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**Core Assurances**

Experience has taught us that when things go wrong in care services, they often relate to key areas. Theory and inquiries into when care goes wrong have highlighted the areas that are important to monitor because these can be identified as early indicators of concern to people using services ([Scottish Government 2014](https://www.gov.scot/publications/early-indicators-concern-care-services/), [Hull University 2012](https://www.hull.ac.uk/work-with-us/research/site-elements/docs/groups/early-indicators-of-concern-for-older-people.pdf), [Francis Report 2013](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/report-of-the-mid-staffordshire-nhs-foundation-trust-public-inquiry)).

These are the key areas considered during the registration process, and policies and procedures relating to them must be in place before a service is registered. Because we know, and research tells us, that these key areas are essential to a service being safe, we have called them ‘core assurances.’

The list of core assurances highlights what inspectors must look at on inspection. They help guide providers on the areas that are important to children’s safety and wellbeing. The core assurances span the entire framework, covering elements of several different quality indicators.

The process for checking the core assurances is different from the rest of the self-evaluation as these areas are not evaluated, they are minimum assurances that need to be in place.

This template (which includes a worked example) is devised to help you check that you are meeting all of these core assurances and that you are able to evidence this.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| General actions | Date checked | Comments/actions required |
| A registration certificate is on display and contains accurate information that reflects the service currently being delivered. | 16/7/24 | Current certificate displayed. |
| A valid insurance certificate is on display on the noticeboard. (Not LA services) | 16/7/24 | Checked and last year’s certificate was displayed. This has been replaced with the current certificate. |

**Worked example**

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| **Protection** |
| * There are child and adult protection policies and procedures including whistleblowing that evidences how children are kept safe. * Staff are trained in child and adult protection and are confident in knowing when and how to make referrals, including notifying the Care Inspectorate. * Where required, there is evidence that appropriate protection referrals have been made and followed up. |
| How can we evidence that we meet this core assurance? |
| We have a child protection policy and procedure in place, last reviewed/updated 12/3/22. This includes a flowchart of the actions we need to take when a concern is raised. Child Protection training has been completed by all staff and is included in our induction training. As part of induction, we ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of their role in protecting children. We have procedures in place to ensure that training is refreshed every year.  Records of the training attended are kept in each staff member’s personal development file, along with copies of any training certificates and copies of their reflective account of the impact of the learning on their practice. Child Protection is a standing item on agendas for monthly whole staff meetings. We regularly check staff understanding by discussing case studies from events elsewhere.    We have made 2 child protection referrals during the past year, all of which were notified to the Care Inspectorate. Detailed chronologies are stored securely, and we make sure that staff have the information they need to support individual children appropriately and to work with other agencies. |
| Any additional actions to be taken? |
| Make sure that child protection training is refreshed every year and the procedure is up to date with changes. |

**Core assurances self-evaluation template**

**Service…………………………………………………………………………………………**

**Date completed………………………………………………………………………………**

**Completed by………………………………………………………………………………...**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **General actions** | **Date checked** | **Comments/actions required** |
| A registration certificate is on display and contains accurate information that reflects the service currently being delivered. |  |  |
| A valid insurance certificate is on display. |  |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Protection** |
| * There are child and adult protection policies and procedures including whistleblowing that evidences how children are kept safe. * Staff are trained in child and adult protection and are confident in knowing when and how to make referrals, including notifying the Care Inspectorate. * Where required, there is evidence that appropriate protection referrals have been made and followed up. |
| How can we evidence that we meet this core assurance? |
|  |
| Any additional actions to be taken/areas for improvement? |
|  |
| **Infection prevention and control** |
| * All staff are trained in and can demonstrate they understand and apply the principles of IPC in line with their role, responsibility and workplace setting. * The service has quality assurance processes in place for IPC. * Leaders ensure that staff have access to appropriate resources to protect themselves and to minimise the risk of infection to others. |
| How can we evidence that we meet this core assurance? |
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| Any additional actions to be taken/areas for improvement? |
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| **Medication system and records** |
| * Children, young people and staff are protected by safe medication management policies and practices. * Legislation and good practice guidance are followed when supporting children and young people to take medication. * Where there are medication errors the agency makes appropriate notifications to the Care Inspectorate and learns from these to improve medication practice. |
| How can we evidence that we meet this core assurance? |
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| Any additional actions to be taken/areas for improvement? |
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| **Accident/incident records** |
| * While being cared for by agency staff a record of all accidents and incidents involving children and young people are being maintained. Where required, notifications are being made to the Care Inspectorate and the appropriate agencies. * There is evidence of learning from quality assurance processes around accident and incidents. |
| How can we evidence that we meet this core assurance? |
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| Any additional actions to be taken/areas for improvement? |
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| **Development/Improvement plan** |
| * There is an up-to-date development/improvement plan in place that is informed by feedback from children, their families, other people who use the service and staff. * This plan is actively used to drive improvement in the service. |
| How can we evidence that we meet this core assurance? |
|  |
| Any additional actions to be taken/areas for improvement? |
|  |
| **Quality assurance and improvement** |
| * There are quality assurance systems in place to positively inform practice and ensure appropriate action is taken to improve outcomes for those using the service. |
| How can we evidence that we meet this core assurance? |
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| Any additional actions to be taken/areas for improvement? |
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| **Complaints** |
| * The complaints and concerns of each child, young person, their family or advocate are listened to and acted upon and there is an effective appeals procedure. * People are promptly made aware of the outcome of any complaints and there are processes in place to implement learning from complaints.  A record is made of all complaints, responses and outcomes and details of any formal investigations undertaken. * The complaints process is accessible and easy to use. |
| How can we evidence that we meet this core assurance? |
|  |
| Any additional actions to be taken/areas for improvement? |
|  |
| **Staff recruitment procedures** |
| * Safe and effective recruitment practices are in place to recruit staff in accordance with good practice and national safer recruitment guidance. |
| How can we evidence that we meet this core assurance? |
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| Any additional actions to be taken/areas for improvement? |
|  |
| **Safe staffing** |
| * The numbers, skill mix and deployment of staff are determined by an effective process of continuous assessment featuring a range of measures and is linked to quality assurance |
| How can we evidence that we meet this core assurance? |
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| Any additional actions to be taken/areas for improvement? |
|  |
| **Planned care and support** |
| * Children and families using the agency are actively involved in the development and review of their personal plan. * Personal plans are accessible to children, their families and the staff providing their care and support, ensuring their needs and wishes are met. |
| How can we evidence that we meet this core assurance? |
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| Any additional actions to be taken/areas for improvement? |
|  |