This Toolbox Talk is focused on creating discussion about how your team addresses this theme. Below are listed a number of prompts/questions for discussion. Please pick the ones relevant to your service or indeed feel free to develop a more relevant ones if desired. The main thing is to engage with staff around this theme in order to raise awareness and to elicit from them any suggestions with regard to simple actions your service can take to improve the service user experience.

The detail of what the Healthcare Charter says in relation to what service users can expect and what they can do to help in relation to this theme is outlined overleaf.

Questions

1. How do you ensure that service users receive care which is appropriate, timely and based on their healthcare needs?
2. How do you ensure that service users have reasonable access to the most appropriate public health services regardless of physical, sensory or intellectual ability?
3. Do you ensure that service users are transferred to another public health or social care facility if a recommended medical treatment is not available at your care facility?
4. Do you provide clear information on appointment dates, times and locations?
5. Do you ensure that waiting periods for an appointment, test or a treatment will be kept as short as possible?
6. Do you send reminders of appointments to service users?
7. Do you explain to service users the importance of keeping appointments and letting you know if they cannot attend?
8. Does your service offer service users a choice of appointments?
9. Do you ensure that block booking of appointments doesn’t occur in your service and that service users are offer individual appointments?
10. Do you find out if service users have any special requirements, such as alternative methods of communication, or a requirement for interpretation services?
11. Do you provide information to service users in alternative formats if required, such as email, text, large print, audio or braille?

“Our services are organised to ensure equity of access to public health and social care services”
What service users can do to help

Waiting times
• Ensure to ask your healthcare professional how long you may expect to wait before receiving certain kinds of appointments, tests or treatments.

Using health services appropriately
• Only use emergency services in a real emergency.

Appointments
• Please be on time for all appointments. If late, please phone ahead to let staff know.
• Ask your healthcare professional how long you may expect to wait before receiving certain kinds of appointments, tests or treatments.
• If a member of staff (such as a public health nurse) is due to visit your home, please make sure that you are there at the agreed time.
• If a member of staff phones you to arrange an appointment, please keep it unless you are contacted again to change it.
• If you cannot keep an appointment, inform your healthcare provider in plenty of time so that your appointment can be given to someone else.
• If you have booked HSE transport and no longer need it, please tell the healthcare provider so that it can be cancelled.
• If you have any special requirements, such as alternative methods of communication (braille, audio or interpretive requirements), please let healthcare services know in advance of visits where possible.

Contact details
• Make sure that your GP surgery, dental surgery or any hospital or healthcare service you attend has up-to-date information about how to contact you. If you change address or phone number, please inform all relevant healthcare providers as soon as possible.

Acknowledgements