

# THE QUALITY MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK PROJECT

## Measuring Quality and Value in the Public Services

### Summer 2008

The project aims to place quality and value at the heart of public service commissioning. It covers three areas, adult social care, pre-school education and the third sector.

Since distributing our first newsletter in spring 2008, we published the Interim Report of the Quality Measurement Framework Project, in July 2008. This edition of the QMF newsletter focuses on the findings of that report.

We welcome your feedback on the newsletter and ways it can be developed to be more useful to you. Please send your comments to [qmf@ons.gov.uk](mailto:qmf@ons.gov.uk)

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#### Interim Report

This report follows from the publication of the Initial Report, published in July 2007, which set out the scope of the project.

The report describes progress on the QMF project to design new quality measures so users of public services, from early years education to adult social care, receive a better service and better value for money. This includes:

- development of a toolkit (The Adult Social Care Outcomes Toolkit (ASCOT)) for measuring quality, to be used by commissioners and regulators in adult social care
- plans for a single measure of quality in pre-school education, using data from Ofsted and the Millennium Cohort Study
- progress from the findings of the report on "Estimates of government funding to the Third Sector"
- results of consultation with the third sector and other stakeholders

The report explains how the project will fit with other approaches to local service commissioning, as set out in the National Audit Office report "Local Area Agreements and the Third Sector" and the National Indicators Set for performance measurement in local government.

The full report is available on [www.statistics.gov.uk/qmf](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/qmf) under ONS reports & updates.

#### Adult social care

The Interim Report describes the progress on adult social care, which is being led by Personal Social Services Research Unit (PSSRU) at the University of Kent. The project focuses on care homes, low level services and information and advice services. PSSRU has developed a practical toolkit, ASCOT, to be used by commissioners and regulators in adult social care for measuring quality. ASCOT has two components:

- A well-being measurement scale, which measures the extent of people's functioning and capability to function in a range of relevant outcome domains.
- An expected outcomes (called capacity for benefit) attribution method, which measures the expected well-being in the hypothetical absence of the service.

## Pre-school education

The report explains the three strategies the National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR) will use to compare the quality of pre-school education, by using existing sources. The work explores the theme of "what is quality?" by considering parents' views on future developments of pre-school education and value for money. The three strategies are:

1. A comparison of the quality of provision through the Millennium Cohort Study and other data linked to the children in the survey.
2. To research data interviews with a sample of people responsible for pre-school policy and commissioning in local authorities and people from other organisations involved in pre-school provision. This work focuses on:
  - outcomes of pre-school childcare and education

- support offered to early years providers around quality and sustainability
  - management of the early years market
3. To develop a semi-structured cost survey and analyse the Childcare and Early Years Provider survey series, in order to weight the quality outcome measures for a single quality index.

## Understanding the funding relationship between government and the third sector

The report summarises the findings from the National Council for Voluntary Organisations' (NCVO) report "Estimates of government funding to the Third Sector: Experimental Statistics", October 2007. It identified which government departments have most financial engagement with the third sector and conversely which departments the sector is most dependent on for funding.

## Engaging with stakeholders

### Promotion events

ONS ran a series of QMF promotional events across the UK. These were well attended by a wide range of representatives from the third, public and private sectors, regulatory bodies, think tanks and academia. The events generated good feedback and broadened awareness of the project.

### Discussion Groups

ONS organised a series of group discussions across the UK to explore the domains and indicators proposed by PSSRU in the ASCOT. Overall the groups welcomed the QMF project and felt this was a good time to proceed with its development. The key themes from all the discussion groups included:

- The inconsistent approach to assessing quality when commissioning from different providers.
- The substantial administrative burden for local authorities and service providers.

### Third Sector Network

The network consists of over 20 third sector organisations that receive regular updates on the project and provide a "sounding board" to test proposals about the QMF. If you are a third sector organisation and would like to join this network please email [qmf@ons.gov.uk](mailto:qmf@ons.gov.uk).

### Advisory Boards

The Information and Advice (I&A) Advisory Board met in July 2008. The role of the board is to ensure that experience and expertise in commissioning and delivering I&A services is fed into the project. The board will:

- assist the team in defining and identifying the range of services and the user sample
- provide advice on a realistic timeframe for the proposed work on measuring the outputs of I&A services

We welcome the opportunity to engage with organisations from all the sectors across the UK. For more information please email the project team at [qmf@ons.gov.uk](mailto:qmf@ons.gov.uk)