[2.14.1] Quality

Please provide a detailed description of how you will ensure the quality of service delivery through your management practices.

Your response should:

- Provide a detailed explanation of how you will monitor and manage the quality of provision to ensure that the standards set within the specification and your tender will be met from the start and throughout the life of the contract. Your response should include but not be limited to: the quality of staff, frequency and appropriateness of participant engagement and the quality of the action plan and the relevance of its content to participants' needs
- Clearly describe how you will manage and ensure the quality of delivery by any subcontractors e.g. site visits, audits and observing delivery
- Identify how you will continuously improve the quality of delivery of this provision and share best practice throughout your supply chain
- Explain how you will obtain feedback from participants and proactively act upon this including details of procedures and timings
- Describe how you will handle complaints and act on any findings including details of procedures, timescales, escalation routes, how participants will be made aware of these procedures and how you will ensure the impartiality of any decision makers

Insert your response in the pre-set, shaded space on the following pages. Your response MUST be limited to 3 sides of A4.

PLEASE NOTE THE SCORE ATTAINED IN THIS SECTION MAY ALSO BE USED IN A TIE-BREAK SITUATION WHERE APPROPRIATE.

We will manage the delivery quality via our internal quality standard, Customer First (CF). CF incorporates external standards e.g. ISO 9001, Matrix, and Ofsted.

Quality Monitoring and Management: Delivering Quality from the Start of Delivery: Following contract award, our Performance Manager (PM), Partnership Manager (PartM) and England Country Manager (CM) will implement CF management practices including: confirming staff requirements, setting Personal Mentor (PersM) and partner KPIs, and implementing processes with support from our Business Analysis Team (BAT). All staff (incl. partner staff) will receive training and monthly reviews in implementation to ensure we deliver quality from the start of delivery.

Ensuring Quality over the entire contract: Our PM will use CF to monitor and manage quality, including reviewing performance against KPIs.

Quality of Staff: Staff are recruited based on their qualifications, competence, attitude and skills e.g. PersM will be min. Level 3 IAG, and REDACTED years' experience; Health Advisors (HA) will have experience providing professional health support and assessments (e.g. bio-psychosocial assessments) and be qualified with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) or equivalent e.g. BABCB or BACP. Staff will be given access to professional development opportunities e.g. accredited training for PersM ; access to peer support and best practice sharing from internal and external health professionals for HAs. The PM and PartM will monitor PersM quality by monitoring performance against KPIs and reviewing participant feedback. This will inform monthly individual performance meetings where they set individual targets for improvement. We will track participant demographic data to ensure we have the necessary skilled staff to deliver the required support.

Frequency and Appropriateness of Participant Engagement: PersM will upload all customer interaction to CRM. Our Financial, Claimants and Compliance (FCC) team supported by a Local Administrator (LA) will monitor CRM data to produce monthly performance reports (MPR) seen by our PM, PartM and CM. Reports will contain data on the frequency and appropriateness of participant engagement (e.g. interventions addressing participant needs). The PM and PartM will monitor progression of all participants and address issues in monthly performance reviews with PersM. If necessary, they will scrutinise participant engagement via formal observations and ECs will be subject to a performance improvement plan (PIP).

Quality of Action Planning: PersM will upload copies of APs, including reviewed APs to CRM. PM and PartM will review APs in monthly individual performance meetings with PersM and at monthly caseload reviews checking to ensure APs are signed by the PersM/participant, that all evidence is captured and recorded and that there is consistency across APs.

Relevance to Participant Needs: PersM will upload copies of the Initial Assessment (IA) conclusions, all APs and evidence of completed interventions to CRM. PersM will review APs against IA results and participant progression monthly, checking the relevance of the support and interventions provided to the participant against the barriers, needs and aspirations recorded, and anticipated pace of progress. The PM and PartM will review interventions provided on a monthly basis, informed by participant feedback. Participant support is informed by our REDACTED to assessment, designed with REDACTED which identifies evidence-based interventions for each barrier.

Self-Assessment: We will complete a full self-assessment using the DWP Self-Assessment Tool within REDACTED months of contract start which incorporates our subcontractors; thereafter annually. This will be informed by data from our reporting activity including contract performance figures and feedback from participants,

partners, employers, and project staff.

Compliance: Our centrally based FCC Team will ensure compliance by: checking participant files for evidence; providing advice to operational staff; reviewing contract compliance checking processes; and conducting compliance sample checks across all contracts to ensure alignment to compliance processes. Marketing material will be monitored by our Marketing Manager and checked with DWP before use to ensure compliance with ESF marketing requirements. All subcontractors will be required to use ESF logos and display ESF 2014-20 posters in their premises.

Subcontractor management: We were accredited 'Excellent' in our most recent Merlin assessment (2016) with our quality management process praised by sub-contractors who said that it supported them to deliver well. We will require all subcontractors to adhere to CF. WL will ensure quality from our partners by:

1) Procuring high quality partners, by selecting organisations based on their specialism, track record e.g. minimum Ofsted grade 2, past performance data, financial position, and external accreditations e.g. Matrix, Investors in People;
2) Our experienced PartM will work with subcontractors to develop KPIs covering quality and compliance e.g. regularity of PersM/Participant contact;
3) All subcontractor staff will receive the same training as WL employees and access to the same development opportunities. Our Apr 16 Merlin assessment (Excellent score) observed that '*Working Links will coach [partner] delivery staff on a one-to-one basis for a set period of time in an effort to improve the knowledge and skills, which has impact on performance levels*';
4) Our FCC team will audit and monitor on partner performance/evidencing and report in Weekly Performance Summaries and MPRs;
5) The PartM will manage subcontractors against agreed KPIs by conducting quarterly site visits to monitor contract compliance e.g. ESF 2014-2020 posters are visible and ESF logos are appropriately used; and to observe staff delivery, ensuring support is appropriate and of the sufficient quality.

This activity will inform: 1) Weekly performance reviews between the PartM and individual partners, including compliance and audit checks on provision, e.g. Action Plans (AP) and outcome evidence; 2) Monthly quality meetings held between the PartM and subcontractor delivery managers to review performance, assess quality against service requirements, share best practice and address issues.

Continuous Improvement: Our continuous improvement process, outlined in CF, will be initiated on contract award where BAT, PM and PartM will develop and implement contract specific processes. The BAT, PM and PartM will review, measure and improve processes 6-monthly to ensure they continue to drive quality e.g. giving stakeholders a range of routes through which to provide feedback.

Once delivery has started, our continuous improvement process will include:

- Identifying improvement opportunities via quarterly staff observations, biannual self-assessment, external inspection (e.g. ***REDACTED***), participant engagement (e.g. listening groups, participant feedback/complaints), and performance vs KPIs;
- Problem definition, investigation and analysis into root causes of issues, informed by our monitoring and reporting activity, conducted by our PM, to develop solutions which improve and increase quality;
- Quality Improvement Plans (QIP) to implement quality increasing solutions, which contain specific, relevant and measureable actions set to timescales, with clear responsibility for completing the action and for reviewing its completion.

We will provide WL and subcontractor staff with the same induction and training opportunities throughout the contract, supporting their development to improve the

quality of the service. Staff will be invested in the success of the service through individual KPIs, reviewed by their line managers at monthly performance reviews. The PM and PartM will have recourse to continuous professional development mechanisms and disciplinary steps to ensure quality is maintained.

Sharing Best Practice: Where our continuous improvement and reporting processes identify quality, we will share this across the whole supply chain via:

- PM and PartM providing good practice advice, informed by MPRs at monthly performance meetings;
- Inviting high performing staff to provide 'what works' advice at these meetings, at individual staff meetings and by mentoring other staff.

Participant Feedback and Complaints: PersM will inform participants of the feedback and complaints procedures during induction.

Gathering Feedback: Participants will be invited to provide feedback at the beginning, during and end of provision. Feedback will be gathered anonymously via: online surveys, monthly participant listening groups, dedicated feedback phone line and email address, and participant feedback boxes at all delivery locations. We will provide employers and other stakeholders with the opportunity to provide feedback after their interaction with the service. The PM will upload feedback to CRM within 24 hours of receipt. Our LA will include feedback in the MPRs used to manage the service, ensuring participants views inform the service's development.

Complaints process: We have a four stage customer complaints process which complies with recommendations in the DWP Providers Complaint Resolution Core Briefing Pack. ***Stage 1:*** Where a participant raises complaint, our PM will undertake an initial discussion, plan a resolution and provide all parties with a formal written response within 10 working days. All complaints/resolutions are recorded on CRM. ***Stage 2:*** If necessary, the complaint will be escalated to our CM who will conduct an investigation and review previous resolutions. The CM will provide a written response within 10 working days detailing actions to resolve the complaint. ***Stage 3:*** If the participant is not satisfied, we will provide them with the address and/or email of WL's Chief Executive Officer (CEO). They will receive a written response containing a proposed resolution within 15 working days following a further review of the complaint. ***Stage 4:*** If required, we will provide the participant with details on complaining to the Independent Case Examiner's Service. Our process ensures impartiality in our handling of complaints by providing recourse to individual staff's superiors and senior management, up to WL's CEO.

Acting upon findings: All feedback and complaints are recorded on CRM and are fed into our monitoring and reporting activity, which is used to inform the management of the service. Where feedback or complaints data highlights the need to review, improve, or change service delivery this will be communicated to the relevant parties as part of monthly contract reviews between WL PM and subcontractors. Feedback and complaints data will support our CF self-assessment process. The findings will be used by our Regional Quality Managers, Customer Standards Manager and Head of Customer Service to identify gaps in capability/capacity and areas for improvement which will prompt quality improvement activity. Service improvement actions include:

- Recruiting additional subcontractors to increase service capabilities and capacity, improving ease of access and variety of services available;
- Implementing staff training to increase staff knowledge and skills e.g. customer service training; and
- Improving the range of specialist spot-purchase provision available based on customer need and demand.