

Driving Up Quality

Self Assessment Report 2014



fulfilling potential

Introduction

CMG held its first self assessment day on the 20th May 2014 looking at how the organisation is performing in relation to the Driving Up Quality Code. Eighty eight people attended the day including service users, family members, staff and commissioners. The day started with several entertaining drama sketches presented by The Brelade Players, a CMG group of service users and staff from Brighton, who had composed sketches to reflect best practice in relation to the different areas of the code. This was a great start to the day.

After that, four workshops took place looking at the first four areas of the code. Everyone who attended the day went to each of the workshops which were designed to be creative and accessible so that everyone could participate fully. Later in this report, you will see a description of each of the different methods used in the workshops.

At the end of the workshop sessions, attendees were asked to give anonymous feedback about the fifth area of the code, which asks about how well the organisation is led and run. Everyone was encouraged to write their thoughts on a feedback form which was handed in as attendees left. We thought this was the best way to gain honest feedback. Service users were supported by staff to do this.

The day was chaired by Roy Taylor, Independent Chair of CMG's Safeguarding Board. At the end of the day, there was also a question and answer session with Peter Kinsey, CMG's Chief Executive.

We also asked people to complete feedback forms about how they found the day. We were delighted that almost everybody really enjoyed it, thought it was well organised and a useful forum for discussion.

We filmed the day and have put together a video showing the highlights. If you would like to see this, you can either go on the CMG website or the Driving Up Quality Alliance website.

www.cmg.co.uk www.drivingupquality.org

“Well done on actually running this type of event. It demonstrates a willingness to engage on difficult issues.” Staff member

“Very positive. I learnt different aspects of the company. There is room for improvements but I feel meeting like this will give the company information on all sides. I really appreciate the invite today.”
Relative of CMG service user.

1. Support focused on the person



Method

A mindapple tree was used to support the facilitation of these sessions. During the session, there was a discussion focusing on five key questions. Following the discussion, people were asked to write on apples examples and their thoughts on what CMG is doing well, using a green pen, and what CMG could do better using a red pen. These were then hung on the tree. At the end of the day the apples were evaluated to pick out key themes.



Questions that were considered were:

-  What has CMG done to make people's lives better?
-  How are people supported in CMG to make choices with flexibility and control over their lives?
-  What has changed as a result of what people CMG support and/or their families have said?
-  How are people and their families involved in training for staff?
-  What could CMG do better, to ensure support is focused on the person?

What we do well?

Throughout the four sessions, people shared many examples of how CMG provides individualised support that is focused on needs, wishes and aspirations. Person-centred plans were discussed and generally it was agreed that, not only are they creative and meaningful, but also have a strong emphasis on dreams and goals. One service user wrote "I realised a dream of mine by going on a UK tour with my band. Staff have supported me to do this and I hope that one day I can do this again." Another added "I have been at rock bottom until I'm in CMG, I act for [a drama group], work as a volunteer and have contact with my daughter." The support plans and PCP's are developed in partnership with service users, families and advocates. The PCP's also help to match service users and staff with like-minded goals, hobbies and interests.

Training and staff development is well regarded which ensures staff are knowledgeable; one person stated that "CMG staff give good support" and another highlighted that "training was aimed with service users individual needs."

People concluded that CMG is good at "maintaining contact with friends outside the home – including advocates," and "advocacy included and well informed." CMG is good at organising wider group activities that not only "support friendships" and encourage socialising but also offer opportunities to try new activities and new experiences.

People felt that CMG is good at supporting service users into employment and helping them move towards more independence. A service user wrote "CMG have helped me to find 2 new jobs," and another has enjoyed his "work experiences." One service user spoke about his work in helping people with a learning disability (outside of CMG) to apply for appropriate benefits.

Even better if?

When discussing support plans and person-centred plans, people said that "mental capacity assessments need to be incorporated," and "restrictive practices need to be clearer for each individual that has them." All service user plans should be person-centred and not just the PCP's; some people felt this was restricted because of the organisation's expectations with regard to paperwork.

Although there were great comments about staff training and development, a few people did point out that service user and family involvement in training was insufficient. One service user said "I would like more opportunity to take part in training." A staff member wrote that CMG needs to offer "more training for service users." There were also suggestions that staff would benefit from more bespoke training. Staff would like "more awareness of each service user's diagnosis."

Another theme that was apparent throughout the four sessions was how people choose their staff. There was a real sense that service users are not actively involved enough in this process. People said service users needed to "participate in staff interviews for their service."

Some people thought that CMG "need to do more for people to be active within their community" and people need access to "more leisure activities that are outside the organisation," which highlighted some regional variations with community participation across the organisation.



2. An ordinary and meaningful life

Method

During the session we wanted to explore what makes the lives of the people that we support meaningful and worthwhile as well as how support staff have helped them to achieve a life that they want.

In addition to a small group discussion, we encouraged individuals to create a short video. An iPod Touch was used to capture the video; a video editing program was also used, which allowed different backgrounds to be superimposed during filming using a green screen.

A number of props were used, either as a visual prompt for discussions about day to day activities or as props for the filming (including: hats, sunglasses, wigs).



There was much discussion in the 4 groups. In addition, 12 individuals also created videos and spoke of their experiences of being supported to live an ordinary and meaningful life.



What we do well?

People attending this workshop thought that CMG was good at encouraging service users to be healthy and also at supporting people to do different activities of their choice, like cooking and going to pottery classes. They also thought that CMG was good at celebrating people's achievements and helping them keep in contact with family and friends.

There was positive feedback about the support CMG provides to service users to help them get a job and to do voluntary work. There was also comments about service users being supported to get involved in the community, for example one person mentioned about the support they received to get involved in a café project.

Even better if?

A number of areas were identified where people felt there was room for improvement. This included encouraging and supporting service users to go out in the evenings and enjoy more of a nightlife. In some areas, for example East Sussex, it was suggested that service users could be supported to become more involved in activities in the community.

There was feedback from some family members that communication to relatives by staff could be improved and there was also feedback that service users would like to be more involved in recruiting and choosing the staff who support them.



3. Being happy and quality of life

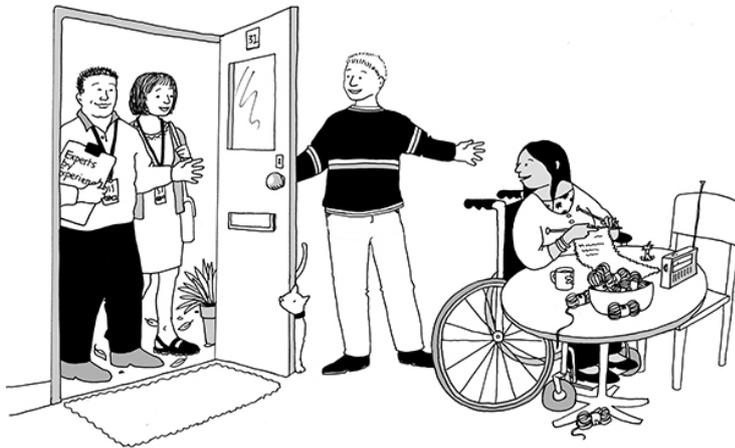
Method

Six statements around quality of life acted as guides for the groups, although they were also free to choose their own. They were:

- Do I help to choose who works in my house or flat?
- Do people come to see me often?
- Do I have enough support to do the things that are important to me?
- Do the staff who support me know how to tell that I am happy?
- Do I have enough help to make friends?
- If I am unhappy, do staff help me? How?

Using a Talking Mat (www.talkingmats.com) we sorted comments from each group into positive or negative. Groups were encouraged to comment using index cards which were then velcro'd onto the talking mat.

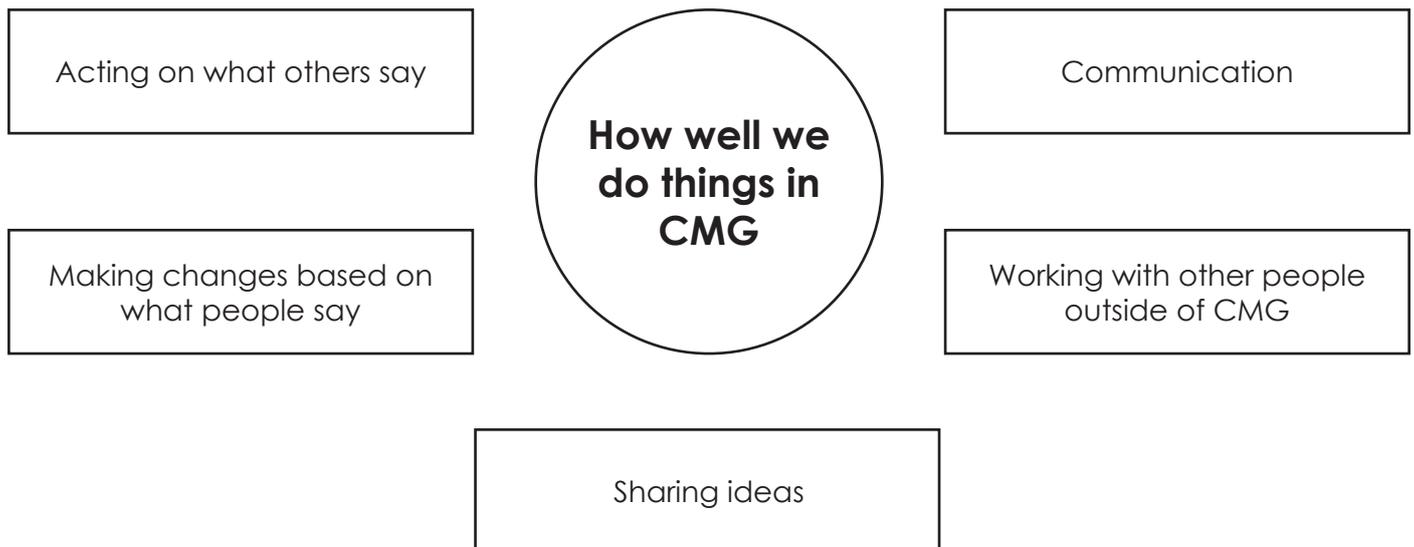
After the event, the comments of the four groups were then sorted, taking the majority of the words from the positive comments cards. The same process was used for things we could do better. Themes were arrived at visually by using Word clouds or Wordle's (www.wordle.net), where more common words are presented as larger text.



4. A good culture is important to the organisation

Method

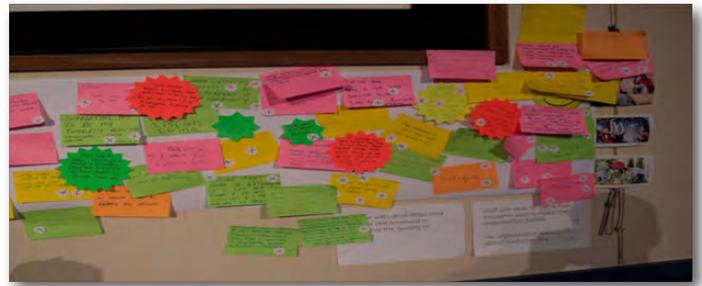
To look at the culture of the organisation and get feedback on what CMG does well and what CMG could do better we first discussed what culture means using the phrases below as prompts.



We then discussed what a good and bad culture might look like with pictures and phrases to illustrate it on a scale from bad to good.



We asked the group to use post it notes to write down what they thought the good things are about CMG's culture and things that CMG could improve. They shared their thoughts in smaller groups and then stuck their post it notes on the scale from bad to good. They were also given some small stickers to stick on other people's post it notes that they agreed with or liked.



What do we do well?

A number of themes were identified by the groups:

Service users felt that they were listened to both, when they had problems and about their goals. "Staff are kind to me. They listen to me and they help me when I need help".

People felt confident that they could express their views at CMG and staff commented on there being an open and transparent culture where things could be discussed and reflected upon. Comments were also made that CMG listened to people outside the organisation who had ideas.

Staff felt that the training and development within CMG is good, this ranged from the induction programme, opportunities to develop through projects, promotions and the use of champions.

"CMG training is the best" and "CMG has good foundation for development and growth"

Staff and service users felt that communication was good at CMG. This included between staff and tenants, advocates, teams, Regional Directors and managers. "Communication between services and staff is absolutely fabulous". Staff felt that feedback on safeguarding and quality was cascaded well within the organisation.

Service users felt that they had the support to be able to do the activities that they wanted to do. This included going to church, cooking, creating a recipe book, dancing, basketball and being independent in the community.

It was felt that CMG addressed issues when they arose and had a "can do attitude". "When CMG hears an issue needs improving they do act to improve it." Staff commented positively on the monitoring and checking of quality and it was felt that where there were concerns they were addressed by appropriately skilled staff.

Even better if?

The key themes that were identified are:

Communication in a number of areas could be improved. Some families wanted to see an improvement in the number of relative meetings and for expectations to be made clearer when someone moves into a service. There was also some feedback that communication between senior management and support workers needed improving.

A number of comments highlighted that improvements need to be made in communication between services and Central Office. This included feeling that decisions were made by senior managers alone. One person said "I think that we could do more to hear the voices of service users. Decisions are often made by senior management (which is)top down".

Several service users wanted to see more activities taking place outside of their home. They wanted to see more socialising and house to house activities. One service user said she wanted more support in getting a job.

A number of people felt that there should be more structured mentoring support for all new managers and that their skills should be further developed through mentoring and coaching.



5. Managers and board members lead and run the organisation well

Method

Roy Taylor who chaired the day explained the relevance and meaning of this part of the code and he asked attendees to write down their comments honestly and, in the case of service users who needed help with this, for staff to support them to record their comments. People were then encouraged to leave their feedback forms which were collected at the end of the day.

What we do well?

Most people felt that the organisation was led and run well. Comments included “generally well run”, “very good leadership” and that the senior management team were “visible and approachable” and “open and transparent”. Several people commented specifically about CMG’s Chief Executive, Peter Kinsey, and described his “openness and visibility” and his “involvement in the wellbeing of tenants”.

There were also several comments about improvements in CMG, for example “cascading values and professionalism down the management chain and leading a more polished, slick organisation”. There were also several comments about the Human Resources and Learning and Development teams which were described as “fantastic and very helpful”.

Even better if?

There was feedback that senior managers could do more to engage with and listen to staff members. One staff member summed this up by saying “we need to listen to those that support service users, not give moments to workers but time to enable them to open up and express how they really feel about their work. The organisation does wonders for its service users, it just needs to do more for its staff”.

Whilst CMG has an active Service User Parliament, it was commented that the organisation needs to do more to engage with a wider group of service users, as well as doing more to involve them in companywide activities.

Action we are going to take

We have considered all of the feedback which we received on the day very carefully. We have decided to prioritise seven actions that we think both address the most important issues raised and the themes where there was the most feedback from attendees. Those actions are:

- We are going to involve both service users and family members more in delivering training to our staff.
- We are going to make sure that service users are involved more consistently in recruiting and choosing their staff.
- We are going to invite service users and staff to join us in a group to look at how we can increase involvement in community activities, particularly helping people have a good social life, including in the evenings.
- We are going to review the way our system of staff representatives works so that we can improve the involvement of our staff in decision making. We are also going to launch our team meeting toolkit which aims to help make staff meetings more interactive so that staff feel more involved in decisions that are made at a local level.
- We are going to hold an annual conference for family members, both to improve communication and also to provide families with information around best practice and developments in the sector. We will involve family members in planning the conference.
- We will talk to our service user MP's about how we can get more service users across CMG involved in decisions about how the organisation is run. In particular, we will review with them the format of our annual service user conference which is attended by a large number of people.
- We will encourage everyone who works in our Central Office to do at least one shift a year working in services to better understand the work that our staff do. We will also encourage staff to spend time with Central Office teams, for example when they go there for training courses, so that they can better understand what Central Office staff do.

Feedback

We would really like to hear your feedback on this report. If you have any comments to make, our Chief Executive, Peter Kinsey, would be keen to hear them.

Please contact him on: peter.kinsey@cmg.co.uk

