision for achieved results.

- The social service provider actively disseminates organisation performance among its staff, person served and external stakeholders.

## **5. Innovation**

EQUASS criteria:

- The service provider introduces and manages innovative ways of working that have been identified based on the needs of stakeholders.



## **Annex 1: Criteria for EQUASS Assurance (SSGI) (2012)**

### **Introduction**

The European Quality in Social Services (EQUASS) is an initiative of the European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR). EQUASS provides comprehensive services in the area of development, promotion, approval and certification of quality, all of which comply with the European requirements<sup>1</sup> for quality in the provision of Social Services. EQUASS aims to enhance the social service sector by engaging service providers in quality and continuous improvement, and by guaranteeing service-users quality of services throughout Europe. EQUASS wants to contribute to the creation of a European market and the modernization of social services of general interest where service providers can distinguish themselves and use the quality of their service provision as a competitive advantage.

The Quality Assurance in Social Services (EQUASS Assurance) is a certification program for quality assurance and quality control in social services<sup>2</sup>. It enables organisations that provide services in the social sector to engage in an external certification process at a European level by which they assure quality of their services to service users and other stakeholders.

This document presents the criteria for quality assurance of the European Quality for Social Services, based on the Common Quality Framework for Social Services of General Interest (CQF for SSGI) (European Platform for Rehabilitation, November 2010) and the Voluntary European Quality Framework for Social Services of General Interest (VEQF for SSGI) of the Social Protection Committee (Social Protection Committee, October 2010). The EQUASS Assurance assures fundamental performance on the EQUASS Principles for Quality, the Common Quality Framework for SSGI and its core criteria for quality assurance and the requirements set in Voluntary European Quality Framework for Social Services of General Interest. It also assures performance on an operational Quality Management System which is one of the basic requirements for certification with the EQUASS Excellence.

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<sup>1</sup> Position Paper on Quality (High Level Group on Disability, September 2007); The Voluntary Quality Framework for Social Service of General Interest (SPC, October 2010) and the Common Quality Framework for Social Service of General Interest (EPR, November 2010)

<sup>2</sup> Commission Communication "Services of general interest, including social services of general interest: a new European commitment", COM(2007) 725 final, 20.11.2007.

## EQUASS Assurance characteristics

Certification by EQUASS Assurance is characterised by:

1. 50 criteria for quality assurance
2. The criteria for quality assurance are based on the ten EQUASS Principles for Quality, the CFQ for SSGI and the VEQF for SSGI.
3. The criteria for quality assurance cover essential and basic elements<sup>3</sup> of Quality Management Systems (QMS)
4. The self-evaluation and the internal audit is based on given key performance indicators and presented in a questionnaire approach.
5. The external audit will be carried out based on how the service provider performs in relation to these indicators. The auditor will confirm the performance based on these indicators through a review of documentation and interviews carried out during the site visit.

This document has the following structure:

- a. Description of the EQUASS Principles for Quality
- b. Description of relevant dimensions for Quality Assurance: a brief description of why the criteria are considered to be relevant
- c. Description of the EQUASS Assurance criteria
- d. Description of the Key Performance Indicators

EQUASS Assurance is customised for the social sector and offers a comprehensive approach based on quality criteria and key performance indicators using a questionnaire for self-evaluation, internal audit and external audit procedures. After sending the application form and the filled in questionnaire for internal audit, a site visit is carried out. During this site visit, an independent auditor verifies the applicant's evidence by reviewing documentation and conducting interviews with staff, service users and other relevant stakeholders. The results are reported on in a written audit report. An organisation that meets the EQUASS Assurance criteria will be certified for a period of two years. The EQUASS Awarding Committee oversees the process.

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<sup>3</sup>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

## Overview

| Principles for quality |               | Dimensions                             | Criteria               | Indicators                     |
|------------------------|---------------|--|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1                      | Leadership    | Mission, vision and quality policy     | 1 & 2                  | 1,2,3,4                        |
|                        |               | Communication                          | 3 & 4                  | 5,6,7,8                        |
|                        |               | Annual planning                        | 5 & 6                  | 9,10,11,12                     |
|                        |               | Contribution to society                | 7 & 8                  | 13,14,15,16                    |
| 2                      | Staff         | Managing Human Resources               | 9 & 10                 | 17,18,19,20,,                  |
|                        |               | Qualification and Development of staff | 11.&12                 | 21, 22, 23 24                  |
|                        |               | Staff engagement                       | 13 & 14                | 25,26,27,28                    |
| 3                      | Rights        | Rights and duties                      | 15 & 16& 17            | 29,30, 31,32,33,34             |
|                        |               | Self determination                     | 18 & 19                | 35,36,37,38                    |
| 4                      | Ethics        | Policy on ethics                       | 20 & 21 & 22 & 23 & 24 | 39,40,41,42,43,44, 45,46,47,48 |
|                        |               | Roles and responsibilities             | 25                     | 49,50                          |
| 5                      | Partnership   | Partners in service delivery           | 26 & 27                | 51,52,53,54                    |
| 6                      | Participation | Involvement of person served           | 28 & 29                | 55,56,57,58                    |
|                        |               | Empowerment of person served           | 30 & 31                | 59,60,61,62                    |

| Principles for quality |                        | Dimensions                   | Criteria | Indicators  |
|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|----------|-------------|
| 7                      | Person Centred         | Identifying customer demands | 32 & 33  | 63,64,65,66 |
|                        |                        | Individual planning          | 34 & 35  | 67,68,69,70 |
| 8                      | Comprehensiveness      | Delivery process             | 36 & 37  | 71,72,73,74 |
|                        |                        | Continuing service delivery  | 38 & 39  | 75,76,77,78 |
|                        |                        | Holistic approach            | 40 & 41  | 79,80,81,82 |
| 9                      | Result Orientation     | Measuring results            | 42 & 43  | 83,84,85,86 |
|                        |                        | Evaluating results           | 44 & 45  | 87,88,89,90 |
|                        |                        | Reporting results            | 46 & 47  | 91,92,93,94 |
| 10                     | Continuous Improvement | Continuous improvement cycle | 48 & 49  | 95,96,97,98 |
|                        |                        | Innovation                   | 50       | 99, 100     |

# 1. LEADERSHIP

## EQUASS Principle for Quality:

Organisations providing social services demonstrate leadership within the social sector internally by good governance and within the wider community by promoting positive images, challenging low expectations, encouraging best practice, enabling more effective use of resources, inspiring innovation, and aiding the creation a more open and inclusive society.

- **Mission, vision and quality policy**

A mission statement gives the social service provider a vision for the future and direction towards the development of its core business policy. It also helps to creates clarity and transparency for its customers, employees and other stakeholders.

A quality policy describes relevant goals and objectives and the commitment of management in achieving these goals. It also emphasises continuous improvement of the organisation's performance. Policy deployment is considered to be a key function within the organisation of the social service provider ensuring that all employees understand the vision, mission, objectives and strategy of the social service provider in meeting customers' needs and expectations.

### Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

1. The social service provider defines documents and implements its vision and mission values on service provision.

|   | Indicator  |
|---|--|
| 1 | The social service provider has documented its: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. vision</li> <li>b. mission</li> <li>c. corporate values</li> </ol> |
| 2 | Staff are aware of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the vision</li> </ol>  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | b. the mission<br>c. corporate values of the social service provider |
|--|--|

2. The social service provider defines, documents, and implements its quality policy by determining long term quality goals, and its commitment to continuous improvement.

|   | Indicator   |
|---|---|
| 3 | The social service provider has a documented a quality policy containing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. long term goals</li> <li>b. commitment to continuous improvement</li> </ul> |
| 4 | Staff are aware of the quality policy of the social service provider.   |

- **Communication**

Communication relates to the systems present in an organisation for managing, sharing and distributing information and feedback. Communication is considered to be effective when internal and/or external stakeholders have access to relevant, accurate and up-to-date information. With effective communication, potential and current customers can make informed choices, staff can maximise their effectiveness and management can plan in a strategic manner.

### Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

3. Persons served, family members and service user organisations are able to give feedback on their individual and collective experience of programmes and services.

|   | Indicator  |
|---|--|
| 5 | Stakeholders have the opportunity to give feedback on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. programmes</li> <li>b. services.</li> </ul> |
| 6 | Feedback is documented from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. funding bodies</li> <li>b. persons served</li> </ul>                  |

4. The social service provider informs all stakeholders about the offered programmes and services available.

| Indicator |  |
|-----------|--|
| 7         | Information is available on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. development of programmes and services</li> <li>b. processes and procedures</li> <li>c. performance of the organisation</li> <li>d. upcoming relevant events</li> <li>e. opportunities for involvement of persons served</li> </ul> |
| 8         | Stakeholders are aware of the programmes and services offered.   |

### • Annual planning

The social service provider should provide leadership, management and stability for the organisation so that it can achieve its stated mission. Therefore the social service provider should strive for and maintain stability in service delivery, development and innovation and balanced finance structure. Annual planning is crucial for implementation and control of these objectives and therefore it should be linked to the strategic plan.

### Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

5. The social service provider management establishes and documents an annual planning and review process.

| Indicator |  |
|-----------|--|
| 9         | The process of annual planning is documented.  |
| 10        | The annual planning process is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. implemented</li> <li>b. reviewed periodically</li> </ul> |

6. The plan includes:

- annual outcomes / targets
- the activities to be undertaken in achieving the annual targets
- monitoring of the performance of the organisation in meeting its annual targets
- time-scales and procedures for review and revision.

|    | Indicator  |
|----|--|
| 11 | The annual planning process has a <b>cyclical</b> character:<br>a. objectives / targets<br>b. key activities<br>c. tangible results<br>d. review of objectives and targets |
| 12 | The annual plan is approved by the Board of Management.  |

- **Contribution to the society**

Social services have an impact on society through the very nature of their primary business or statutory mandate. The results of these core activities can be manifested by the satisfaction of their customers, stakeholders, financiers, community, and key performance results. Social responsibility of a social service provider in the social sector is considered to be an important concept and should be given special focus beyond the customers' needs.

### Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

7. The social service provider demonstrates organisation's success in satisfying the needs and expectations of the society.

|    | Indicator   |
|----|---|
| 13 | The social service provider collects feedback from stakeholders in the society.                         |
| 14 | The social service provider can show tangible results in meeting needs and expectations of the society. |

8. The social service provider demonstrates organisation's social responsibility through activities contributing to the society.

|    | Indicator  |
|----|--|
| 15 | The social service provider is involved in community-based activities.           |
| 16 | The social service provider can show evidence of its added value to the society. |

## 2. STAFF

### EQUASS Principle for Quality

Organisations providing social services lead and manage their personnel and their performance to achieve the organisations business objectives and the delivery of a person centred services. They are committed to the employment and promotion of qualified personnel based on required knowledge, skills and competences. They promote a culture of engagement, development and continuous learning of staff and professionals for the benefits of person served and other stakeholders. The organisation provides health, safety, well - being and appropriate working conditions of its personnel.

- **Managing Human Resources**

A key determinant of the quality in service provision is not only the qualification and development of staff, but also a structured and transparent recruitment process. Equally important are the working conditions of staff and volunteers, so that they may be given the opportunity to perform well and be inspired in their work.

### Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

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

|    | Indicator  |
|----|--|
| 17 | The service provider has a documented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. staff recruitment policy</li> <li>b. criteria for staff recruitment</li> <li>c. the process for staff recruitment</li> <li>d. its policy for equality and non-discrimination</li> </ul> |
| 18 | The staff recruitment and retention policy is based on selection of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. knowledge</li> <li>b. skills</li> <li>c. competences</li> </ul>   |

10. The social service provider operates in compliance with mandatory national legislation, providing appropriate working conditions, adequate and agreed staff level and staff ratio, and appropriate rewarding for staff and volunteers.

| Indicator |   |
|-----------|---|
| 19        | The social service provider has documented <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. its policies in compliance with the employment legislative framework.</li> <li>b. its policy for showing recognition to:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. staff</li> <li>ii. volunteers (if applicable).</li> </ol> </li> </ol> |
| 20        | The social service provider evaluates the working conditions of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. management</li> <li>b. staff</li> <li>c. volunteers (if applicable).</li> </ol>  |

- **Qualification and development of staff**

A key determinant of the quality in service provision is the qualification and the competence of the staff and the level of education and training of staff. It is essential that every service provider has a systematic approach to the recruitment and further professional development of staff engaged in social service delivery. The social service provider should ensure that staff have sufficient experience and expertise to fulfil their designated roles and that staff members have access to and are encouraged to use the given support and development opportunities. There should be a systematic approach to the identification of their training and development needs.

### Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

11. The social service trains all staff based on a plan for learning and development and evaluates the effectiveness of the training.

| Indicator |  |
|-----------|--|
| 21        | The plan for staff qualification, staff development and staff support is:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. documented</li> <li>b. evaluated on annual basis</li> </ul>   |
| 22        | The social service provider:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. demonstrates records from all training activities of staff</li> <li>b. evaluates the effectiveness of the training activities (based on feedback from staff and other stakeholders)</li> </ul> |

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

| Indicator |  |
|-----------|--|
| 23        | The competence requirements for staff has been:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. identified</li> <li>b. specified</li> <li>c. documented</li> <li>d. evaluated on an annual basis</li> </ul> |
| 24        | The performance of staff members, who are directly involved in the provision of services to the persons served, is reviewed periodically.  |

- **Staff engagement**

Staff engagement is about creating opportunities for employees to connect with their colleagues, managers and wider organisation. It is also about creating an environment where employees are motivated to want to connect with their work and really care about doing a good job. It is a concept that places flexibility, change and continuous improvement at the heart of what it means to be an employee and an employer in a twenty-first century workplace. Employee engagement strategies enable people to be the best they can at work, recognising that this can only happen if they feel respected, involved, heard, well led and valued by those they work for and with.

**Criteria for EQUASS Assurance**

13. The social service provider recognises the staff as a resource for feedback on organisational performance, service development and staff development

|    | Indicator  |
|----|--|
| 25 | The social service provider has a policy and procedure for active involvement of staff in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the planning of the service</li> <li>- the evaluation of the service</li> </ul>             |
| 26 | The social service provider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- records staff involvement and feedback from staff</li> <li>- utilises that feedback in the staff development of strategic and annual planning</li> </ul> |

14. The social service provider has mechanisms in place to enhance satisfaction and motivation of staff

|    | Indicator   |
|----|---|
| 27 | Social service provider measures, records and reviews the satisfaction and motivation of staff. |
| 28 | Social service providers implement mechanisms for recognition of staff.                         |

### 3. RIGHTS

#### **EQUASS Principle for Quality**

Organisations providing social services are committed to protecting and promoting the rights of the person served in terms of equal opportunities, equal treatment and freedom of choice, self-determination and equal participation. Organisations providing social services are ensuring informed consent and adopting non-discrimination and positive actions within their own services. This commitment is apparent in all elements of service development and delivery and in the values of the social service provider.

- **Rights and duties**

A key value in organisations providing services in the social sector is that they are committed to protecting and promoting the rights of the person served in terms of equal opportunities, equal treatment and equal participation, providing informed choice and adopting non-discriminatory values.

#### **Criteria for EQUASS Assurance**

15. The social service provider assures the rights of persons served outlined in a Charter of Rights that is based on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of the Council of Europe and other international human rights conventions, especially those elaborated under the United Nations.

|    | <b>Indicator</b>   |
|----|--|
| 29 | The social service provider has documented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. a charter of rights for the persons served</li> <li>b. a charter which is compliant with international human rights conventions</li> </ul> |
| 30 | All staff including volunteers are aware of the rights and duties of the persons served.   |

16. The social service provider informs the person served about his/her rights and duties especially to equal treatment on grounds of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation before receiving the services.

| Indicator |  |
|-----------|--|
| 31        | The social service provider can show evidence of informing the persons served about their rights and duties. |
| 32        | Persons served are aware of their rights and duties.   |

17. The social service provider has accessible complaint management system that registers feedback on performance from persons served, purchasers and other relevant stakeholders.

| Indicator |  |
|-----------|--|
| 33        | The social service provider has a documented complaint management system that assures appropriate and objective investigation. |
| 34        | The social service provider shows transparency of results in the complaint management system.                                  |

- **Self determination**

The right of self-determination, is the principle in international law, that nations have the right to freely decide on their sovereignty and international political status without external pressure or outside interference. By extension the term self-determination has come to mean the free choice of one's own acts without external pressure.

18. The social service provider respects the fundamental right to self-determination of the person served. They freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

| Indicator |  |
|-----------|--|
| 35        | The social service provider demonstrates its support the self-determination of the person served.  |
| 36        | The social service provider evaluates its performance on respecting the right to self-determination with the persons served on annual basis. |

19. The social service provider facilitates the person served in choosing and having access to advocates and/or supporting persons.

|    | <b>Indicator</b>  |
|----|---|
| 37 | The social served provider informs persons served how to access advocates and/or supporting persons.  |
| 38 | The social service provider evaluates its performance in facilitating persons served in having access to advocates and/or supporting persons on annual basis. |



## 4. ETHICS

### **EQUASS Principle for Quality:**

Organisations providing social services operate on the basis of a Code of Ethics that respects the dignity of the persons served and their families or carer takers, protects them from undue risk, specifies the requirements for competence within the organisation of the social service provider, and promotes social justice.

- **Policy on ethics**

The policy on ethics refers to the professions in organisations providing social services. It is a code of professional criteria containing aspects of fairness and duty to the profession and set of principles and values that govern behaviour in accordance with the notions of values such as confidentiality, accuracy, privacy, and integrity.

### **Criteria for EQUASS Assurance**

20. The social service provider defines and documents its policy on ethics that respects and assures the dignity of the persons served, protects them from undue risk and promotes social justice

| Indicator |  |
|-----------|--|
| 39        | The social service provider has documented its policy on ethics reflecting the dignity of persons served and protecting them from undue risk.                                      |
| 40        | The social service provider informs staff (including volunteers if applicable) about the policy on ethics and the principles and values that govern behaviour in service delivery. |

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

| Indicators |  |
|------------|--|
| 41         | The social service provider has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. documented policies to prevent physical, mental and financial abuse of person served</li> <li>b. procedures to prevent physical, mental and financial abuse of person served</li> </ul> |

|    |   |
|----|---|
| 42 | The social service provider evaluates the effectiveness of its policy to prevent physical, mental and financial abuse of person served. |
|----|---|

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

| Indicator |  |
|-----------|--|
| 43        | The social service provider has documented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. a health and safety plan <b>for each of its service locations</b></li> <li>b. procedures to ensure a safe environment and physical security of persons served</li> </ul> |
| 44        | The social service provider identifies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. measures for ensuring health and safety <b>for each of its service locations</b></li> <li>b. improvements for ensuring health and safety on annual basis</li> </ul>          |

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

| Indicator |  |
|-----------|--|
| 45        | The social service provider has defined a set of principles, values and procedures (code of Ethics) to assure and to govern behaviour in service delivery. |
| 46        | Staff (including volunteers if applicable) are aware about the set of principles, values and procedures that govern behaviour in service delivery.         |

24. The social service provider defines, documents, monitors and evaluates procedures for assuring confidentiality of data regarding the persons served and the service provided to them.

| Indicator |  |
|-----------|--|
| 47        | The social service provider has a policy and procedures for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. assuring confidentiality of information of persons served</li> <li>b. recording information on the persons served</li> <li>c. access to personal data</li> </ul> |
| 48        | The social service provider's reviews: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. its policy on confidentiality at least every two years with staff</li> </ul>  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <p>and persons served</p> <p>b. its procedures on confidentiality at least every two years with staff and persons served</p> |
|--|--|

- **Roles and responsibilities**

The identification of the different roles and responsibilities of functions including the mutual relationships between the function in the organisation facilitates transparency, accountability and efficiency in communication in service provision with the person served. Especially when the social process is a complex process in a multidisciplinary approach, the identification of the roles and responsibilities of those functions in the process may contribute to the efficiency of a coordinated service provision.

### Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

25. The social service provider defines the roles and responsibilities, authorities and the interrelation of all personnel who manage, design, deliver, support and evaluate the service provision to person served.

|    | <b>Indicator</b>   |
|----|--|
| 49 | <p>The social service provider:</p> <p>a. defines the roles and responsibilities of management</p> <p>b. communicates the roles and responsibilities of management</p>   |
| 50 | <p>The social service provider;</p> <p>a. defines the roles and responsibilities of the functions directly involved with services delivery to the persons served</p> <p>b. communicates the roles and responsibilities of the functions directly involved with services delivery to the persons served</p> |

## 5. PARTNERSHIP

### **EQUASS Principle for Quality:**

Organisations providing social services operate in partnership with public and private sector agencies, employers' and workers' representatives, funders and purchasers, organisations of person served, local groups, families and carers to create a continuum of services and achieve more effective service impacts and a more open and inclusive society.

- **Partners in service delivery**

The growth in the applicability of information technology in the society, the requirement for effective use of resources and expertise and the empowerment of the person served requires cooperation in information, logistics and service provision. Therefore organisations should operate in partnership with public and private sector agencies, employers' and workers' representatives, funders and purchasers, organisations of service users, local groups, families and carers. Partnership in service delivery in the social process should add value to the outcome of the service delivery.

### **Criteria for EQUASS Assurance**

26. The social service provider works in partnership with other organisations in the provision of services.

|    | <b>Indicator</b>  |
|----|---|
| 51 | The social service provider has partnerships with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. social partners in the delivery of services for the persons served</li> <li>b. funding agencies in the delivery of services for the persons served</li> <li>c. organisations of persons served in the delivery of services for the persons served (if applicable)</li> </ul> |
| 52 | The social service provider evaluates the added value of its partnerships on regular basis.   |

27. The social service provider works in partnership with persons served, purchasers and other stakeholders in the development of services.

|    | Indicator   |
|----|---|
| 53 | In development of services, the social service provider involves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. person served and their representatives</li> <li>b. purchasers</li> <li>c. funders</li> </ul> |
| 54 | The social service provider involves relevant external stakeholders in assessment of needs.   |



## 6. PARTICIPATION

### Principle for Quality:

Organisations providing social services promote the participation and inclusion of person served at all levels of the organisation and within the community. Social service providers involve service users as active members of the service team. In pursuit of more equal participation and inclusion, social service providers should facilitate the empowerment of the persons served. They work in consultation with representative bodies and groups to support advocacy, the removal of barriers, public education and active promotion of equal opportunities.

- **Involvement of the person served**

Facilitating and encouraging the involvement of persons served in all key aspects of their services is an essential and important factor to the success of the social programme. Social service providers facilitate the involvement of persons served by setting up procedures to encourage, foster and promote the empowerment of the person served. This in turns creates a culture where by the social service provider enables the self-advocacy of the individual being served.

### Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

28. The social service provider includes persons served as active participants in planning and have set up appraisal made up of on-going of an on-going structured dialogue process in the management of the service, including the definition of the needs, the definition of the services, as well as of the evaluation of quality.

|    | Indicator  |
|----|--|
| 55 | The social service provider has a policy and procedures for active involvement of person served in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. assessing needs</li> <li>b. planning of the services</li> <li>c. evaluation of the services</li> </ul> |
| 56 | Persons served participate in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. assessing individual needs</li> </ul>   |

|  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. planning of the individual services</li> <li>c. evaluation of the received services</li> </ul> |
|--|

29. The social service provider institutes an annual evaluation of participation of persons served both on individual and/or group basis.

| Indicator |  |
|-----------|--|
| 57        | The measures, activities and policy for participation have been agreed with the persons served or representatives of persons served.                                 |
| 58        | The social service provider reviews the measures, activities and policy for participation of persons served or representatives of persons served on an annual basis. |

- Empowerment of the person served

Person served who have no opportunities for self-sufficiency become, at a minimum, dependent on charity or welfare. They lose their self-confidence because they cannot be fully self-supporting. This can lead to psychological, social and even mental health problems. Empowerment is then the process of obtaining basic opportunities for persons served, either directly by those people, or through the help of others who share their own access to these opportunities. It also includes actively thwarting attempts to deny those opportunities. Empowerment also includes encouraging, and developing the skills for, self-sufficiency, with a focus on eliminating the future need for charity or welfare in the individuals of the group. This process can be difficult to start and to implement effectively, but there are many examples of empowerment projects which have succeeded. Empowerment can be attained through many ways and is often considered as a condition for participation.

### Criteria for Quality assurance

30. The social service provider operates specific instruments for **the persons served** to improve their personal empowerment and personal situation and. that of their community

|    | <b>Indicator</b>  |
|----|---|
| 59 | The social service provider systematically facilitates the empowerment of the persons served on individual basis.   |
| 60 | The social service provider has achieved tangible results in strengthening the empowerment of persons being served. |

31. The social service provider operates specific mechanisms for establishing an empowering environment.

|    | <b>Indicator</b>  |
|----|---|
| 61 | The social service provider has identified measures for creating an empowering environment in the organisation. |
| 62 | The social service provider trains staff to facilitate the empowerment of persons served.                       |



## 7. PERSON CENTRED APPROACH

### **EQUASS Principle for Quality:**

Organisations providing social services operate processes aiming at the improvement of quality of life of persons served that are driven by the needs of both the persons served and potential beneficiaries. They respect the individual's contribution by engaging them in self - assessment, service-user feedback and evaluation and that value personal as well as service goals taking into account the physical and social environment of the person served. All processes are subject to regular review.

- **Identifying Customer demands**

Organisations providing social services operate processes that are driven by the needs of the persons served, purchasers and potential beneficiaries. Therefore identifying demands of customers and potential customers is crucial for programme development and service delivery. The changes in demands also require an adequate response on these changes so the provided services will meet the future demands of the customers.

### **Criteria for EQUASS Assurance**

32. The social service provider selects programmes which are based on a needs assessment at the location which is most convenient for the person served, family and care takers

|    | <b>Indicator</b>  |
|----|---|
| 63 | The social service provider has identified the needs of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. its current persons served recently (&lt; 3 years)</li> <li>b. its potential persons served recently (&lt; 3 years)</li> </ul> |
| 64 | The social service provider offers its services at the most convenient location for persons served, families and carer's.   |

33. The social service provider offers programmes consistent with the identified needs of its customers and objectives for the programme.

| Indicator |  |
|-----------|--|
| 65        | The social service provider has identified the needs for programs of:<br>a. the financing bodies<br>b. other relevant external stakeholders                                |
| 66        | The social service provider determines the success rate(s) of existing programmes:<br>a. in reaching their objectives and<br>b. in meeting the needs of the persons served |

- **Individual Planning**

Social services are designed around the identified needs and desires of the persons receiving services. By analysing the needs, expectations and opportunities the organisation can design its services to be responsive to the expectations and the needs of the person served.

### Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

34. The social service provider operates individual processes that are driven by the needs of the persons served.

| Indicator |   |
|-----------|---|
| 67        | The social service provider delivers services based on the needs of the persons served.                               |
| 68        | The social service provider records the identified needs and expectations of the person served in an Individual Plan. |

35. The social service provider documents the planning of services based on the identification of individual needs and expectations of persons served in an Individual Plan.

| <b>Indicator</b> |  |
|------------------|--|
| 69               | <p>The Individual Plan contains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the desired situation of the person being served</li> <li>b. overall goals</li> <li>c. specific measurable objectives</li> <li>d. methods / techniques / interventions to be used</li> <li>e. staff involved and responsibilities for implementation</li> </ul> |
| 70               | Each Individual Plan is agreed by the person served or his/her guardian.   |



## 8. COMPREHENSIVENESS

### **EQUASS Principle for Quality:**

Organisations providing social services ensure that the person served can access a continuum of holistic and community based services, which value the contribution of all persons served and potential partners including the local community, employers and other stakeholders and that span from early intervention to support and follow up. The services should be delivered through a multi-disciplinary team approach or multi-agency partnership with other service providers and employers.

- **Delivery process**

Organisations providing social services must have processes for service delivery that need to be managed and improved. Amongst these processes there are some that are crucial to the success of the organisation. Processes that are critical to the success of the organisation often cut across departmental and functional boundaries and require particular attention.

### **Criteria for EQUASS Assurance**

36. The social service provider identifies, documents, and maintains the key service delivery processes to the persons served in line with its vision, mission statement and quality policy.

|    | <b>Indicator</b>  |
|----|---|
| 71 | The key service delivery processes of the social service provider are <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. identified</li> <li>b. documented</li> <li>c. reviewed on regular basis</li> </ul>  |
| 72 | The key service delivery processes of the social service provider are compliant with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the mission</li> <li>b. the quality policy of the organisation</li> <li>c. the specifications made by purchasers and funders</li> </ul> |

37. The social service provider reviews this delivery process and maintains control over the delivery of the service.

|    | Indicator  |
|----|--|
| 73 | The social service provider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. monitors the performance of the key service delivery processes on regular basis</li> <li>b. reviews the performance of the key service delivery processes on a regular basis</li> </ul> |
| 74 | The social service provider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. carries out internal audits on the delivery of key service delivery processes</li> <li>b. reports on the outcomes of key service delivery processes</li> </ul>                          |

- **Continuing service delivery**

A fundamental responsibility of organisations that provide social services is to assure a comprehensive programme structure with the aim to facilitate a well-coordinated process for the person served in achieving the desired goals.

### Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

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

|    | Indicator   |
|----|---|
| 75 | Evaluation on continuing service delivery is carried out on annual basis.             |
| 76 | The social service provider implements measures for assuring a continuum of services. |

39. The social service provider develops a seamless continuum of services and reduces barriers in a multi-disciplinary or multi-agency setting.

| Indicator |   |
|-----------|---|
| 77        | The organisation identifies and reports barriers:<br>a. to <b>the</b> seamless continuum of programmes on annual basis<br>b. <b>on access</b> to programs and services on annual basis. |
| 78        | The social service provider operates services characterised by a multidisciplinary approach to the persons served in their Individual Plan.   |

- **Holistic approach**

Complementary social services focus on holistic care (which has become known internationally as *'wellness'* care) concentrating on maintaining and improving person's performance rather than just treating one specific aspect of the person. The holistic care describes an approach in which the physical, mental, and social factors in the person served are taken into account.

The service involves considering the entire person as a complex system rather than focusing only on particular parts of the person or systems. Person served will view outcomes from a holistic perspective, covering - for instance - housing, transport, employment, income and benefits, and broader issues around discrimination and equality.

### Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

40. The social service provider operates services from a holistic approach based on the needs and expectations of the person served with the aim of improving the quality of life for the person served.

| Indicator |   |
|-----------|---|
| 79        | The social service provider ensures that quality of life is specific to and defined for each person and/or family receiving services. |
| 80        | The effectiveness of Quality of life initiatives are:<br>a. measured<br>b. reported   |

41. The social service provider identifies the needed competences, skills and support for staff to enhance the quality of life for person served.

|    | <b>Indicator</b>  |
|----|---|
| 81 | The social service provider specifies the skills and competencies for staff to enhance quality of life of persons served.                     |
| 82 | The social service provider evaluates the skills and the competencies for staff to enhance quality of life of persons served on annual basis. |



## 9. RESULT ORIENTATION

### EQUASS Principle for Quality

Organisations providing social services are aiming for results, in terms of both how they are perceived, on achievements they have made and on the benefits they are providing to the persons served, their family members, carers, employers, other stakeholders and the general community. They also aspire to the achievement of best value for their purchasers and funders. Service impacts are measured, monitored, and are an important element of continuous improvement, transparency and accountability processes.

- **Measuring results**

Organisations providing social services are aiming for results, in terms of both perceptions and achievements, on the benefits of the persons served, their family members, carers, employers, other stakeholders and the community. A successful social process is defined as: 'Achieving the objectives set in the Individual Plan' (IP). Results of the processes must be measured in relation to the defined objectives stated in the Individual Plan. Valid judgements on the outcome of the quality of the social services should be based on an evaluation system based on facts and objective criteria.

### Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

42. The social service provider identifies its business results and provides formal periodic and independent review and procedures to achieve the targeted results.

|    | Indicator  |
|----|--|
| 83 | The social service provider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. measures its performance against business objectives annually</li> <li>b. reports its performance against business objectives annually</li> </ul> |
| 84 | An independent external body reviews business results and performance.   |

43. The social service provider identifies and registers the outcomes and benefits for person served of the receive services on individual and collective basis.

|    | Indicator  |
|----|--|
| 85 | The social service provider measures:<br>a. the achieved results of the objectives of each Individual Plan<br>b. benefits for persons served of each individual Plan                     |
| 86 | The social service provider measures:<br>a. the achieved results of the received services on collective basis<br>b. benefits for persons served of received services on collective basis |

- **Evaluating results**

Valid judgments on outcomes, especially of the quality of the social services, should be based on facts and objective criteria. For this reason evaluation of results ought to be carried out on a regular and systematic basis.

### Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

44. The social service provider evaluates its business results in order to determine best value for purchasers and funders (*'best value'* can also be expressed in relation to the increased quality of life offered to the person being served).

|    | Indicator  |
|----|--|
| 87 | The social service providers evaluates added value of the business results for its:<br>a. purchasers<br>b. funders |
| 88 | The social service provider evaluates added value of the services for quality of life of the persons served.       |

45. The social service provider evaluates the individual and collective satisfaction of persons served and other stakeholders by internal and/or external evaluation.

|    | Indicator   |
|----|---|
| 89 | The social service provider measures the satisfaction of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. its persons served</li> <li>b. its purchasers</li> <li>c. its funding bodies</li> </ul> |
| 90 | The service provider assures appropriate and objective measurement of satisfaction of its stakeholders.   |

- **Reporting results**

When reporting results to relevant stakeholders, the social service provider must assure that the results are correct, valid and relevant. It is also essential to demonstrate the value and added value of the services to all stakeholders, and therefore the records and outcomes must be communicated **extensively**.

### Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

46. The social service provider provides accessible and easily understandable records on outcome, including personal perception and achievements

|    | Indicator   |
|----|---|
| 91 | The report on records and outcomes is communicated to stakeholders in understandable form and language. |
| 92 | The service provider records outcomes include personal perceptions and achievements.                    |

47. The social service provider actively disseminates organisation performance among its staff, person served and external stakeholders.

|    | Indicator   |
|----|---|
| 93 | The social service provider reports its performance to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. purchasers</li> <li>b. funding bodies</li> <li>c. staff</li> <li>d. persons served</li> </ul>                       |
| 94 | The social service provider reports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. results on an annual basis</li> <li>b. personal perceptions on an annual basis</li> <li>c. achievements on an annual basis.</li> </ul> |



## 10. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

### **EQUASS Principle for Quality:**

Organisations providing social services are proactive in meeting market needs, using resources more effectively, developing and improving services and utilizing research and development to achieve innovation. They strive for effective communications and marketing, value ‘persons served’, funders’ and stakeholders’ feedback and operate systems of continuous quality improvement.

- **Continuous Improvement Cycle**

Providing and assuring quality in social services provision are considered to be a cyclic process of reviewing of current performance and continuously making the desired changes. In this process of continuous improvement of the social services new areas for improvement will occur. The systematic approach in continuous improvement is a key characteristic of the Quality Management System.

### **Criteria for EQUASS Assurance**

48. The social service provider has a standard procedure for continuous improvement on the basis of an improvement cycle.

|    | <b>Indicator</b>  |
|----|---|
| 95 | The organisation implements a documented quality improvement system which is characterised by a cyclic manner (PDCA) meaning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. planned actions reaching the objective</li> <li>b. implementing the actions</li> <li>c. measuring the results of the actions</li> <li>d. implementing corrective actions</li> </ul> |
| 96 | The results of quality improvement projects are documented.   |

49 The social service provider identifies performance indicators for measuring the results of the improvement actions.

|    | Indicator   |
|----|---|
| 97 | The social service provider establishes performance indicators for measuring the results of all improvement projects.   |
| 98 | The social service provider defines: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. objectives for all improvement projects</li> <li>b. measures the results for all improvement projects</li> </ol> |

- **Innovation**

Innovation should reflect the introduction of new ideas, goods, services, and practices to support market changes and service development. Innovation can be considered as a process of converting knowledge and ideas into better ways of doing business or into new or improved products and services that are valued by the community. An essential element of innovation is its successful implementation. Innovation is most often viewed at service or process level, where product innovation satisfies customers' needs and process innovation improves efficiency and effectiveness.

### Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

50. The service provider introduces and manages innovative ways of working that have been identified based on the needs of stakeholders.

|     | Indicator   |
|-----|---|
| 99  | The social service provider can demonstrate at least: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- two examples of innovative ways of working</li> <li>- two examples of emerging needs of stakeholders</li> </ul>            |
| 100 | The social service provider: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. manages the innovation projects</li> <li>b. monitors the innovation projects</li> <li>c. records the results of the innovation projects</li> </ol> |