

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN IMPLEMENTING A TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

### **Governance and Leadership**

- How does facility leadership communicate its support and guidance for implementing a trauma-informed approach?
- How do the facility's mission statement and/or written policies and procedures include a commitment to providing trauma-informed services and supports?
- How do leadership and governance structures demonstrate support for the voice and participation of people using their services who have trauma histories?

### **Policy**

- How do the facility's written policies and procedures include a focus on trauma and issues of safety and confidentiality?
- How do the facility's written policies and procedures recognize the pervasiveness of trauma in the lives of people using services, and express a commitment to reducing re-traumatization and promoting well-being and recovery?
- How do the facility's staffing policies demonstrate a commitment to staff training on providing services and supports that are culturally relevant and trauma-informed as part of staff orientation and in-service training?
- How do human resources policies attend to the impact of working with people who have experienced trauma?
- What policies and procedures are in place for including trauma survivors/people receiving services and peer supports in meaningful and significant roles in facility planning, governance, policy-making, services, and evaluation?

### **Physical Environment**

- How does the physical environment promote a sense of safety, calming, and de-escalation for clients and staff?
- In what ways do staff members recognize and address aspects of the physical environment that may be re-traumatizing, and work with people on developing strategies to deal with this?
- How has the facility provided space that both staff and people receiving services can use to practice self-care?
- How has the facility developed mechanisms to address gender-related physical and emotional safety concerns (e.g., gender-specific spaces and activities).

### **Engagement and Involvement**

- How do people with lived experience have the opportunity to provide feedback to the organization on quality improvement processes for better engagement and services?
- How do staff members keep people fully informed of rules, procedures, activities, and schedules, while being mindful that people who are frightened or overwhelmed may have a difficulty processing information?
- How is transparency and trust among staff and clients promoted?
- What strategies are used to reduce the sense of power differentials among staff and clients?
- How do staff members help people to identify strategies that contribute to feeling comforted and empowered?

### **Cross Sector Collaboration**

- Is there a system of communication in place with other partner agencies working with the individual receiving services for making trauma-informed decisions?
- Are collaborative partners trauma-informed?
- How does the organization identify community providers and referral agencies that have experience delivering evidence-based trauma services?
- What mechanisms are in place to promote cross-sector training on trauma and trauma-informed approaches?

### **Screening, Assessment, Treatment Services**

- Is an individual's own definition of emotional safety included in treatment plans?
- Is timely trauma-informed screening and assessment available and accessible to individuals receiving services?
- Does the organization have the capacity to provide trauma-specific treatment or refer to appropriate trauma-specific services?
- How are peer supports integrated into the service delivery approach?
- How does the facility address gender-based needs in the context of trauma screening, assessment, and treatment? For instance, are gender-specific trauma services and supports available for both men and women?
- Do staff members talk with people about the range of trauma reactions and work to minimize feelings of fear or shame and to increase self-understanding?
- How are these trauma-specific practices incorporated into the organization's ongoing operations?

### **Training and Workforce Development**

- How does the facility address the emotional stress that can arise when working with individuals who have had traumatic experiences?
- How does the facility support training and workforce development for staff to understand and increase their trauma knowledge and interventions?
- How does the organization ensure that all staff (direct care, supervisors, front desk and reception, support staff, housekeeping and maintenance) receive basic training on trauma, its impact, and strategies for trauma-informed approaches across the facility and across personnel functions?
- What types of training and resources are provided to staff and supervisors on incorporating trauma-informed practice and supervision in their work?
- How does workforce development/staff training address the ways identity, culture, community, and oppression can affect a person's experience of trauma, access to supports and resources, and opportunities for safety?
- How does on-going workforce development/staff training provide staff supports in developing the knowledge and skills to work sensitively and effectively with trauma survivors.
- What workforce development strategies are in place to assist staff in working with peer supports and recognizing the value of peer support as integral to the organization's workforce?

### **Progress Monitoring and Quality Assurance**

- Is there a system in place that monitors the facility's progress in being trauma-informed?
- Does the facility solicit feedback from both staff and individuals receiving services?
- What strategies and processes does the facility use to evaluate whether staff members feel safe and valued at the facility?
- How does the facility incorporate attention to culture and trauma in facility operations and quality improvement processes?
- What mechanisms are in place for information collected to be incorporated into the facility's quality assurance processes and how well do those mechanisms address creating accessible, culturally relevant, trauma-informed services and supports?

### **Financing**

- How does the facility's budget include funding support for ongoing training on trauma and trauma-informed approaches for leadership and staff development?
- What funding exists for cross-sector training on trauma and trauma-informed approaches?
- What funding exists for peer specialists?
- How does the budget support provision of a safe physical environment?

### **Evaluation**

- How does the facility conduct a trauma-informed organizational assessment or have measures or indicators that show their level of trauma-informed approach?
- How does the perspective of people who have experienced trauma inform the facility performance beyond consumer satisfaction survey?
- What processes are in place to solicit feedback from people who use services and ensure anonymity and confidentiality?
- What measures or indicators are used to assess the organizational progress in becoming trauma-informed?