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Trauma and ACE (TrACE) Informed Organisations Toolkit

Supporting organisations to embed ACE Awareness
and trauma-informed Practice

Embedding TrACE Informed Practice Self-Assessment Tool

September 2021 (Version: 1b)

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About this self-assessment tool

Welcome to the ACE Support Hub's self-assessment tool for Trauma and ACE Informed Organisations: Embedding ACE Awareness and ACE Informed Practice.

The purpose of the Tool is to help you reflect and understand the progress your organisation is making from both an individual and wider partnership perspective in embedding trauma and ACE informed practice. The Tool should assist in identifying strengths and successes, whilst also highlighting opportunities for improvement. The development of this tool was been influenced by the ACE Support Hub's sector-specific work and a scoping exercise of related material.

A **Guidance document** is available to explain the purpose of the self-assessment as part of a process in more detail; we advise that you read the guidance *before* completing the questionnaire.

Everyone has a role to play in Wales becoming an ACE-informed, trauma-informed, nation. Our aim for the Toolkit supports this vision, which will be achieved through preventing, tackling and mitigating the impact of ACEs. Within this vision is the reduction of the incidence of ACEs, trauma and re-traumatisation, increased focus on the facilitation of healing from past trauma, supporting the use of trauma-informed practice, strengthening reflection on practice and self-care approaches, improving system's responses and facilitating a compassionate and responsive society that demonstrates human rights based approach.

This toolkit is a practical guide to support organisations to embed ACE Awareness and Trauma-Informed Practice. The toolkit aims to support organisations to reflect on current culture, practice and process and identify activity to implement more trauma-informed and trauma responsive approaches resulting in increased ownership for transformational change within their setting.

The guide supports the implementation of a whole organisation approach to being trauma and ACE informed and therefore has different sections that may be relevant to different people/teams within the organisation. It provides practical information to support the various stages of becoming ACE-informed, from senior leaders identifying ACEs as a strategic priority through to the provision of skills and knowledge to staff.

Increasingly the policy context in Wales is highlighting the need for a more professions and organisations to be ACE-informed and to consider their role in preventing, mitigating and tackling ACEs, to ensure an integrated and innovative approach to health and wellbeing generally and support prevention and early intervention. It is imperative that organisations and staff are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to consider their impact on future generations living in Wales. As part of the implementation of ACE-informed approaches, organisations may consider relevant national and local policies that are specific to certain areas of their work. This will help to strengthen the case for being ACE-informed and to see where it fits best within the context of local area and the population it serves.

This document has been designed to be downloaded to your computer. The document will need to be opened in Adobe Acrobat or Adobe Acrobat Reader which can be downloaded for free from <https://get.adobe.com/uk/reader/>

Once saved to your computer you will be able to input your information into the '**Evidence of things we do**' column. The '**Where things might be done differently**' column should be used to identify things that could be done differently and further reflected on to inform an improvement action plan. You can then save the file and return to it later.

Please note without Acrobat, you will be able to view the document but you will not be able to add your own information or save the file.

Further support can be found by visiting www.aceawarewales.com or by contacting the Hub directly ace@wales.nhs.uk

Self-assessment of trauma and ACE informed practice across implementation domains / areas

A1 Governance, Leadership and Organisational Culture

A1 Governance, Leadership and Organisation Culture: this domain relates to the overall support for and investment in implementing and sustaining a trauma-informed approach.		
Criteria to consider	Evidence of things we do	Where things might be done differently
Engagement and involvement	Directors, leaders and managers understand ACEs, trauma and adversity, the potential impact of ACEs, trauma and adversity, the complexity around healing and recovery and the principles of trauma-informed practice.	
	There is an organisational statement of commitment to growth and change towards being (more) ACE-informed, trauma-informed communicated and understood across the organisation.	
	There is an identified point of responsibility within the organisation to lead and oversee this approach.	
	Leadership allows for resourcing of implementing ACE-informed, trauma-informed practice.	
	There is inclusion of staff at all levels within the organisation in informing and driving the implementation of trauma-informed approaches and practice.	
	Leadership is collaboration and there is engagement and involvement of those who experience the organisation, programme or service, as staff or customers/service users/clients/etc to inform planning.	
Useful resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation Readiness Checklist • ACE Change Champion Description 		

A2 Policies and Procedures

A2 Policies and Procedures: this domain relates to how organisational policies and procedures demonstrate commitment to, and enable internal systems to, reflect the foundational values and principles of trauma-informed practice.

Criteria to consider		Evidence of things we do	Where things might be done differently
Engagement and involvement	A policy outlines the organisation's commitment to being (more) ACE-informed, trauma-informed.		
	The organisation's policies and procedures recognise that trauma histories are a possibility for everyone and consider the impact of, signs and symptoms of trauma.		
	The organisation's policies and procedures consider the risk of re-traumatisation and promote opportunities for wellbeing, healing and recovery through a focus on the principles of trauma-informed practice (safety, choice, collaboration, empowerment and trust (relationships and trustworthiness). Ensuring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical and emotional safety is prioritised • Trustworthiness is maximised through task clarity, consistency and interpersonal boundaries • Activities and settings maximise people's experience of choice and control • Activities and settings maximise collaboration • Activities and settings prioritise empowerment and skill-building • There is consideration to the balance between infrastructure / process and relationships. 		
	The organisation's workforce policies demonstrate a commitment to staff training on ACE awareness and trauma-informed practice at orientation / induction and relevant ongoing training and support.		
	There is evaluation and review of policies and procedures conducted regularly as part of the review and planning process to implement change where relevant.		
	There is engagement and involvement of those who experience the organisation in the development and review of policies and procedures.		

A3 Workforce Training and Support

A3 Workforce Training and Support: this domain relates to ensuring knowledge and skills within the workforce, enabling trauma-informed principals to be embedded in an ongoing supportive, learning cycle that recognises the importance of the wellbeing and safety of the workforce.

Criteria to consider		Evidence of things we do	Where things might be done differently
Engagement and involvement	ACE Awareness, trauma-informed practice knowledge and skills requirements are endorsed at recruitment (e.g. job descriptions and selection processes) and corporate induction / on-boarding.		
	There is a training strategy to ensure appropriate training and workforce development for staff to understand ACEs, trauma and adversity, the potential impact of ACEs, trauma and adversity, the complexity around healing and recovery and the principles of trauma-informed practice.		
	Advanced development opportunities (as required) involves action planning to ensure knowledge and skills are embedded, learning transfer and follow-up support.		
	There is a culture of safety and continuous learning where staff feel safe to express feelings, make mistakes and reflect on their own and others thoughts, emotions and behaviour.		
	Supervision and support is provided for staff to include impact on own wellbeing, self-care and safety.		
	The organisation addresses the emotional stress that can arise as a result of working practices.		
	Reflective practice is endorsed to include the impact on own wellbeing, self-care and safety.		
	There is access to communities of practice, action learning sets or similar opportunities for sharing of knowledge and skills in relations to trauma-informed practice.		

Useful resources

- [ACE Skills and Knowledge Framework](#)
- [ACE Hub Training Prospectus](#)
- [Introduction to ACEs e-Learning](#)
- Reflective Practice short guide
- Peer Review short guide
- Communities of Practice – visit www.aceawarewales.com for further information

A4 Physical Environment

A4 Physical Environment: this domain relates to what the physical and social environments provide to promote safety and the provision of appropriate resources to achieve this.

Criteria to consider		Evidence of things we do	Where things might be done differently
Engagement and involvement	Physical and social environments promote a sense of physical and emotional safety for all people experiencing the setting.		
	There is consideration for aspects of the physical environment that maybe re-traumatising.		
	Spaces are provided that promote health and wellbeing and for people to use to practice self-care.		
Useful resources			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under development / visit www.aceawarewales.com for inspiration 			

A5 Service Design and Delivery

A5 Service Design and Delivery: this domain relates to ensuring trauma-informed principles are incorporated in all aspects of service delivery.

Criteria to consider		Evidence of things we do	Where things might be done differently
Engagement and involvement	Services are designed with an understanding of the prevalence and potential impact of ACEs, trauma and adversity and the complex paths to healing and recovery and in particular a consideration that anyone may have lived experience(s).		
	All aspects of the services provided are organised to recognise and acknowledge the prevalence and dynamics of ACEs, trauma and adversity.		
	Services are organised recognising that something has happened to the person rather than it being about what is wrong with the person.		
	Services are responsive to the impact of ACEs, trauma and adversity emphasising physical, psychological and emotional safety for those who have experienced ACEs, trauma and adversity.		
	Services are created to maximise opportunities for those who have experienced ACEs, trauma and adversity to rebuild a sense of safety, control and power through choice, collaboration and empowerment.		
	Services recognise the important of relationships as a means of promoting healing and recovery.		
	There is whole system consideration in terms of the interface with other services, both internal to the organisation and across partner agencies to ensure that there is a mutual understanding trauma-informed practice.		
Useful resources			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACE Informed Environments Framework for Service Delivery and Design 			

A6 Monitoring and Evaluation

A6 Monitoring and Evaluation:			
Criteria to consider		Evidence of things we do	Where things might be done differently
Engagement and involvement	Information on the experiences of people is regularly gathered and is used to inform planning.		
	Evaluation of policies and practice is regularly conducted as part of the review and planning process – used to implement change where relevant.		
	There are processes for continuous learning and improvement in place.		
	Monitoring and evaluation considers mechanisms to promote cross-sector collaboration and how trauma-informed the system is.		
Useful resources			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under development/ visit www.aceawarewales.com for inspiration 			