RISK, AUDIT AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	23 June 2022
Report Title	Signposting Protocol
Report Number	HSCP22.030
Lead Officer	Alison Macleod
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Consultation Checklist Completed	Yes
Appendices	Appendix A - Draft Signposting Protocol

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide a protocol for guidance prior to Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership (ACHSCP) specifically and deliberately signposting patients, clients, carers, and service users to organisations that have not gone through the commissioning or grant funding process.

2. Recommendations

2.1. It is recommended that the Risk, Audit, and Performance Committee approve the draft Signposting Protocol attached at Appendix A.

3. Summary of Key Information

3.1. There are a significant number of third and independent sector organisations providing advice, care, and support to vulnerable individuals in need in Aberdeen City. Some of these receive funding from ACHSCP through formal commissioning or grant funding processes. When these organisations are formally commissioned their governance arrangements and legitimacy are checked as part of the tendering process prior to a formal contract being

awarded. Similarly, grant funded organisations are checked using the Operational Assessment Framework under the Following the Public Pound Code of Practice.

3.2. The selection criteria used to assess an organisations suitability to even be considered for a contract award under Public Contracts Scotland Regulations 2015 include: -

- Suitability to Pursue Professional Activity e.g., enrolled in certain professional or trade registers
- Economic and Financial Standing via Accounts or Insurance Levels
- Technical and Professional Ability via qualifications, references, examples of current or previous work
- Quality Management Procedures e.g., health and safety legislation

3.3. The Following the Public Pound Operational Assessment Framework is as follows: -

- Does the organisation have a management board to oversee the direction, service delivery and financial stability of the organisation?
- Is the organisation a registered charity, and if so, have they complied with guidance from OSCR?
- Is the organisation a registered company, and if so, have they complied with their requirements under Companies Act?
- Does the organisation have a clear statement of purpose and organisational objectives?
- Is the organisation able to provide evidence or other support to demonstrate achievement of its objectives and purpose?
- Are there any known reasons that would result in a risk to the Council's reputation through association with an external body if financial or service delivery problems emerge

3.4. Organisations providing advice, care, and support in Aberdeen range in scale and complexity. Some are small, relatively informal groups offering peer support with virtually no financial turnover, and others are more formal in nature perhaps offering and charging for professional services. Some may have charitable status or belong to an umbrella organisation such as Aberdeen Council for Voluntary Organisations (ACVO), others will not. All of these organisations have a valuable place in the health and social care landscape. ACHSCP do not wish to discriminate against organisations or stifle community enterprise. Individual service users should be free to make their own choice about which services they use.

3.5. Organisations are also able to list themselves on the following databases which provide publicly accessible information on support services available locally.

- [ALISS - A Local Information System for Scotland](). This programme is funded by the Scottish Government and delivered by the Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE). It is a central point for hosting health and wellbeing information for people living with long term conditions, disabled people and unpaid carers.
- [Scotland's Service Directory (SSD)](). This is a central point for information on health and wellbeing services in Scotland.

3.6. The purpose of this protocol is to provide clarity for service users whenever ACHSCP specifically and deliberately signpost to an organisation that is not commissioned, or grant funded by them ensuring that most benefit is derived from the experience. When specifically, and deliberately signposting, ACHSCP should, where possible, signpost to more than one organisation and encourage individuals to undertake their own research before making up their mind which to use.

3.7. It is proposed that the protocol is implemented for any new organisations ACHSCP specifically and deliberately signpost to, and that there is no retrospective action.

4. Implications for IJB

4.1. Equalities, Fairer Scotland, and Health Inequality

There are no direct equalities impact on our equalities duties as a result of the recommendations within this paper.

4.2. Financial

There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

4.3. Workforce

There are no direct workforce implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

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4.4. Legal

There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

4.5. Covid 19

There are no implications in relation to Covid-19 resulting from the recommendations in this report.

4.6. Unpaid Carers

There are no specific implications for Unpaid Carers resulting from the recommendations in this report.

4.7. Other

There are no other implications resulting from the recommendations in this report.

5. Links to ACHSCP Strategic Plan

5.1. This report links to the Caring Together aim of the Strategic Plan. It will support service users and patients to access a range of organisations to meet their individual needs.

6. Management of Risk

6.1.   Identified risks(s)

There is a risk that service users/ patients are signposted to organisations which do not deliver the standard of service we would expect which will have a negative outcome for the individual.

6.2. Link to risks on strategic or operational risk register:

This is linked to Risk 5 – 'There is a risk that the IJB, and the services that it directs and has operational oversight of, fails to meet the national, regulatory, and local standards'

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6.3. **How might the content of this report impact or mitigate these risks:**

The use of the Signposting Protocol will provide clarity for service users encouraging them to shop around and use their own judgement thus hopefully avoiding them experiencing negative outcomes. With this mitigation in place the likelihood of risk is low.

Approvals	
Sandra Macleod	Sandra Macleod (Chief Officer)
[signature]	Alex Stephen (Chief Finance Officer)

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APPENDIX A

Signposting Protocol

Officers of Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership who wish to signpost patients, clients, carers, and service users to organisations that have not been directly commissioned or grant funded should follow the protocol below prior to specifically and deliberately signposting: -

* Research what organisations exist locally to meet the needs of the service user cohort making use of the ALISS and SSD databases. Ideally service users should be made aware of a range of options available to them.

* Encourage the service user to undertake their own research and evaluation of the options available to them. What specific services are offered; would these meet their specific needs; what form of support is involved – is it informal peer support or more professional advice or services; and what potential benefits could be achieved from engaging with the organisation. The most valuable information will be testimonies from people who have used the service and service users should be encouraged to seek these out using the organisations website or asking directly for these.

* Encourage service users to feedback on their experience with particular services, and provide a mechanism for that, in order build up local knowledge of the value delivered.