NHSScotland revised wording for:

Core 4 – Service Improvement

Status

Core – this is a key aspect of all jobs as everybody has a role in implementing policies and strategies and in improving services for users and the public.

Levels

1. Make changes in own practice and offer suggestions for improving services
2. Contribute to the improvement of services
3. Appraise, interpret and apply suggestions, recommendations and directives to improve services
4. Work in partnership with others to develop, take forward and evaluate direction, policies and strategies

Description

This dimension is about improving services in the interests of the users of those services and the public as a whole. The services might be services for the public (patients, clients and carers) or services that support the smooth running of the organisation (such as finance, estates). The services might be single or multi-agency and uni or multi-professional.

Improvements may be small scale, relating to specific aspects of a service or programme, or may be on a larger scale, affecting the whole of an organisation or service. They might arise from:

- formals evaluations (such as audit)
- more informal and ad hoc approaches (such as ‘bright ideas’)
- applying developments from elsewhere
- national policy and targets
- changes in legislation at international and national level
- working closely with users and the public
- the need to modernise services.

This dimension also covers the development of direction, policies and strategies to guide the work of the organisation or service, including agreeing vision, values and ethos. Leadership and partnership are key aspects here as it is through inspiring and working collectively with others that strategy and direction can be taken forward into service improvements.

Leadership includes such aspects as:

- understanding and rising to the challenges of service improvement – critical tasks that need to be done, problems and issues to be faced
- understanding the context in which services are to be improved – local politics, national policy imperatives, the local environment and the people in it
- understanding the characteristics of the people involved and building on their diversity
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Progression through the levels in this dimension is characterised by:

- moving the implementing agreed changes to setting the context which guides and informs service improvements
- an increasing role in, and understanding of, direction, policies and strategies at a macro level
- increasing knowledge and skills in leading others, managing change and partnership working
- an increasing ability to identify direction in the longer term over a number of years rather than in the immediate to short term

Links to other KSF dimensions

This dimension is supported by:

- Core 1 Communication – which is a key aspect of taking forward policy, strategy and direction
- G5 Services and project management – which focuses on running services and projects in line with strategy and direction
- IK2 Information collection and analysis – as research and interpretation of information is a key part of setting strategy and direction.

This dimension is different from dimensions:

- Core 5 Quality which focuses on the quality of current practice whereas this dimension is about improving services
- G2 Development and innovation which focuses on appraising new and innovative methods, equipment, concepts and ideas and testing them in practice. This might be a fore-runner to service improvement
- G7 Capacity and capability which focuses on developing collective capacity – this might be necessary to support service improvements.
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**Level 1** – Make changes in own practice and offer suggestions for improving services

- I pass on any good ideas or suggest changes to my manager and colleagues that could improve the way we do things.
- I recognise that there is always room for improvement in my area of work and I am willing to make changes to support this.
- I help to get feedback on the service provided by my team when I am asked to do so.
- I inform my manager if I notice that new ways of working are making things worse for people.

**Level 2** – Contribute to the improvement of services

- I talk to my team about how we can improve the ways we work, discuss ideas for change and how we can make those changes.
- I identify ways to improve my work and put them into practice, asking for help when needed.
- I encourage and accept feedback from other people to identify what needs to be improved and support others in my team to do the same.
- I make constructive suggestions on how to improve the service provided to patients/clients and others.
- I work with my team to identify any negative effects of changes and how these can be avoided.
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**Level 3** – Appraise, interpret and apply suggestions, recommendations and directives to improve services

- I actively look for opportunities, information and ideas that could support continuous improvement.
- I work in partnership with colleagues, patients/clients and others to discuss improvement ideas and agree a prioritised plan to take these forward.
- I provide positive support to colleagues, listening to their concerns about change and encouraging them to overcome challenges.
- I create a shared purpose and vision of the future valuing others’ contributions and ideas for delivering improved outcomes and services.
- I evaluate the impact of service improvements, draft strategies and policies recommending any changes that need to be made.

**Level 4** – Work in partnership with others to develop, take forward and evaluate direction, policies and strategies

- I actively involve and engage users of the service and others in discussions about service direction, improvements and the values on which these are based.
- I actively build and develop relationships to create partnerships with other departments/professional groups/organisations in order to create improved outcomes for people who use services.
- I work with others to review, develop and implement strategic plans and service objectives ensuring these are realistic, detailed, consistent with values, and take account of constraints.
- I create a positive, supportive environment which encourages opportunities for people to contribute their views and ideas for improvement.
- I work with people affected by service changes to evaluate the impact of the changes on them and feed this information into ongoing improvements.