

Staff survey - guidance for the local authority

Introduction

The information collected through the survey is used to help the team:

- understand the key issues within social services from the perspective of a representative cross-sample of staff directly employed by the local authority;
- identify areas for further enquiry;
- provide evidence for reaching a judgement in areas such as workforce, leadership and culture.

The survey is conducted at an early stage of the review process as a means of engaging indirectly with a substantial proportion of staff. Questionnaires are supplied to all staff in some categories and to a representative, randomly selected cross-section in others. The completed questionnaires are analysed, discussed with the local authority and a summary is made available when the final report is published.

The questionnaire

The questionnaire has four parts.

Part 1 - About me

Part 2 - About social services as an organisation

Part 3 – Organising and shaping social services

Part 4 - Overall impressions

In all four sections, staff are only required to tick boxes in response to statements. Some people will want to make additional comments, perhaps about areas that are especially good or where there are concerns. There is a space for comments at the end of each section.

The questionnaire has been designed for flexible use across a wide range of staff groups. Everybody receiving the questionnaire is asked to complete Parts 1 and 4. These sections help to provide an overview of staff attitudes in social services as a whole. They contain statements that can be completed by all members of staff on the basis of their own experiences.

For certain staff, particular statements in Parts 2 and 3 may be outside their knowledge or experience. They are invited to tick the box labelled *irrelevant* in respect of those statements.

Conducting the survey

The staff survey is one of the main agenda items for the review-planning meeting (Week 3 of the review). The meeting considers how the survey will be conducted and the need to accommodate any particular issues within the local authority. Agreement is reached about creating the survey sample.

It is anticipated that a copy of the questionnaire will go to all staff responsible for case management and to all staff in managerial posts within social services. On a random basis, 10% of staff in other groups (such as business support, domiciliary care, day care, residential care and other service provision) should receive a copy of the questionnaire. Please ensure that the sample reflects the functional and geographic distribution of staff within social services. Records of the sampling process should be kept for audit purposes.

The questionnaires are made available to staff by the local authority, with a copy of the leaflet *Reviewing Your Services* (Week 6 of the review). This can be done electronically or in a paper version. You may wish to supply a letter encouraging staff to take part in the survey. Completed questionnaires are returned directly to the joint review team via a pre-paid envelope that will be supplied by SSIW.

The results are analysed in time for the interim assessment when all the evidence from the broad review phase is examined (Week 14 of the review). Results are routinely shared with the local authority in the introductory meetings that bring this phase to an end. It is our experience that qualitative analysis of the questionnaires often provides as many insights as statistical data. We look for comments that appear to be representative and corroborated by evidence from a range of other sources.