



Trauma Informed Quality and Improvement

A guide for services

A trauma informed approach to quality and improvement

At Future Pathways, we aim to take a trauma informed approach to every aspect of our work. Our impact evaluation shows that in doing so, we support people to gain a sense of purpose, freedom and independence; and we help make trauma informed support more accessible to people registered with us.

Taking a trauma informed approach means we work in a way that is directed by an understanding of how trauma can affect a person, their world view and relationships.

The key principles of trauma informed practice are:

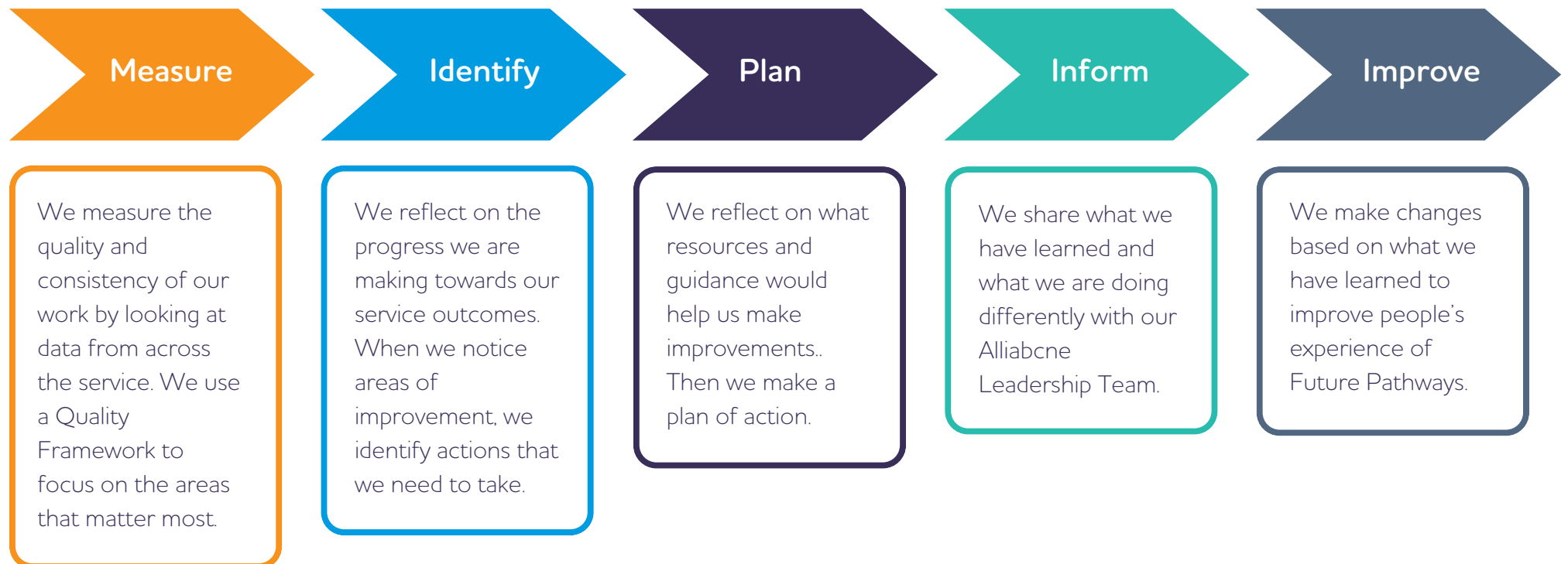
- Cultural consideration
- Safety
- Trustworthiness
- Collaboration
- Choice
- Empowerment

In this resource, you can read more about how we embed these principles in our approach to quality and improvement at Future Pathways. You can also see some prompts to facilitate reflection about how this could be applied in different settings.

The context of our work

The context of our service affects our approach to quality and improvement. Future Pathways is fully funded by the Scottish Government and our quality and improvement work is coordinated and overseen by a Quality and Improvement Manager. In addition, Future Pathways is not a social care provider, and as such, we are not regulated by the Care Inspectorate, although our approach is informed by this standard.

This means that we have been able to develop a bespoke approach to quality measurement. We use a Quality Framework to measure how we are doing and what we could improve. This graphic shows how our Quality Framework works.



Cultural consideration

We bear in mind the specific impacts of experiencing abuse in Scottish care settings in our quality and improvement work.

Our Quality Framework is informed by:

- Future Pathways' performance framework. This framework outlines our strategic objectives and performance indicators according to our contract with Scottish Government.
- Our impact evaluation
- The purpose and values of the In Care Survivors Alliance
- the principles of trauma informed practice

We collaborated with staff members from across the service and with our Alliance partners when we created our Quality Framework. This allowed us to pool our expertise and make sure we are measuring what matters most. This helped us create a bespoke Quality Framework which measures what matters most for a service supporting people with lived experience of in care abuse and neglect. For example, the indicators in our Quality Framework look at the extent to which our support is equitable, which we know is very important to the people we support.

Reflection:

What matters most for your service and how is this measured?

Safety

We are curious about what works well about our work and how we can improve.

We value learning and growth, and we know it is important for team members to have safe spaces to access support and reflect on what they are learning and how they and the service are evolving.

One of the ways team members do this is by contributing to our Quality Framework. Through reflective Quality Framework discussions with staff members, we identify our strengths and areas of improvement. This helps us track our progress towards our service outcomes and describe, with confidence, the impact we make.

By creating safe spaces where team members can reflect and contribute to our development, we are able to continuously improve the quality of our work. Team members reflect that this enhances their professional development and contributes to them feeling valued and heard. And, by being curious about what works about our support and what doesn't, we can continue to make a positive difference in the lives of people we support.

Reflection:

What are you curious to learn more about at your service?

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Trustworthiness

Our quality findings are informed by evidence, analysis and reflection. This helps us focus our attention on the areas we know we need to improve.

We are proactive about making sure our approach to quality and improvement is trustworthy. Our Quality & Improvement Manager is responsible for coordinating the Quality Framework. This role is about objectively measuring the quality of our work and making recommendations for how we should change.

We draw together evidence from across the service and we reflect on it as a team to learn more about the quality of our work and how we should improve. For example, we analyse samples of data from across the service which helps us measure how consistent our practice is.

We carry out the same process each quarter so we can compare our findings throughout the year. This helps us to clearly see where we have improved and where we need to focus our attention throughout the year.

The Quality and Improvement Manager and Impact and Evaluation Lead work together to assess our progress towards our service outcomes and how confident we are in our data. We developed tailored evidence standards to help measure this. We use these standards twice a year. This enables us to reflect on and celebrate the progress we have made and identify where we should focus our efforts next. It also gives us confidence in the trustworthiness of our findings because we have taken account of what might impact these. You can see a simplified version of our evidence standards on the next page

Reflection:

What would high confidence in your data look like in practice?

Evidence standards

GREAT PROGRESS/ HIGH CONFIDENCE

Progress

We have evidence that...

- This steppingstone is true most of the time.
- We are effectively mitigating the risks associated with this steppingstone.
- Our assumptions about this steppingstone are accurate.

SOME PROGRESS/ CONFIDENCE

- This steppingstone is true some of the time, but not always or often.
- We may have taken steps to address the risks associated, but the measures have only been partly successful.
- Some of our assumptions about this steppingstone are accurate.

LITTLE PROGRESS/ CONFIDENCE

- This steppingstone is not true most of the time.
- We do not know if the risks we identified are happening or not.
- Our assumptions about this steppingstone are not accurate.

Progress

We have evidence that...

- more than one data source to evidence this steppingstone.
- data sources that are varied and balanced.
- data about most of the population we are looking at.
- only one data source with little or no corroboration from other sources.
- data sources which are all of one type.
- data about some but not most of the population we are looking at.
- no or very little data about this steppingstone.
- data sources which are unlikely to capture the full picture.
- data about a small group of the population we are looking at.

Collaboration

Each of our roles contributes to our collective responsibility to deliver a high-quality service in different ways.

Team members from across Future Pathways contribute to our Quality Framework in various ways.

Support Coordinators, who deliver support, and Practice Learning Managers, who support teams of Support Coordinators, facilitate reflective discussions about our Quality Framework each quarter. This is supported by the Quality and Improvement Manager.

Team members with responsibilities for different aspects of the service analyse different data sets. For example, Practice Learning Managers look at data about people's journey through the service. And the Partner Relationships Lead, who coordinates our work with Delivery Partners, looks at data related to our commissioning of Delivery Partner services.

Drawing together data in a collaborative way helps us consider what the results are telling us about the quality of our work and agree improvement actions that will work for everyone involved.

Reflection:

What are the different ways that people could contribute to quality and improvement work in your service?

Choice

We make shared decisions about how we will approach improvement work. We ensure that people accessing our service and staff from across the service have a voice in decision-making about improvement.

When we identify areas of improvement, we take the time to hear different perspectives and consider different choices before putting our learning into practice. Often, we do this by creating working groups made up of different stakeholders, so we can hear different views. These working groups provide opportunities to share expertise, learning and ideas. This means people can help us explore different choices for what improvement should look like at Future Pathways.

For example, over the last three years, we have been working on improving our data system, Carista, in partnership with Rockpool Solutions. We put together a working group of team members in different roles from across the service. They work together to choose solutions that will work for everyone.

We also regularly work closely with the Voices for a Better Future, our lived experience voice group, to hear their perspectives on how we should improve. Last year we worked with members of the group, representatives from Alliance partners, Future Pathways team members and some Delivery Partners to develop a new policy for resolving complaints.

We also facilitated a co-design process with members of the Voices for a Better Future Group, exploring what peer support should look like at Future Pathways. Here we invited people with lived experience to help us come up with and explore different options for what peer support could look like.

Reflection:

How can people accessing your service contribute to decision making about improvements?

Empowerment

We are committed to continually developing as we learn more.

Since we launched our Quality Framework in 2018, we have reviewed it several times to make sure it responds to the service's growth and what we have learned. You can see the journey of our quality and improvement work in the timeline on the next page.

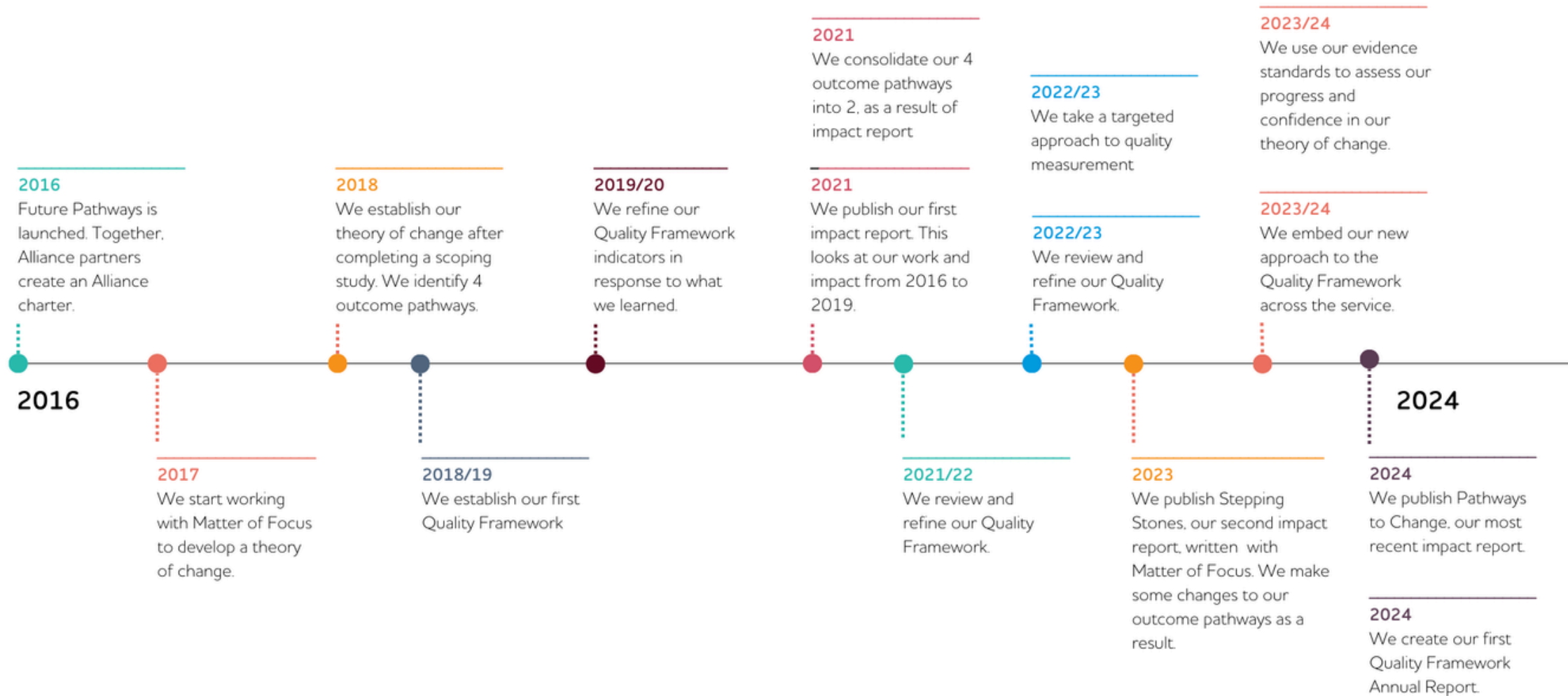
Our Quality Framework has helped us learn about our work and it has demonstrated how our continuous cycle of improvement helps make our approach more consistent and more effective for people accessing our support. This has given us confidence to refine the Quality Framework over time so that we are only measuring what is most important. Each time we review the Quality Framework, we focus more closely on the priorities of the service and where we want to improve or learn more.

Our Quality Framework also empowers us to celebrate our progress towards our service outcomes. In 2024, we created our first Quality Framework Annual Report which outlined where we have improved, our strengths, where we are most consistent and where we are continuing to improve.

Reflection:

What does the evidence say about what your service does well and how could this be celebrated?

Timeline of improvement



Further resources

Quality Framework Annual Report

This summary version gives a holistic picture of how we are working within our quality framework, highlighting how we drive improvement and maintain quality.

[Read more here.](#)

Trauma-Informed Practice: a short guide

How you make your work trauma-informed will depend on you and the kind of work you do. In this short guide, we highlight how we can all work in a trauma-informed way. It is based on what people tell us is important to them. [Discover more.](#)

In Care Survivors Alliance

The In Care Survivors Alliance delivers two services – Future Pathways and Redress Support Service. Find out more about Alliance service, our Partners, timeline and values. www.incarealliance.scot

Pathways to Change

Weaving together insights, reflections and key figures, Pathways to Change takes an in-depth look at the work of Future Pathways from April 2023 to March 2024. The report gives us greater insight into how we make a real difference, and where there is scope for improvement. [Read Pathways to Change here.](#)

Co-designing peer support

In 2023, Future Pathways undertook a project to look at how we might develop peer support. We took a collaborative approach, working alongside people with lived experience who have accessed support from Future Pathways, as well as partners with expertise in co-design and peer support. Created in collaboration with Voices for a Better Future, Iriss and Scottish Recovery Network, this report looks at co-designing peer support at Future Pathways. [Find out more.](#)



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