Quality of Care Approach briefing note

Healthcare Improvement Scotland’s Quality of Care Approach is how we design our inspection and review frameworks and drive quality improvement in healthcare through external quality assurance activity. There are three components:

- the approach itself – the methodology, and the principles that underpin it, that we use for all of our quality assurance work
- the Quality Framework – outlines the quality indicators used for self-evaluation and external quality assurance, and
- our programmes of work – the inspections and reviews that we undertake to deliver on our strategic objectives.

The approach brings a consistency to our quality assurance activity by basing all of our inspections and reviews on a common Quality Framework and a set of fundamental principles.

Implementation of the approach will ensure that all our quality assurance activity:

- is risk-based and proportionate
- makes best use of the data and intelligence already available to us
- is focused on improved outcomes for people
- builds supportive improvement-focused relationships with service providers,
  and
- is seen within the context of our broader improvement support offering.

The Quality Framework is a key component of the approach. It is a tool that has been designed to support both self-evaluation and external quality assurance activity. The content of the framework was developed iteratively starting with a review of international literature and with subsequent versions being informed and shaped through national consultation, feedback from key stakeholders and the outcomes of a variety of test exercises.

The framework is broken down into a series of areas of focus called domains to help organisations to reflect, evaluate and make decisions about how best to improve outcomes for users of healthcare services. Each domain has quality indicators and related themes that support the process of self-evaluation.
The emphasis of the approach is on regular, open and honest organisational self-evaluation using the Quality Framework. We will follow-up this up with a programme of work at an organisational level where we will engage regularly with colleagues in NHS boards and larger independent healthcare providers. This professional dialogue is aimed at helping share best practice, identifying where there are challenges and providing the right support for organisations to help address them. As well as this, you will start to see ongoing inspection and review work beginning to reflect the framework domains and any new thematic review work will also be based on the Quality Framework.

A document explaining the approach is available below together with a draft edition of the Quality Framework. We plan to publish a ‘first edition’ Quality Framework in mid-September 2018 which will reflect feedback from stakeholders and outcomes from test exercises. Continued feedback and constructive dialogue with our stakeholders will be key to getting it right. The only way to do this is for services to start trying it out in practice and telling us about their experiences, what works, and what could be better. We will continue to incorporate feedback from stakeholders and we welcome any comments or feedback to help shape future iterations of the Quality Framework, tools, guidance and support package.

**What next?**

Further test organisational/thematic reviews are planned for 2018–2019 to test the quality of care review approach in different NHSScotland areas or settings, before formally rolling out the approach.
The learning from the tests will inform future iterations of the Quality Framework as well as the supporting self-evaluation tool, guidance and support package. While we do this, we will be actively engaging with organisations and individuals to talk about the approach, encourage early use of the framework and actively seek feedback.

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<tr>
<th>August 2018</th>
<th>September 2018</th>
<th>Autumn/Winter 2018-19</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NHS Orkney pilot organisational review published</td>
<td>First edition Quality Framework, self-evaluation tool and guidance published</td>
<td>Organisational and thematic reviews roll-out</td>
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<td>Further test organisational and thematic reviews</td>
<td>Continuing alignment of existing review and inspection work</td>
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