

18th January 2011

Dear Colleague,

The CLEAR Project recently launched, "**CLEAR Standards and Quality Assessment Framework for Community and Voluntary Sector Organisations**". This document sets out the minimum quality standard to which community and voluntary organisations should work to in terms of:

- Governance Structures
- Service User Involvement
- Privacy and Confidentiality
- Knowledge and Skills
- Service Delivery

It also seeks to enable us to provide assurances on the high standards of service provision in the Western Health Trust Area.

As a means of assuring others of the high standards of service provision locally, the CLEAR Project are asking community and voluntary groups to **voluntarily assess** their organisation and its service(s) using the document and provide the gathered information to the CLEAR project. CLEAR will then begin a process of disseminating the **list of groups** who have completed the self-assessment tool and are proactively implementing the standards, (the self assessment frame work will only be retained by the CLEAR Project and not shared with outside agencies), to community, voluntary and statutory sector organisations and publish them, with permission, on the CLEAR website.

CLEAR endeavours to use an evidence based method to ensure reliability. We would therefore ask organisations when completing the framework to indicate not only which standards have been met but also **HOW** your organisation meets each of the defined standards.

Benefits to your organisation

- Better quality for service users;
- Improved service user involvement;
- Greater confidence with sign-posting / making referrals to other organisations;
- Greater credibility with funders;
- Continuous professional development (CPD) for the organisation, staff & volunteers;
- Enhanced working practice.

In completing this framework it is not expected that each groups self-assessment status is **fully met** for all standards, however, where a group is not in compliance with an individual standard an action plan of how this can be achieved should be completed (*please see sample ACTION PLAN attached*).

Further guidance and support is available from the CLEAR Project Manager using contact details at the top of this letter. I would be grateful if all completed assessments are submitted to the CLEAR project by **Friday 11th February 2011** to ensure that your organisations details are included on the list of groups working to CLEAR Standards. Organisations that submit their framework will also get the opportunity to achieve recognition for doing so and will get a chance to raise awareness of their service at the CLEAR networking events which are scheduled to take place at the end of March 2011.

Should you require any further information regarding this matter please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely



Shauna Houston
CLEAR Project Manager