

Overview

This standard is about operating within advice networks. It is aimed at people who provide advice and guidance to clients who use services such as public services, education and training, health services and those provided by community social welfare advice providers and others.

The standard looks at maintaining memberships within networks and what to consider when exchanging information with others within networks.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. comply with all relevant legal, professional and organisational policies, procedures and guidelines in relation to operating within networks
2. identify networks that could be used to the benefit of services and clients
3. confirm that networks meet your own and services' quality standards
4. develop and maintain personal contacts within networks to maximise effective co-operation
5. take action to address any concerns identified with networks
6. identify appropriate people who you can exchange information with, in line with information sharing protocols and data protection requirements
7. check that information exchanged is accurate and suitable for the purpose for which it is required
8. confirm that people are clearly briefed on the exchange of information in line with information sharing protocols and data protection requirements
9. agree realistic timescales for exchanging information
10. provide constructive feedback on the contribution of networks to the work of services
11. record information that has been exchanged in line with information sharing protocols and data protection requirements

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. legislation, codes of practice, organisational policies, procedures and guidelines in relation to operating within networks.
2. the importance of complying with relevant legal, professional and organisational policies, procedures and guidelines
3. different methods of communication and how to adapt them to suit the needs, preferences, and accessibility requirements of others, ensuring inclusive practices.
4. what types of network exist, have been used before and the organisational criteria for participating in networks
5. how to confirm that informed consent for information sharing has been given by clients where applicable
6. how to obtain information on requirements of network participants
7. how to check your contributions to networks are constructive and effective
8. how much time should be devoted to networks and how to ensure time is used well
9. how to be constructive when communicating with others
10. levels of involvement when operating within networks
11. conflicts of interest that could occur and what to do if they do occur
12. how to reciprocate support, information and resources with others
13. problems that could occur and actions to take to address them
14. why it is important to address problems and implications of not addressing them
15. who can provide information within networks and what information is required
16. what information is used for and how to assess the accuracy of information
17. who should know about exchanges of information and the organisational timescales for doing this
18. how feedback can improve the use of networks
19. organisational and legal recording requirements, including how to store recorded information securely
20. workplace requirements on equity, equality, diversity and inclusion.
21. trauma informed principles and safeguarding requirements

Operate within networks

Developed by	Skills for Justice
Version Number	3
Date Approved	11 Feb 2026
Indicative Review Date	11 Feb 2031
Validity	Current
Status	Original
Originating Organisation	Skills for Justice
Original URN	LSIAG18
Relevant Occupations	Education and Training, Health, Public Services and Care, Housing Advisors, Public Service Professionals
Suite	Advice and Guidance
Keywords	communicate; network
