**Standards Management Regional Meetings: Quality Assuring RARPA**

The regional standards management meeting is a key part of the external quality assurance process. Each regional standards management coordinator should hold a minimum of one regional standards management meeting per year for their region. Meetings may be organised and run quite differently across the regions; for example, some regions may choose to work in pairs and hold a single meeting for providers across two neighbouring regions if this suits the providers involved. However they are set up, all meetings should be designed to meet the purposes and to achieve the outcomes described below.

**Purpose:**

* to help establish a shared understanding within a region(s) of the RARPA standards and criteria
* to support the consistent application of the standards in internal reviews and external checks across a region(s)
* to address issues or discrepancies that have arisen during the external check visit and report-writing process
* to support continued quality improvement in relation to RARPA and its quality assurance within in a region.

**Place of the regional standards management meeting in the quality assurance cycle**

The regional standards management meeting should take place annually, usually after the majority of external checks have taken place and reports have been submitted. This is likely to be towards the end of the summer term.

**Who should attend?**

All sector leaders in the region(s) who have undertaken, or are due to undertake, an external check of another provider’s RARPA provision and quality assurance arrangements should be invited to attend. The organising body may choose to invite further people if they think this would be useful.

**Suggested preparatory tasks:**

**Sector leaders (providers):**

* completion of external check visits and submission of reports
* logging of issues/discrepancies arising during external check visits and writing of reports (these might include disagreements about or difficulty in interpretation of criteria, validity or sufficiency of evidence, issues do to with organising or carrying out external reviews or quality of reports)
* gathering of any material requested by regional standards management coordinator.

**Regional standards management coordinators:**

* analysis of external check reports
* collation of issues arising, eg inconsistent interpretation of criteria, inconsistent interpretation of what constitutes adequate evidence
* collation of examples of good practice from external check reports, eg in external check report-writing, application of RARPA processes, quality assurance of RARPA
* contact with sector leaders to request they bring specific materials to support activity at the meeting (eg evidence relating to a specific criterion or standard where issues have arisen).

**Suggested activity at meeting:**

* group reflection on process of completing external check visits/reports
* show-casing of good practice
* discussion of issues arising from regional standards management coordinator analysis of external check reports (eg areas of discrepancy, aspects with which providers appear to be struggling)
* focused exploration of specific criteria or standards, using sample materials collected by regional standards management coordinator and/or materials brought by sector leaders
* suggestions to regional standards management coordinator of items that might be usefully discussed at cross-regional RARPA standards management meeting (attended by regional standards management coordinators)
* identification of support needs in relation to RARPA, and ways to address these within the region, including through peer support and any led by the regional standards management coordinating body
* agreement of arrangements for next round of external check by peer review within the region(s), including ways to accommodate new sector leaders, where appropriate.

**Desirable outcomes from meeting**

* Resolution of any conflicts between reviewing and reviewed providers
* Clarification of any aspects of the RARPA criteria or standards that had been incorrectly or inconsistently interpreted
* Sector leaders in possession of ideas for improving practice in applying the RARPA process, quality assuring RARPA, conducting and/or preparing for an external check and/or writing up external check reports
* Suggestions for improvements to the regional arrangements for external checks by peer review
* Agreement on issues to be raised at the cross-region standards management meeting
* A plan for meeting RARPA-related support needs in the region
* A plan for the next cycle of external checks by peer review, including creation of new peer review triads where necessary