

Carr-Gomm national stakeholder survey 2009

Summary findings, September 2009

National charity Carr-Gomm values feedback about its services from its stakeholders—the organisations and individuals with which it works. This feedback tells us if we are on the right track and what we need to improve. In today's financial climate, it is vital to understand what people require from Carr-Gomm so we can target resources and services to where they are needed most.

This year, Carr-Gomm commissioned an independent agency, Cordis Bright, to carry out its largest ever stakeholder survey. This research took place during April and May 2009.

The survey's aim was to find out from a wide range of organisations their views about:

- Carr-Gomm's values, strengths and weaknesses
- How Carr-Gomm compares with other organisations
- What commissioners are looking for from organisations providing services
- Future opportunities and challenges in support and social care

These views were gathered through an anonymous online survey and follow up telephone interviews.

Key points

Carr-Gomm's strengths:

- **74% of all respondents to the online survey judged our services to be good or very good**
- Participants were impressed by the quality of front-line staff; our leadership and policies and procedures
- Carr-Gomm is seen as highly values-driven and offering value for money
- Carr-Gomm is recognised for its expertise in client involvement which some organisations would like to see promoted widely - almost 80% said we were committed to this principle
- 82% were aware that our main client group is people with mental health needs and that we also work with other groups.

Areas for improvement:

- Lack of local presence and issues with infrastructure were the main concern
- Partnership working needs to be more consistent across the organisation
- Delivery of services was seen by some as 'traditional' rather than innovative; others felt that move on of clients could be improved
- Overall people understand what we do, but struggle to understand the detail of our work

Future care and support services:

- Personalisation is the big issue for providers
- 68% saw local presence and reputation as essential for securing services in the future
- 68% felt user-led organisations would have a strong chance of success
- Both specialist (high need) and generalist (low need) services will be needed

"When I think of Carr-Gomm, I think of quality services." Provider organisation

"I saw people thrive because the front-line staff are so focused on service user needs." Commissioner, East of England

"They're one of the few providers that have processes in place to articulate and evidence outcomes. That's why service users like to choose them." Commissioner, North East

Survey responses

Cordis Bright contacted over 1000 people to ask them to participate in this research.

243 people took part in the anonymous online survey (24% response rate). 44 follow up telephone interviews took place. Of those who replied to the online survey:

- 93% knew of our work
- 45% were commissioners
- 25% were providers
- 8% were regulators or referrers
- 5% were housing partners
- 7% were policy advisors / representatives
- 10% included ex-staff, consultants, press

Thank you to everyone who took part—we are delighted by the response and by its findings.

Progress since our last survey

There have been improvements since our last national stakeholder survey in 2004:

- Over 60% felt that diversity is an area which we are now tackling effectively
- Our leadership is above average
- Previous issues about costs have been laid to rest. Carr-Gomm now represents good value for money
- We continue to be seen as leading the way in involving clients/service users
- Our staff / services remain high quality

Next steps

The stakeholder survey is part of the process to develop a new corporate plan for the organisation which will set the direction of the organisation for the next five years. We are now reviewing its findings and recommendations with our staff, clients, managers and Board. This valuable feedback will help us to improve the services we provide and to target resources more effectively.

Recommendations and conclusions

The survey shows that Carr-Gomm is a respected and valued organisation with many strengths to build upon, including its staff and its leadership.

There were a number of recommendations arising from the results, which are discussed below.

With such a widespread reputation for quality and client involvement, the organisation should actively celebrate its successes in these areas. In A more targeted approach to marketing would be welcomed by stakeholders.

Partnership working is highly valued by commissioners. There are some excellent examples of this in Carr-Gomm, which the whole organisation could learn from. Demonstrating our innovation and commitment to moving clients on will help to improve views of services as traditional and reluctant to challenge clients.

Having a clear 'stand' on personalisation is seen as key for all voluntary sector organisations and Carr-Gomm should communicate its response to this agenda. Local presence and reputation are also regarded as important for securing new services now and under personalisation. Improving our profile and engagement in each community where we work will be a priority for Carr-Gomm.

For more information about Carr-Gomm or to discuss the findings of this survey, please contact: marketing@carr-gomm.org.uk or tel: 020 73975300; or visit: www.carr-gomm.org.uk

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