

Our QPM Assessment in December 2015

Below are the comments made by our Quality Performance Mark Assessor. Our assessor spent a day with all staff, trustees and service users and was able to tell us in his report that:

- 'CASBA delivers high quality advocacy to people who use its advocacy services.'
- 'CASBA are fiercely independent and achieve very good outcomes for people by having a strong values base that ensures people's voices are heard and that their rights are upheld.'
- 'The values base and commitment to purpose are strong, genuine and person centred. This resonates through all levels of the organisation'.
- 'CASBA have strong and robust support mechanisms in place which support their advocates to be incredibly resilient when supporting people through challenging and emotionally difficult situations.'
- 'CASBA has clear policies and procedures for staff, trustees and people who access its services. This includes a Conflict of Interest policy to ensure that its independence is not compromised.'
- 'CASBA have a robust governance structure in place that includes regular reporting to the board of trustees as well as to their charitable funding organisations including Big Lottery and the Henry Smith Charity.'
- 'CASBA has both a safeguarding adults and a safeguarding children policy in place which the advocates are well aware of. Safeguarding issues are explained to everyone who accesses the service. As one person said: 'I know they'll breach confidentiality if there's a risk to self or others'. The three advocates confirmed that they had all had safeguarding training within the last year.'
- 'CASBA, at all levels has a values base that means that the people who use services are absolutely at the center of everything they do.'



- ‘During the site visit I was able to casually witness interactions between advocates and people who use the service. All the interactions were warm and professional with both verbal and body language being appropriately adjusted to support communication.’
- ‘The Executive Manager is a very experienced and highly principled manager within the charity sector. His charismatic style and deep understanding of CASBA’s legacy enables him to ensure that the team are working to a consistently high standard.’



Our assessor also gave us 3 areas for improvement

- Equality Data is captured at the start of the advocacy relationship but there is little evidence of how this is used afterwards. For example, the advocate may record that somebody is a Christian but, in challenging times, there may not be a note that the advocate has used this as a way of the person getting additional support - such as by reminding the person that they could talk to their Pastor.

To date: We have recently introduced community volunteers, enabling us to extend service users ‘Circle of support’ which would include local community leaders and supporters.



- There is a modestly sized South Asian community within CASBA’s catchment area. This group are not referred to CASBA as often as expected, which in part is due to the location of an alternative service. CASBA are mindful of this and would hope to recruit an advocate from the South Asian community in the future.

To date: As our projects expand and develop, so our client base extends. We have also started to receive interest from volunteers from recently arrived communities, who wish to support our work. Due to our clients own vulnerabilities we are presently working to resolve difficulties that we can face, when they are asked to work with someone from a different background to themselves.

- While CASBA can demonstrate the involvement of people that use its service through gathering and acting on feedback and inclusion on project reviews, there is not a person with a learning disability from South Birmingham within the Trustee group. I would ask that CASBA reflect on this and work to ensure that there is involvement of people who use services at all levels of the organisation.

To date: In 2016 our Service User and Volunteer Development Group started. This group are now taking an active role in developing their involvement within CASBA. We aim to have a Trustee from this group on our Executive Committee by September 2018.



We are committed to working on these areas of improvement and very much look forward to our reassessment for the QPM in 2018