



Theme 5 – Responsive Workforce

(Standards and Features extracted from Interim Standards for New Directions Report)



Theme 5: Responsive Workforce

Each staff member has a key role to play in delivering high quality, person-centred services and supports to people with disabilities. Service providers organise and manage their workforce to ensure that staff have the required skills, experience and competencies to respond to the needs of the people using their services and supports.

Safe recruitment practices ensure that staff have the required qualities, skills, competencies and experience to undertake duties associated with their roles and responsibilities. All staff receive support and supervision to ensure that they perform their job to the best of their ability. The performance of staff is appraised at regular specified intervals. Staff are registered with their professional body, where relevant to assure the public that they are competent to deliver high quality, person-centred services to people with disabilities.

Providing services and supports to people with disabilities can be complex and demanding for the staff involved. The service provider should protect its workforce from the risk of work-related stress, bullying and harassment and should listen and respond to their views.

As aspects of service provision change and develop over time, the service supports staff to continuously update and maintain their knowledge and skills. The training needs of the workforce are monitored on an ongoing basis and identified training needs are addressed to ensure the delivery of high quality, person-centred services for people with disabilities.

All staff receive specific training in the protection of vulnerable people to ensure that they are well equipped with the knowledge and skills to recognise the signs of abuse and/or neglect and the action(s) required to protect them from significant harm.

Theme 5: Standards for Responsive Workforce

Standard 5.1: Safe and effective recruitment practices are in place to recruit staff.

Standard 5.2: Staff have the required competencies to manage and deliver high quality, person-centred and reliable services and supports.

Standard 5.3: Staff are supported and supervised to carry out their duties to deliver high quality, person-centred and reliable services and supports.

Standard 5.4: Training is provided to staff to improve outcomes for people using services and supports.

Standard 5.1: Safe and effective recruitment practices are in place to recruit staff.

Features of a service meeting this standard are likely to include:

- 5.1.1. Staff are recruited in compliance with employment and equality legislation, and recruitment and selection processes are informed by evidence-based human resource practices.
- 5.1.2. The service provider identifies the skills, competencies and personal attributes required of staff and recruits accordingly, including people who have a community inclusion and participation focus or profile, and who have the flexibility to provide supports to people in the evenings and at weekends (outside of standard 9am to 5pm arrangements).
- 5.1.3. Each person, where appropriate, is consulted on the range of skills and expertise required by staff who support them and contributes to the development of their job descriptions.
- 5.1.4. Garda Síochána vetting is carried out on staff with direct access to people using services and supports. References are verified before they start working.
- 5.1.5. All staff have written job descriptions and a copy of their terms and conditions of employment prior to taking up a post.
- 5.1.6. Job descriptions for staff who provide services and supports state that staff are required to establish and maintain professional relationships with people with disabilities that are based on respect and equality and that promote their independence.
- 5.1.7. A contemporaneous, accurate and secure personnel file is kept for all staff.
- 5.1.8. Orientation and induction training is provided to all staff when they start working in the service. The induction programme includes a focus on:
 - communication
 - safety of people who use services
 - positive risk-taking
 - disability awareness
 - person-centredness and what it means for day-to-day service practice
 - informed decision making and self-determination
 - community inclusion and active citizenship

- 5.1.9. There is a written code of conduct for all staff, developed in conjunction with people who use services and supports. All staff also adhere to the codes of conduct of their own professional body/association and/or professional regulatory body, where applicable.

Standard 5.2: Staff have the required competencies to manage and deliver high quality, person-centred and reliable services and supports.

Features of a service meeting this standard are likely to include:

- 5.2.1. While a person is using services and supports, there are sufficient numbers of staff with the necessary experience and competencies to meet their needs at all times, as set out in their personal plan.
- 5.2.2. While a person is using services and supports, there are sufficient staff available at all times to ensure their safety. Contingency plans are in place in the event of a shortfall in staffing levels.
- 5.2.3. Continuity of staffing and the maintenance of relationships are promoted through:
- strategies for the retention of staff
 - ensuring sufficient staffing levels to avoid the employment of casual, short-term, temporary and agency workers, except in exceptional circumstances
- 5.2.4. Staff have the necessary competencies and skills to provide high quality, person-centred and reliable services and supports to people with disabilities. Where applicable, staff are registered with the relevant professional regulatory body in compliance with legislation and maintain professional competence.
- 5.2.5. Key workers have the skills required to:
- facilitate person-centred planning
 - plan and co-ordinate individual services and supports
 - communicate and liaise effectively with other organisations and professionals.
- 5.2.6. The service provider has competent managers with appropriate qualifications and sufficient practice and management experience to manage the services and supports and meet its stated purpose, aims and objectives.

Standard 5.3: Staff are supported and supervised to carry out their duties to deliver high quality, person-centred and reliable services and supports.

Features of a service meeting this standard are likely to include:

- 5.3.1. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities, have clear accountability and reporting lines, and are aware of policies and procedures to be followed at all times.
- 5.3.2. Staff are supported to effectively exercise their personal, professional and collective accountability for the provision of high quality, person-centred and reliable services and supports.
- 5.3.3. There are procedures to protect staff by minimising the risk of violence, bullying and harassment by other members of staff or persons using the services and supports.
- 5.3.4. Staff are provided with access to support and advice. Staff receive regular supervision and support by appropriately qualified and experienced staff.
- 5.3.5. Each individual staff member's performance is formally appraised, at least annually by appropriate personnel.
- 5.3.6. A written record is kept of each supervision, support and performance appraisal and a copy is given to the member of staff. The record is signed by the supervisor and staff member at the end of each supervision, support and performance appraisal session and is available for inspection.
- 5.3.7. Staff are facilitated to make protected disclosures about the effectiveness and safety of the service in line with legislative requirements, where appropriate.
- 5.3.8. Staff are provided with training and development opportunities that equip them with the necessary skills required to meet the needs of people with disabilities.
- 5.3.9. Accredited management training is provided to all new managers who manage front-line staff.
- 5.3.10. Managers who supervise staff are provided with training in supervision theory and practice.

Standard 5.4: Training is provided to staff to improve outcomes for people using services and supports.

Features of a service meeting this standard are likely to include:

- 5.4.1. All staff are trained to support people in a person-centred way and to facilitate them to achieve their goals.
- 5.4.2. A training needs analysis is periodically undertaken with all staff and relevant training is provided as part of a continuous professional development programme.
- 5.4.3. There is a training and development programme to ensure that staff maintain competence in all relevant areas. This programme includes areas such as:
 - person-centredness, choice and self-determination
 - positive risk-taking
 - community inclusion, active citizenship and valued social roles
 - appropriate and relevant communication methodsand is tailored to specific members of the workforce and the needs of the people who use the services and supports, in order to ensure the delivery of high quality person-centred services and supports.
- 5.4.4. All staff receive ongoing training in the prevention, detection and reporting of abuse and their requirement to report abuse, as outlined in legislation and national policies.
- 5.4.5. The service provider ensures that staff participate in mandatory health and safety education and training programmes.