

Service Specification

Provision of a Service

1. Introduction/Background

This section should cover:

- a **brief description** of the nature and scope of the service required (more detailed information regarding the service will be covered later in this document); the user group for whom the service will be provided; the overall purpose and aims of the service.
- locally agreed **principles** or values underpinning the service
- relevant information about **partnership working** in this area
- explanation/definition of any **technical terms** used in the document
- recent **background** of the service or client group (for example, is it a new service or existing one?)
- any national **standards and related targets**, or other national or local guidance as appropriate
- local **analysis of needs**

2. Description of the Service

This section should give a fuller description of the size and nature of the service required, including information about:

- the different **client groups** requiring services
- the differing **needs** of the service users
- the geographical **location** and spread of services
- any **eligibility criteria** for the service that will operate
- the processes or **activities** to be provided under the contract and an indication of the volume
- **marketing** and promotion of the service

3. Budget/Payment Arrangements

For this section include the following:

- the **budget** for the service and how the service should be costed, e.g. state maximum budget or whether a unit cost/overall cost is required for the service for the term of the contract
- what **payments arrangements** should be in place, e.g. monthly or quarterly payments in advance/arrears

4. Outcomes, Outputs and Targets

This section should detail the specific **outcome and output** targets to be achieved

- differentiate between **requirements** and those that offer some flexibility for the service provider

- get a balance between **outcomes, outputs and inputs**, and, in any event, for outcomes to be restricted to three or four vital issues, which are meaningful and measurable
- include model **care pathways** for the different client groups

5. Standards

Having determined the outcomes and outputs of services required, it is important to identify any other quality aspects that you require. Examples of minimum practices and policy requirements in a specification are:

- expectations/requirements in relation to **staffing levels, training, qualifications and experience**
- expectation/requirements in relation to the **management of staff, professional supervision and HR/employment standards**
- compliance with local or national service **standards** and guidance
- service provider's **policies, procedures and systems** ensuring a safe, consistent and quality service
- **involvement of users and carers** in agreeing care programmes and their review, and service evaluation
- expectation/requirements of **service provider's involvement in the review of services**
- expectations of service provider's **complaints procedures**

6. Monitoring Arrangements

This section should closely link with sections 4 and 5 above and provide the means by which commissioners can satisfy themselves that service delivery accords with the agreed levels and standards.

There are two main possibilities in respect of **information systems**.

- Commissioner systems dictate the way in which information is recorded, collated and transmitted by the provider.
- The Commissioner is happy to leave the collection, collation and transmission systems to the provider, providing it is able to meet the overall information requirements. It is vital that the specification makes clear what is required of the provider in these terms.

The specification should also make clear

- the expectations of the commissioner in terms of the **provider attending meetings and the sharing of information**. A schedule of meetings and the main agenda items might be included as an appendix of the specification.
- as well as the performance indicators that the provider will be expected to report on, any **other monitoring arrangements** need to be outlined such as monitoring visits, complaints or the possibility of spot checks.

[Failure to comply with service quality and other matters is normally contained in the contract or schedule detailing the agreement conditions and should not be contained in the service specification.]

7. Awarding the service

For this section include the following:

- start and end **dates** of the contract

- whether an **extension** period is to be built into the contract (this should be agreed prior to tendering the service)

For sections 8 and 9 – these are particularly pertinent when a service will/may be delivered by an external organisation. These sections do not need to be completed until you, the Commissioner, have decided which appropriate procurement process to follow.

8. Method statements

During a tender process, as the Commissioner you will be asked to draft a list of method statements, which the Service Provider needs to complete. A method statement is a series of questions covering a specific issue relating to the service, e.g. how is the service to be provided, communication, services to clients, management information and forms the basis for the evaluation of the process.

9. Evaluation

Prior to the evaluation stage commencing, as the Commissioner you must inform Service Providers as to the different stages of the evaluation process.

APPENDIX A

Key components of a service specification

The bulleted list is a checklist of items that should be included within a service specification.

- Expected outcomes
- Staffing levels, training and qualifications
- Staff management arrangements
- Information reporting and monitoring arrangements
- Full costs
- Safeguarding
- Health and safety
- Insurance indemnities
- Start, end and review dates
- Agreement on media
- De-commissioning
- Evaluation
- Feedback from customers

APPENDIX B-1

Service Specification Outcomes

This table should be used either as part of

- Section 4: Outputs, Outcomes and Targets, or as an
- Appendix

It sets out what specific outcomes the service should work towards, within the ECM outcomes framework.

Appendix B-2 provides a completed example.

5 ECM OUTCOMES	SPECIFIC OUTCOMES
1. BE HEALTHY Promoting healthy choices; improving physical, mental, sexual health and healthy lifestyle.	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE:
2. STAY SAFE Helped to stay safe, feel secure and stable	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE:
3.ENJOY AND ACHIEVE Positive engagement in education, training, employment, leisure, sport and culture	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE:
4. MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION Developing positive relationships, not bullying, self-	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE:

confident, deal with significant life events and relationships within the immediate environment	
5. ACHIEVE ECONOMIC WELLBEING	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE:
GENERALLY MEETING THE CHILD/YOUNG PERSON'S NEEDS	



APPENDIX B-2

Service Specification Outcomes - EXAMPLE: FOSTER CARE

This is an example of a completed outcomes table, which should be used either as part of

- Section 4: Outputs, Outcomes and Targets, or as an
- Appendix

It sets out what specific outcomes the service should work towards, within the ECM outcomes framework.

Appendix B-1 provides a blank table that you can use as a template.

5 ECM OUTCOMES	SPECIFIC OUTCOMES FOR FOSTERED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
1. BE HEALTHY Promoting healthy choices; improving physical, mental, sexual health and healthy lifestyle.	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE:
	are non-smokers or their smoking is demonstrably reducing since their previous review
	are not drug/alcohol users or their usage is demonstrably reduced since their previous review
	are engaging in at least one sustained period of physical exercise per week out of school
	weight is either in the appropriate range or is demonstrably moving in that direction since last review
	receive appropriate treatment for any medical/ dental needs
	have an acceptable sleeping pattern
2. STAY SAFE Helped to stay safe, feel secure and stable	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE:
	have been uninjured during period prior to their review
	do not require restraining
	do not require unplanned moves
3.ENJOY AND ACHIEVE Positive engagement in education, training, employment, leisure, sport and culture	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE:
	school attendance is either 95% or demonstrably improving since their previous review
	measured attainment levels are either at average for age, or are demonstrably improving since their previous review
	have at least one regular leisure activity enjoyed and shared with at least one other Child/Young Person
	are taking part in a pursuit which could be enjoyed later in adult life
4. MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION Developing positive relationships, not	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE:
	have at least one close friend
	are part of a social club/organisation
	respect others and give time to activities which promote good citizenship
	are not offending or anti-social or their offending pattern is demonstrably reducing since their previous review

bullying, self-confident, deal with significant life events and relationships within the immediate environment	can present themselves appropriately for their age in most settings
	are achieving daily living skills
	show evidence of increased independence and self reliance
	make a positive contribution to social/community group
5. ACHIEVE ECONOMIC WELLBEING	CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE:
	have positive attitudes towards achieving their own economic wellbeing
	have some savings (all ages)
	are aware of a variety of career options (14+)
GENERALLY MEETING THE CHILD/YOUNG PERSON'S NEEDS	Carers respond positively and warmly to the child and young person and pursue with urgency and vigour any necessary tasks to provide the best care and opportunities