

**IMA**

# Case Review Guidance

November 2010

**Quick Guidance:**

*This case review form can be used for open or closed cases.*

*Use the space at the end of each point to denote:*

- *yes (y)*
- *no (n)*
- *not applicable (na) or*
- *not known (nk)*

*Use the space below each point to add comments if necessary and the open space at the end of the form for any general comments or recommendations.*

## Guidance and Commentary

Most of the criteria on the form are self explanatory but we have added some additional guidance and suggestions which you might find useful.

### 1. Administration details

- *Advisers would generally be expected to have carried out these administrative elements upon opening case. However, there may be a valid reason why this might not happen; for example a case started by telephone may not yet have authorisation, or if the adviser does not expect to take action on the client's behalf.*
- *The client is usually expected to receive some information about the service they have accessed, this might but not necessarily include quality control, details of complaints, funding, costs, casework responsibility, access information which might include opening times and contact arrangements.*

### 2. Exploration and Diagnosis

*Relevant aspects of the enquiry should be explored to establish: the background, the facts, the client's needs. Has the adviser:*

- *Explored and included details of the problem, relevant aspects of the enquiry, and the client's goals and needs?*
- *Included particular and relevant background and circumstances which may affect the advice given, this should indicate evidence of wider exploration including any health, benefits, housing, employment, family issues for example?*

### 3. Advice / Options

- *Has the adviser shown that they have considered, explored and discussed the range of the client's options, including the potential consequences, limitations and suitability of these options?*
- *Is the advice given legally correct, comprehensive and relevant? Has the adviser considered income maximisation and exploration of improving the client's circumstances?*
- *Has the adviser identified and highlighted any time limits? This might include limitation periods, deadlines for appeals or applications etc.*

### 4. Support / Action

- *Has the adviser explored the appropriate level of support required in order for the client's case to be progressed, bearing in mind the service boundaries and also the client's goals, capabilities and needs?*
- *Has information been provided to the client about next actions / steps and whose responsibility it is for taking them?*
- *Has the adviser provided the appropriate/agreed level of support and action?*

### 5. Signposting / Referral

*Is there evidence that appropriate and effective signposting or referral has taken place where necessary which would benefit the client? Has the adviser provided the appropriate information to the client about possible costs and help with costs? Or has the adviser missed a possible referral opportunity which would have benefited the client?*

## **6. Case recording**

*Has the case been recorded fully to allow another person to follow what has happened in the case?*

## **7. Casework management**

*Have systems been used to ensure that the case has been managed efficiently and effectively for example has a diary system or other prompts for reviews, follow-up work or key dates.*

*i, If the case is one off advice or has been closed following ongoing action:*

- Is it appropriate that the case is now closed? I.e. once outcomes were obtained, client ceased contact or stopped for another valid reason etc.*
- Was the case closed following notice from the adviser that it was going to happen and giving the client chance to respond.*
- Was the case progressed as far as possible prior to closure?*
- Has the outcome of the case or the status quo been reported to the client?*

*ii, If the case is still open:*

- Is it appropriate that the case is still open?*
- Is work is still active and/or outcomes forthcoming?*
- Is the adviser in contact with the client sufficiently to pick up on changes in clients needs*

## **8. Impact / outcomes for client**

*Positive*

- Was the case progressed based on agreed goals?*
- Were there other positive outcomes brought about by the advise; this might include the client being better able to manage their affairs or that they are now better informed about their rights and responsibilities*

*Negative*

*NB: Some negative outcomes cannot be avoided by virtue of the client's circumstances but this section is about any negative impact caused by missed or incorrect advice.*

- Missed issues might be that income maximisation has not been addressed, options have not been considered / discussed or an action has not been completed.*
- Where there are instances of incorrect advice or missed issues did this result in a negative impact on the client?*

## **9. Social policy**

*Advisers might find that they are encountering unfair treatment of clients, unnecessary bureaucracy or unhelpful practices or legislation. By taking Social Policy action it may be possible to avoid or reverse these practices. Social Policy activities are usually encouraged and often an intrinsic part of advice agencies; these might include setting up meetings with local departments, talking to local press or submitting Social Policy Evidence Forms.*

*For more information about submitting Social Policy Evidence forms please visit the IMA Website [Social Policy](#)*