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Quality Indicators Framework for Trauma-Informed Services, Systems and Workforces Proposal and Development Plan Stakeholder Consultation



Introduction

It is the Scottish Government and COSLA's ambition to have a trauma-informed and responsive workforce and services across Scotland. This means that universally, across all systems and services, we recognise where people are affected by trauma and adversity, respond in ways that prevent further harm and support recovery, and improve life chances for people affected by trauma.

Led by NHS Education for Scotland, the National Trauma Training Programme (NTTP) has produced a [knowledge and skills framework](#) for the Scottish workforce, alongside training resources appropriate for all levels across the workforce. This is designed to support everyone in Scotland's workforce to have the knowledge and skills they need to support the ambition. Whilst staff training is a key component of any organisation's journey to becoming trauma informed and responsive, equally important are the processes, policies and environments across all of our services, organisations and multi-agency systems that can enable and maintain the ambition of a truly trauma-informed nation.

This consultation paper sets out a proposal for the development of a quality indicator framework to support the implementation of this ambition. The paper has been co-developed by the Improvement Service, NHS Education for Scotland, COSLA and the Scottish Government.

Rationale for the proposed framework

Over 2020-21, the Improvement Service has engaged with a range of stakeholders across Scotland, across policy areas and sectors, including practitioners, service managers, senior leaders, Elected Members, and nominated [Trauma Champions](#) about the barriers and enablers to implementing a trauma-informed approach in their service/organisation/local area and multi-agency systems. We also asked about the kinds of support stakeholders need to embed trauma-informed practice and policy in a robust, consistent and meaningful way.

[Key findings](#) from discussions with stakeholders across sectors and policy areas is the need for support with:

- understanding more tangibly what a trauma-informed service/organisation looks like, the key activities to support this and what good practice looks like;
- identifying how to implement good practice consistently across services/organisations and supporting a multi-agency, joined-up approach at the local level;
- tracking their service/ organisation/local area's progress in developing and embedding trauma-informed practice and policy;
- strengthening understanding of how their work at a local level supports the national ambition;
- finding ways to identify and celebrate achievements and successes, and also identify gaps, challenges and areas for improvement;
- evaluating the impact of trauma-informed approaches for people affected by trauma, including people accessing services and the workforce; and
- developing accountability for and leadership prioritisation of this work.

Lessons learned from implementation support in Lothian over the past two years identify similar needs for progressing this work. In their recent activity report for 2021-23, the Lothian Transforming Psychological Trauma Implementation Coordinators (TPTICs) highlight that, “While there is considerable interest and enthusiasm for trauma-informed practice service delivery, there is no consistent tool or guidance regarding how this should be implemented and measured. Having national implementation standards and quality indicators which guide services about what is required and also provide a method of measuring and reporting change would be invaluable” (p.43).

Stakeholders have also highlighted that, while there are a number of high-quality resources and tools available, such as the [NTTP lens tool and service walkthrough](#), [TICPOT](#) and the [Trauma-Informed Practice: A Toolkit for Scotland](#), it can be challenging and time-consuming to navigate and pull together the parts that are relevant to their service/organisation/local systems and processes to support with implementation, improvement and tracking progress.

This paper sets out a proposal for developing a framework to support the next phase of implementation across Scotland and to respond to stakeholders' asks outlined above.

Aims and audience of the proposed framework

The ambition is for everyone in the Scottish workforce to receive training and support to understand the key role they have to play and the skills they need, to respond to the needs of people affected by trauma, no matter their role. It is equally important that all staff are able to work within systems, policies and environments that are designed and developed with an understanding of trauma and its impact at their heart.

Local multi-agency partnerships and local systems, services and organisations, across all sectors and policy areas, are key partners in delivering the ambition to develop a trauma-informed and responsive Scotland. The proposed framework would need to be relevant and adaptable for broad use across local systems and policy areas. We also know that individual services and organisations, locally and nationally, may also look to use the proposed framework to support implementation, improvement and evaluation, so it is important that the proposed framework is easily adaptable for those services/ organisations to use.

It is important to note that the specific services, policies and processes that are in place locally will vary depending on the needs, resources and priorities of local communities. It is also expected that they will be shaped by, and respond to, people with lived experience of trauma in those communities. Consequently, the proposed framework will not intend to provide a prescriptive or exhaustive list that all services/organisations/local areas and multi-agency systems are expected to implement, but instead would aim to:

- Highlight the types of processes, policies, practice and activities that are most effective in creating trauma-informed services, organisations and systems;
- Highlight what good practice looks like for trauma-informed approaches in Scotland that services/organisations/local areas can work towards achieving;
- Support identifying achievements and successes and examples of good practice across Scotland;
- Identify areas for improvement for services/ organisations/ local areas and multi-agency systems and help to increase capacity and capability to develop and embed a trauma-informed approach across policy and practice;
- Continue to build a national picture across Scotland to help identify common opportunities and challenges, and where more support may be needed;
- Provide a consistent basis for tracking the progress being made to implement trauma-informed approaches at a local level;

- Support users to identify cross-policy links between trauma and other key national and local priorities; and
- Offer benefits for Elected Members, community planning partners and communities as a whole by helping them to gain a better understanding of the work that is being undertaken to develop trauma-informed policy and practice at a local level and the impact that is having. Ultimately, this will help to strengthen local democratic accountability.

The resource will offer services, organisations, local areas and multi-agency systems a number of benefits, such as a method of evidencing the contribution they are making to the Public Service Reform agenda and to Covid recovery and renewal. Additionally, it offers an opportunity to gather evidence to help Trauma Champions and local areas demonstrate the value of their work and make a persuasive case for continued investment.

Approach to development of the proposed framework

Stakeholders have highlighted the need for support with tracking progress and impact of developing and embedding trauma-informed practice and policy. Based on consultation with stakeholders and learning from implementation so far, we propose that the most effective option would be to frame the quality indicators framework as an evaluation and improvement tool in itself. The advantage of this approach is that stakeholders will be supported to track progress and impact with respect to the 'quality' rather than just 'quantity' of work taking place to support a shift towards trauma-informed services, systems and workforces.

We propose building on existing evidence-based NTTTP resources and other internationally-recognised resources for developing the quality indicators to support consistency of approach and to support services/organisations/local areas and multi-agency systems build on existing and ongoing work that uses these resources. This may include aligning the indicators with the NTTTP [key drivers/principles](#) for developing trauma-informed services, systems and workforces, including leadership, workforce wellbeing and support, workforce skills and training, engaging with people with lived experience of trauma and data and evaluation. Consideration also needs to be given to incorporating other key aspects of trauma-informed services, organisations and systems, including physical environments, policies and procedures, for example.

The proposed framework will need to link to the national logic model/theory of change for developing a trauma-informed workforce and services across Scotland, currently being developed by national partners. This would need to be refined at the first stage of the development of the proposed framework, to crystallise high-level outcomes linked to the overarching Scottish Government and COSLA ambition. This structure would support stakeholders to understand how their own work in their setting/ local area contributes to those high-level outcomes.

We propose that one option is to develop the framework in two parts. The first will provide the high-level outcomes and suggestions for what may support with tracking and evidencing the broader, long-term impact of embedding trauma-informed practice and policy, and the links to existing strategic priorities across policy areas. The second part will be linked to the high-level outcomes and provide a more detailed roadmap to support users with a) understanding in more detail what good looks like and how to assess/ measure current activity in services/ organisations/ local areas and b) the short-, medium- and long-term actions/ activities/ processes that can support this work. We anticipate using existing national and international research and good practice as a basis for the roadmap, but are clear the content needs to reflect the Scottish context, and the framework should be co-developed with experts by experience and profession in Scotland.

In response to ongoing discussions with stakeholders, it is important that the proposed framework is framed as tool that can support implementation, improvement and tracking progress and impact, rather than as a “reporting” tool. With this in mind, there are various methods to use in the tool to support users to self assess and track progress against each indicator (e.g., scaling of 1-5 for each indicator or a ladder scale that demonstrates levels of progress for each activity). Users would be able to indicate to what extent they believe they are working towards each indicator, and they would be encouraged to provide further detail where relevant.

Given that the proposed framework cannot capture every facet of trauma-informed ways of working across every setting, it is important that there is an opportunity for users to detail any additional trauma-informed ways of working that aren't captured within the proposed framework.

Key messages to be communicated in the proposed framework

Long-term culture change

It is vital that the proposed framework supports the message that developing and embedding trauma-informed ways of working is long-term culture change and that there are short-, medium- and long-term actions to support this work, in particular to avoid overwhelming colleagues with the scale of this ambition. As such, services/organisations/local areas and multi-agency systems will likely be able to demonstrate strengths for some areas of work and opportunities for improvement with others, and stakeholders can use the findings to communicate successes and areas for improvement with senior leaders, the workforce, stakeholders, and people with lived experience of trauma in local communities.

Not a tick-box exercise

It is important to emphasise that using the proposed framework would not serve as achieving a kitemark or accreditation; being trauma-informed means working within a cycle of continuous improvement, and the guidance would recommend that users look to assess themselves against the framework on a regular basis, and use the framework to support ongoing self-assessment, implementation and improvement planning, and evaluation.

Cross-policy links

Stakeholders have also highlighted the need to identify cross-policy links between trauma and other key national and local priorities, in particular links between the proposed framework and other frameworks and quality standards that local areas work to (e.g., the MAT standards, Community Justice Outcomes, Performance and Improvement Framework, Equally Safe, progress on The Promise, the Mental Health standards currently in development, etc). The proposed framework could provide information to support stakeholders to strengthen their understanding of the links between the trauma-informed practice quality indicators framework and other existing frameworks and quality standards and how trauma-informed approaches strengthen and support the work and intended outcomes prioritised in other existing frameworks.

Staff wellbeing

Long-term organisational and culture change can often be overwhelming. Doing so while responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, and in longer term recovery and renewal, can be

extremely challenging, particularly given the workforce's ongoing experiences of trauma, vicarious trauma, chronic stress and burnout due to the pandemic. It is vital that the proposed framework does not become an added burden but, rather, is designed in a way that supports users to highlight and evidence why a focus on staff wellbeing is a core component of a trauma-informed organisation. It is vital that the framework is developed and framed as a supportive tool for services/organisations/local areas.

Experts by experience and profession

The proposed framework will only be successful in supporting sustainable and meaningful change if expertise from lived experience and professionals (acknowledging that people often have both) is at the heart of their development and use. We propose seeking endorsement/co-ownership of the proposed framework from organisations representing people with lived experience of trauma, and ensuring there is representation on the advisory group from both experts by experience and profession.

Tracking progress and impact

It is important to remember that the proposed framework should not be considered as league tables that can be used to compare different organisations'/areas' performance. There are likely to be considerable variations between the services, systems and processes that are in place in different areas across Scotland, as these will respond to local needs, geography and differing priorities. Consequently, direct comparisons between one area and another is often neither helpful nor possible, as account should be taken of local circumstance and context. Instead, the proposed framework should primarily be seen as a tool for users and the strategic bodies to whom they report to track their own progress in implementing the ambition.

Endorsement/co-owners

We propose seeking the following endorsers/co-owners of the proposed framework:

The Scottish Government

COSLA

It is the Scottish Government and COSLA's ambition to have a trauma-informed and responsive workforce and services across Scotland.

NHS Education for Scotland/ National Trauma Training Programme

NHS Education for Scotland lead on the development of training resources.

Improvement Service

The Improvement Service is the national improvement organisation for local government in Scotland, and provides support for local authorities and key partners to develop capacity and capability in embedding trauma-informed approaches, including coordinating support for the Trauma Champions Network.

The Trauma Champions Network

The Trauma Champions Network brings together nominated champions from across local authorities, health boards, Health and Social Care Partnerships and other key community planning partners.

Organisations representing people with lived experience of trauma

Other key national partners where relevant

Suggested stages of development of the proposed framework

It is anticipated that the proposed framework and accompanying guidance will be developed in stages, in partnership with relevant stakeholders to ensure a joined-up approach and buy-in from intended users of the framework. There is significant momentum for the development of this work, given the creation of the Trauma Champions Network and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on heightening the risk and intensity of traumatic experiences in our communities and through our work, which has raised awareness of the need for a trauma-informed approach across systems and services. However, the asks from this project need to be balanced with the impact of the pandemic on workforce capacity and wellbeing, given that many colleagues remain operating in very challenging circumstances.

This outline proposal sets out recommended development stages for a framework that will support services, organisations and local areas and multi-agency systems with self-assessments, planning and improvement processes, and evaluation. The framework will also allow progress across Scotland to be tracked to build a national picture of progress, challenges and good practice.

Stage one: Consultation on the development of the proposed framework (Nov 2021 – Jan 2022)

This stage includes several key steps, including:

- Consulting widely on the proposal;
- Identifying co-owners of the framework;
- Developing an advisory group consisting of identified co-owners, as well as representatives of key stakeholders, including TPTICs, Trauma Champions and people with lived experience of trauma; and
- Initial steps to refine the framework focus and logic model/theory of change.

Stage two: Developing the proposed framework and guidance (Jan – May 2022)

The second stage of this proposal sets out the design process of the framework and guidance.

Clarifying audience and users

It will be essential to establish who the framework is aimed at and who will assume ownership of implementation and management, locally and nationally. Multi-agency partnerships and local systems, services and organisations, across all sectors and policy areas, are key partners in delivering the ambition to develop a trauma-informed and responsive Scotland. There is no established multi-agency partnership focusing explicitly on developing and embedding trauma-informed approaches in each local authority area that can automatically take ownership of the framework. A number of local areas are beginning to develop strategic multi-agency steering groups for driving forward this work, comprising Trauma Champions and colleagues across local authorities, health boards and health and social care partnerships and other key partners, and developing the relevant governance structures. However, while this approach is recommended for supporting implementation, this is not yet standard and it is not anticipated that there will be a statutory requirement for this to be in place.

While we will amend based on feedback on the proposal and throughout the process, we recommend that this proposed framework is framed as a tool that can encourage local areas to take a joined-up, multi-agency approach to developing this work, similar to how other thematic planning partnerships track progress and impact through other quality standards/frameworks. With this in mind, there will need to be clarity as to how services, organisations and local multi-agency systems can most effectively use the framework to support improvement activity, and track and document their progress.

We also know that individual services and organisations, locally and nationally, may also look to use the proposed framework as a tool for self-assessment, planning, improvement and evaluation, so it is important that the proposed framework is easily adaptable for those services/organisations to use.

Tracking progress

One of the key areas for discussion with stakeholders will be around tracking progress and impact. National partners will want to use collected data to help build a national picture of progress across Scotland, as well as identify any common themes/gaps/challenges and good practice emerging, and to identify what further support may be needed to aid sustainable implementation. We anticipate that local partners will use the proposed framework to support implementation, improvement and evaluation, as a lever to strengthen scrutiny and accountability at a local level, and as a tool designed to provoke reflection as well as change across services, systems and workforces. The proposed framework will not be statutory and there will be no statutory reporting or data collection. With that in mind, there will need to be an agreed process for the collation of local information that is compiled as local areas use the framework to track progress and impact (process, frequency, use) and how it will be used

by national partners, including the Scottish Government, to allow for a national overview of progress in the implementation of trauma-informed policy and practice.

Evidencing longer-term impact

A key function of the proposed framework will be to support services/organisations/local areas and multi-agency systems to track progress on implementing trauma-informed practice and policy and, most importantly, the impact of trauma-informed services, systems and workforces on people affected by trauma in their communities. We anticipate this will involve drawing on a range of sources, including input gained from people with lived experience of trauma through the development of robust and meaningful feedback loops developed as part of a trauma-informed organisation. This may also involve making use of data already collected locally from across a range of sources (e.g., for existing reporting frameworks, etc). We will need to undertake a scoping exercise to determine what data indicators across the range of policy areas may support local areas to understand and evidence the longer-term impact of trauma-informed practice and policy (e.g., for housing, emerging evidence from housing services that have embedded a trauma-informed approach shows that trauma-informed practice and policy can support people accessing housing support with increased length of sustained tenancy).

We do not anticipate that the proposed framework will include an exhaustive list of data sources that will help evidence impact, but will highlight a select number of data sources across a variety of key policy areas that users may find useful for evaluating impact. It is important to highlight that the framework will not require users to collect or “report” on this data; it will simply highlight some data sources that users may find useful to support tracking broader progress and impact of trauma-informed policy and practice.

There are a number of steps within the development stage, including:

- Reviewing existing national and international trauma-informed practice and policy frameworks and tools to gain learning about key themes, approaches, what works and good practice;
- Reviewing existing reporting frameworks/ quality standards local authorities and community planning partners are already working to, to help strengthen understanding of how trauma-informed practice and policy supports existing priorities;
- Reviewing existing data collected locally and nationally that can support evidencing the longer-term, broader impact of trauma-informed practice and policy;
- Developing the framework; and
- Developing accompanying guidance and tool for documenting progress and impact.

Stage three: testing the proposed framework (June – August 2022)

- Testing with a small set of local areas to enable continued refinement; and
- Gathering feedback on draft framework from stakeholders.

Stage four: publication of the proposed framework (Autumn 2022)

- Final version submitted to the National Steering Group for Trauma Training for agreement
- Launch activity
- Ongoing offer of support from the Improvement Service and Transforming Psychological Trauma Implementation Coordinators (TPTICs) to support local areas with sustainable implementation
- Key message that there will be opportunities to further refine the framework in the future to respond to learning and feedback.

Consultation questions

This survey contains a small number of questions about the proposed framework. Your answers will help us develop the framework to ensure it meets the needs of users and is a supportive resource. We welcome responses from across all policy areas, sectors and geographies in Scotland, and from colleagues working operationally and strategically. We also welcome individual responses and responses on behalf of a service/ organisation/ partnership/ network. We also anticipate that there will be future opportunities to feed in at different development stages of the framework.

The survey can be accessed here: www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/HKSAZJ/. The survey will close on Friday, 14th January 2022.

The survey questions are also listed below. If you prefer to email your responses directly, please send them to the email address below.

General response to proposed framework

- Do you support the proposal in principal for a quality indicators framework for trauma-informed practice? (Yes/No/Don't Know)
- Would this proposed framework support your service/organisation/local area with developing, implementing and embedding trauma-informed practice and policy? (Yes/No Don't Know)

Using existing tools/resources

- Have you used any existing tools/quality standards/frameworks related to developing trauma-informed practice and policy before?
- If so, which ones? What did you find helpful about them? Did you experience any challenges in using them?

Benefits and challenges of the proposed framework

- What do you think are some of the benefits of using this proposed framework to support the implementation of trauma-informed practice and policy in services/ organisations/ local areas and multi-agency systems?
- What do you think are some of the challenges of using this proposed framework to support the implementation of trauma-informed practice and policy in services/ organisations/local areas and multi-agency systems?

Structure of the proposed framework

We have outlined a suggested structure for the proposed framework in this consultation document. This includes providing the high-level outcomes and suggestions of available data that may support with tracking and evidencing the broader, long-term impact of trauma-informed practice and policy, and the links to existing strategic priorities.. The second part will be linked to the high-level outcomes and provide a more detailed roadmap to support users with a) understanding in more detail what “good” looks like and how to assess/ measure current activity in services/organisations/local areas and multi-agency systems and b) the short-, medium- and long-term actions/activities/processes that can support this work.

We have also suggested building on the key drivers/ principles for developing trauma-informed organisations to help develop the proposed framework. These drivers/principles have been developed by the NTTP based on existing literature and good practice (they include workforce skills and knowledge, workforce wellbeing, data and evaluation, lived experience and leadership). Consideration also needs to be given to incorporating other key aspects of trauma-informed services, organisations and systems, including physical environments, policies and procedure, for example. We recognise that these will need to be refined, adapted, and added to during the development of the framework.

- What do you think about the suggested structure of the framework?
- What do you think about the suggestion for the framework to build on the key drivers/ principles of trauma-informed organisations identified by the NTTP?

Support with using the proposed framework

We anticipate that users will engage with the proposed framework to support implementation, improvement and evaluation, as a lever to strengthen scrutiny and accountability at a service/ organisational and systems level, and as a tool designed to provoke reflection as well as change across services, systems and workforces. National partners will want to use information gathered to help build a national picture of progress across Scotland, as well as identify any common themes/gaps/challenges and good practice emerging, and to identify what further support may be needed to aid sustainable implementation across local areas and multi-agency systems. The framework will not be statutory and there will be no statutory reporting or data collection. With that in mind, there will need to be an agreed process for the collation of local information that is compiled as services/ organisations and local areas and multi-agency systems use the framework to track progress and impact (process, frequency, use) and how it will be used by national partners, including the Scottish Government, to build a national picture of progress in the implementation of trauma-informed policy and practice.

- Are there any other specific guidance/tools/resources you anticipate may be required to use the framework effectively in your service/organisation/local area and multi-agency systems?

- What do you think an effective process might look like to help services/organisations/ multi-agency systems track and document progress and impact at a local level?
- What do you think an effective process might look like for collating information about local progress to build a national picture?

Other Comments

We propose seeking the following endorsers/co-owners:

- The Scottish Government
 - COSLA
 - NHS Education for Scotland/ National Trauma Training Programme
 - Improvement Service
 - The Trauma Champions Network
 - Organisations representing people with lived experience of trauma
 - Other key national partners where relevant
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- Do you think there should be any other co-owners of the proposed framework, other than those listed above?
 - Is there anything else we should consider when developing this framework?

For more information, please contact: trauma@improvementservice.org.uk



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