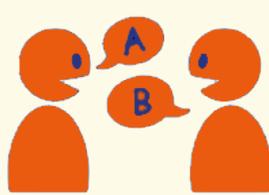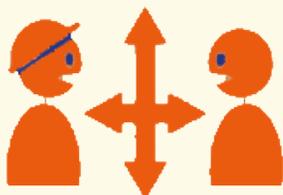# Core Competency Framework

# for

Multiple Needs Workers

What makes an effective multiple needs worker?

Accepting people as they are

- Uses active listening skills.
- Communicates consistently with a warm, friendly, welcoming and interested attitude.
- Tries different and creative ways to engage clients who do not want to engage. This includes talking about interests and 'problem free' talk.
- Validates and acknowledges the points of view and emotions of clients.
- Understands the impact that trauma has on people's willingness to engage with help. Applies this knowledge to engaging with clients.
- Demonstrates an understanding of how the experience of multiple needs is affected by race, culture, disability, sexual orientation and/or gender.
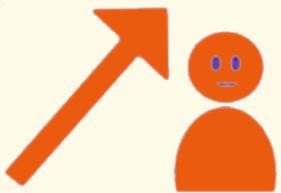
Believing people can get better

- Communicates a realistic hope for a better future with people who are lacking hope.
- Helps clients to break down their goals and plans into smaller, realistic steps and stages.
- Holds positive conversations with clients to help them 'reframe' problems they present within the context of the better future they wish for.
- Understands that recovery is not linear and to remain alongside clients rather than leading them.
- Supports clients to value the progress made however small the steps appear to be.
- Understands the impact that trauma has on people's levels of motivation. Applies this knowledge to the way motivation is built with clients.

Collaborating to solve problems

- Helps clients to describe problems from their point of view and reflects with them on different ways to see it.
- Helps clients develop their own plan for solving a problem collaboratively in ways that draw on the strengths and skills of their support network.
- Reflects with clients on how well their efforts to put a plan into action have gone.
- Works cooperatively as part of team with colleagues in and outside of the organisation.
- Understands the impact that trauma has on people's problem solving skills and their ability to work collaboratively.

Developing trusting relationships

- Demonstrates reliability to do what has been agreed and without overpromising.
- Repairs breaks in the relationship with clients when they occur. This may include: admitting when mistakes are made, or; reflecting on an incident that has led to a loss of trust in a service.
- Communicates that they trust clients around appropriate topics and tasks.
- Shows consistency in approach with clients to avoid giving "mixed messages" and maintains a consistent approach with other staff and services.
- Understands the impact that trauma has on people's ability to trust others. Applies this knowledge to how trust is built with clients.

Core Competency Framework for Multiple Needs Workers

What makes an effective multiple needs worker?
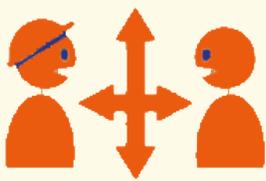
Establishing and maintaining roles and boundaries
- Explains role and the realistic limits of what can be done within it.
- Says "no" to requests for help from other services that are outside of the usual role and explain the reasons why.
- Consistently checks in with colleagues when activities fall outside of the usual role.
- Is appropriately flexible around boundaries.
- Understands the impact that trauma has on people's ability to maintain healthy interpersonal boundaries. Applies this knowledge to how boundaries are established and maintained with clients.
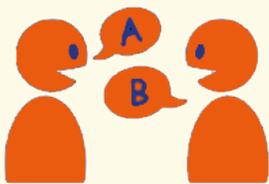
Reflecting on practice
- Has an awareness of, and is able to reflect on, their own responses and behaviours.
- Is constantly reflecting on their own practice and committed to learning and continuous professional development.
- Understands how emotions, thinking and behaviour are linked in themselves and others.
- Learns from the experiences of others and is able to apply to their own practice.
- Recognises the impact of the work and understands when to seek appropriate support within and outside of work.
- Can draw on personal and professional experience appropriately.

Advocacy skills
- Able to identify where system change or service flex is needed and able to communicate this to others appropriately.
- Able to communicate people's skills, assets, needs and priorities to others.
- Demonstrates assertiveness and ability to work with people to promote and gain inclusion.
- Challenges services on behalf of people where it is needed.

Self-care
- Willing to engage with employing organisation's support offers (formal supervision, case conferencing, reflective practice meetings).
- Engages in informal, regular debriefs with colleagues.
- Able to maintain clear identities between work and personal life.
- Recognises when a difficult thought or emotion is their own, or whether it is the result of transference of a client's (or colleague's) emotions or trauma.
- Actively puts activities in place to manage their own wellbeing, rather than responding to stress only when it occurs.
- Demonstrate they are at a stable point in their recovery journey and have the resilience to support others.

Core Competency Framework for Multiple Needs Workers

Intended use

This framework underpins the successful and proven "Navigator Model", which has been developed and tested by the WY-FI Project through its six years of operation as part of the National Lottery Community Fund's Fulfilling Lives Programme.

The framework is designed to be adopted by organisations who work with people experiencing multiple needs as a result of complex trauma. This includes organisations who provide specific outreach to people experiencing multiple disadvantage, as well voluntary sector organisations who provide street outreach programmes. However, consideration should be given for this framework to be applied to all staff who work with people with high levels of need in all settings, including but not limited to:

- supported housing
- people in their own home
- A&E departments
- hostels and shelters.

The framework should be used in conjunction with a learning and development offer for staff which includes training on:

- trauma informed practice
- working with personality disorders
- psychologically informed environments
- strengths based approaches and risk enablement
- dual diagnosis
- working with challenging behaviour.

This offer should also be supported by regular reflective practice meetings, ideally with a service neutral facilitator.

Limitations

This framework is not intended to serve as a complete job description. Other competencies need to be included to create a full framework and job descriptions for specific roles - and these competencies should apply to all workers in support roles, regardless of the degree of complexity they work with.

For example, competencies relating to the completion of records, defensible documentation, safeguarding, lone working, general conduct etc. are not included here. These competencies should be produced by organisations in line with their own policies and procedures.