

**480: BUILDING BRIDGES WITH PEOPLE WHO USE SERVICES – INSPECTING THE QUALITY OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS**

**Authors:**

Whoriskey M., Blakeley A.

**Objective:**

This paper examines the challenges and opportunities of involving people with disabilities, older people, and those with mental illness, in the development and monitoring of standards in Scotland.

**Methods:**

The Scottish Health Advisory Service (SHAS) is an independent organisation, funded by the Scottish Executive, which inspects, reports and advises on health services for people with learning and physical disabilities, older people and people with mental illness throughout Scotland. SHAS produces public reports on local services and monitors progress towards meeting the recommendations.

SHAS has developed Quality Indicators based on research evidence and good practice, which services are monitored against. The development of the Quality Indicators has involved consultation with people who use services as well as professionals. Service user versions of the Quality Indicators have been developed to enable service users and their carers to report on their experiences of services. Particular attention has been given to addressing the communication needs of people and the development of accessible information.

**Results:**

Information on progress in meeting the Quality Indicators is available across a range of health services in Scotland. At this stage this is descriptive data and has not been subject to statistical analysis. Feedback is reported from people who use the services and the results have informed the refinement of the Service User Questionnaires.

**Conclusions:**

The challenge of involving people who use services directly in the development of standards and the inspection of services is key to the quality improvement agenda. People who are vulnerable because of disability, communication needs, mental ill health or physical frailty are not empowered or supported to express their views or contribute to quality improvement. There is an urgent requirement for organisations involved in this area to build bridges with services users, and put them at the centre to ensure effective quality improvement programmes.