SQS 11

The service unit has a planned approach to assessing and meeting service users' needs (whether the service user is an individual, family, group or community).

11.1   The service unit has policy and procedures in relation to assessing and meeting service users' needs, and they are accessible to service users, staff or other interested parties.

11.2   Service users, relevant staff, family members or other relevant personnel are consulted and, where appropriate, their views are incorporated in all stages of the assessment and planning process.

11.3   The service unit records assessment of service users' needs and plans as to how they will meet their needs, including goals, action identified and timeframes for achieving or reviewing plans.

11.4   Service users' records are regularly updated to reflect changing circumstances.

A.   INTRODUCTION TO SQS 11– NEEDS OF SERVICE USERS

A core objective of any human services organisation is to ensure that timely and appropriate services based upon the needs of the service user are provided. Depending upon the mission of the organisation, service users can include individuals, families, groups or communities.

Services should be provided in a planned manner to best meet service user needs and to maximise the use of available resources.   Service provision for individuals, families or groups is generally determined through careful needs assessment and the development of a subsequent individual care plan. Service agencies whose focus is community action and advocacy formulate strategies and plans based upon assessment of community need and environmental factors.

The type of needs assessment and service delivery planning processes that your service unit has will depend upon the nature of the service being provided and, therefore, is likely to vary widely between service types.   For example, if you operate a Care & Attention Home for the Elderly, you will have individual care plans that cover a wide range of issues such as nursing requirements, nutrition, occupational therapy needs and social activities.   By comparison, services which do not provide 24 hour care are likely to have less comprehensive plans which relate to only certain aspects of service users' lives, for example a case plan for the provision of kitchen based home help services or case plans for outreaching social work.   Other services will have assessment and service delivery planning processes that focus on the needs of groups rather than those of individual service users, for example, Social Centres for the Elderly.

It is therefore important to note that SQS 11 does not prescribe any particular needs assessment or case management approach.   Rather, the emphasis is on ensuring that your service has a documented, planned approach to identifying and meeting service user needs that is appropriate for your service type.

B.   ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR MEETING SQS 11

In order to meet SQS 11, your service unit will need to:

1. Have written policy and procedures in relation to assessing and meeting service users' needs which incorporate:

   - designated responsibility for assessment, planning and review;
   - parties to be involved in the assessment;
   - regular review and updating;
   - methods of assessment;
   - maintenance of records; and
   - communicating decisions to relevant people.

2.	Ensure that the above policy and procedures are implemented, and are accessible to service users, staff and other interested parties.

3.	Consult relevant parties (including the service users, relevant staff, family members or other relevant personnel) during the assessment and planning process, and where appropriate, incorporate their views.

4.	Inform service users of their rights to be involved, or to involve significant others, in the assessment and planning process and that their views will be considered and where appropriate, incorporated.

5.	Keep appropriate records of service users' needs assessments and service plans to meet their needs which include goals, action identified, and timeframes for achieving or reviewing plans.

6.	Update service users' records regularly on at least an annual basis to reflect changing circumstances.

## C.	RESOURCES TO ASSIST YOUR SERVICE TO MEET SQS 11

This Handbook contains the following resources to assist you in ensuring that your service unit is complying with SQS 11:

- A sample policy in relation to individual planning;
- Guidelines for developing your service unit's procedures for individual assessment;
- Sample policy for community needs planning; and
- Guidelines for developing procedures for community needs assessment.

The sample documents and guidelines provided may be used either as:

- a basis for developing a policy and procedures specific to your service unit, in the event that you do not already have existing documents in this area; or
- a checklist for reviewing and, if necessary, amending your service unit's relevant policy and procedures, if you already have such items in place.

It is important to note that these examples are guidelines only and that they should be focused to reflect the special circumstances of your service unit. Policy details will vary according to the nature of the service under consideration.

SAMPLE POLICY
INDIVIDUAL PLANNING POLICY
[Insert name of service unit]

1. [*Insert name of service unit*] is committed to [*insert mission of your service unit, for example "providing elderly people who are unable to live at home with quality residential care, including meals, personal care, limited nursing care and recreational activities"*].

2. In order to achieve this mission, appropriately qualified and trained staff from [*insert name of service unit*] will conduct a comprehensive assessment of each service user's needs [*You should specify the relevant needs, for example "health care, nutrition and social needs"*].

3. The aim of the needs assessment process is to identify the services needed by the service user to support them to achieve a good quality of life and maximise their individual potential.

4. Needs assessments will be conducted within one month of a service user entering [*Insert name of service unit*].

5. The results of the needs assessment will be used to prepare an individual care/case plan which will guide the delivery of services to each service user.

6. All individual care/case plans will be regularly monitored and updated and a formal review of each plan will be undertaken on an annual basis.

7. [*Insert name of service unit*] is committed to involving individual service users and/or their family members in all aspects of the needs assessment, individual care/case planning and review processes and will provide appropriate assistance and support.

8. [*Insert name of service unit*] is committed to early intervention and will adopt an approach of prevention of problems and/or early identification of issues.

DATE: [*Insert date policy is created.*]

DISTRIBUTION: [*Insert how and to whom policy will be distributed. For example "To all staff and service users in Service Handbook".*]

REVIEW: [*Specify when and how the policy will be reviewed. For example "September 1999, Annual Service Evaluation".*]

GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROCEDURES
FOR INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT

1. Introduction

These guidelines have been prepared to assist a service unit develop procedures to implement the relevant assessment policies. The focus of these guidelines is on assessment for individuals, families and groups.

2. Contents of the procedures

The contents of the procedures for assessment will depend on the type of service and the nature of your service users. The proposed contents need to be reviewed to reflect your service unit's requirements. The examples we have provided relate to individual assessments.

We propose that the procedures for individual assessment cover the following areas:

A.   Involvement. Identification of who (e.g. individual, family, staff member(s), advocate etc.) will be involved in:

- needs assessment;
- service plan implementation;
- monitoring; and
- review.

B.   Assessment steps, timelines and responsibilities, such as:

- screening or initial assessment;
- detailed assessment;
- written plan;
- communicating assessment results;
- minor review   (timetable and responsibility); and
- major review (timetable and responsibility).

C.   Assessment contents, depending on the type of service and age of the person who is being assessed. The contents may include:

- basic personal and demographic data;
- health data;
- physical capabilities and disabilities;
- emotional and psychological factors;
- cultural factors;
- vocational aspirations and achievements;
- family history;
- financial issues;

- social situation and aspirations;
- recreational needs and aspirations;
- environmental factors; and
- use of other services.

D.   Assessment tools

In this section of the procedures, you will need to specify the range of assessment tools to be used for assessment.   These may include:

- commercially available assessment tools (such as child development scales);
- standardized assessment tools (such as IQ tests);
- tools developed by the service unit; and / or
- specific data collection forms.

E.   Communication and maintaining assessment record

In this section of the procedures, you will need to indicate:

- how and where the assessment will be recorded;
- how confidentiality will be protected;
- who will have access to the assessment; and
- to whom and how you will communicate the results of the assessment.

F.   Administration issues

In this section of the procedures, you will need to indicate:

- the date of the procedures;
- how and to whom the procedures will be distributed; and
- how and when the procedures will be reviewed.

SAMPLE POLICY
COMMUNITY NEEDS PLANNING
[Insert name of service unit]

1. *[Insert name of service unit]* is committed to *[insert mission of your service unit, for example 'promoting residents of all ages to participate in various groups and community activities to develop their potential'].*

2. In order to achieve this mission, appropriately qualified and trained staff from *[insert name of service unit]* will conduct a comprehensive community needs assessment. *[You should specify the relevant needs, for example, the social, cultural, environmental and physical factors of the community'].*

3. The aim of the community needs assessment process is to identify the community based services needed by the service users to support them to achieve a high quality of life and to maximise their potential.

4. Needs assessments will be conducted on a regular *[for example, annual]* basis.

5. The results of the community needs assessment will be used to prepare community development plans which guide the activities of *[insert name of your service unit].*

6. All community development plans will be regularly monitored and updated with a view to meeting the changing needs of the community.

7. *[Insert name of service unit]* is committed to involving individuals in the needs assessment and planning processes and will provide the appropriate assistance and support where required.

8. *[Insert name of service unit]* is committed to early intervention and will adopt a preventive position and an early identification approach to problems.

DATE: *[Insert date policy is created.]*

DISTRIBUTION: *[Insert how and to whom policy will be distributed.]*

REVIEW: *[Specify when and how the policy will be reviewed.]*

GUIDELINES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROCEDURES FOR COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

1. Introduction

These guidelines have been prepared to assist a service unit develop procedures to implement the relevant assessment policies. The focus of these guidelines is on community needs assessment.

2. Contents of the procedures

The contents of the procedures for assessment will depend on the type of service and the nature of your service user population. The proposed contents need to be reviewed to reflect your service unit's requirements.

The procedures for community needs assessment may cover the following areas:

A. Assessment contents

- basic community demographic data (for example, population structure, housing types, income distribution);
- cultural information;
- historical information on the community;
- social factors;
- environmental factors;
- service system information (for example, health care systems, recreational facilities, social supports and networks, educational systems); and
- evaluation of the impact of your service unit's past activities.

B. Assessment steps & responsibilities

- collect information about community needs using various data collection tools and discussion with service users and other key stakeholders;
- develop written plan;
- communicate assessment results;
- minor review (timetable and responsibility); and
- major review and evaluation (timetable and responsibility).

C. Tools to collect information about community needs

In this section you may specify your data collection tools and methodologies. For example:

- regular liaison with groups and agencies in the local community, for example, through inter-agency meetings, relationships with

government departments, advocacy groups and other key opinion forming groups;

- use of community structures and creation of opportunities to collect data and information on key community issues and concerns;
- community consultation activities, for example, public meetings, circulation of papers, consultation with specific interest groups; and
- creating opportunities for participation in assessment and planning, for example, participation in working groups and focus groups, opportunities to provide comment on draft papers.

D. Communication and record keeping

In this section of the procedures, you will need to indicate:

- how and where the assessment information will be recorded;
- how confidentiality (if relevant) will be protected;
- who will have access to the community needs assessment information; and
- to whom and how, you will communicate the results of the assessment.

E. Administration issues

In this section of the procedures, you will need to indicate;

- the date of the procedures;
- how and to whom the procedures will be distributed; and
- how and when the procedures will be reviewed.

- End -