

# Special Issue Bulletin

News from inside the Scottish Government Health Directorates



Welcome to a special edition of your NHS Bulletin which will give you more information about NHSScotland's Quality Strategy

Inside this special issue:

## Putting quality at the heart of everything we do

On 8 February, the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Wellbeing formally announced our shared ambition to work together across NHSScotland, and with all of our partners, to achieve world-leading healthcare quality for everyone in Scotland. This is building on the foundations we already have and it aims to support everyone to further improve our services by being more responsive to patients needs.

The initial ambition to develop a Quality Strategy for NHSScotland was presented at the NHSScotland Event in June 2009 after which, extensive discussions took place with NHSScotland colleagues and key stakeholders which informed the development of a draft Quality Strategy document. The draft strategy was released for wider consultation on 16 October 2009.

During the consultation period, one of the key points raised was that this renewed approach to delivering quality healthcare needs to be shared, owned and delivered by staff working directly with patients and other service users. In order to achieve this, more work needs to be done during the early stages of implementation, led by the NHS Boards themselves, to fully update and prepare staff.

Consequently, during February, March and early April, all NHS Health Boards are being tasked with implementing stage one of the Quality Strategy. This involves promoting awareness of the Quality Strategy and involving staff in discussions of what this will mean for them as an individual, what it will mean for patients as well as for local services. Progress will also be made in reviewing existing measurement systems across NHSScotland and in agreeing a small number of high-level outcome measures with NHS Boards to define high quality healthcare, supported by a single framework for measurement.

Following this first stage of implementation, the final strategy will be published in April 2010 accompanied by a media launch to the public. In June, the 2010 NHSScotland Event will provide a great opportunity to promote and share best practice in improving healthcare quality with staff.

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## What is the Quality Strategy?

In December 2007, the Better Health, Better Care Action Plan made a series of commitments to improving the health of the whole Scottish population as well as improving the quality of healthcare and healthcare experience. The progress which the related programmes and initiatives have made, have already enhanced the quality of healthcare within NHSScotland. The Quality Strategy is a development of Better Health, Better Care (2007) which sets out to build on the great work which is already being done.



In summary, the Quality Strategy is about three things;

- Firstly, it is about putting people at the centre of our NHS. It will mean that the NHS will listen to patients' views, gather information about their perceptions and personal experience of care and respond to what people tell us.
- Secondly, it is about building on the values of our staff and their commitment to providing the best possible care reliably – for every person, every time.
- Thirdly, it is about making measurable improvement in the aspects of quality of care that patients and their families see as really important (see the shared definition of quality healthcare overleaf)

We want the implementation of the Quality Strategy to strengthen confidence and pride in our NHS. Confidence by the patient that the service is the best and highest quality – safe, effective and totally supportive of the individual i.e. person centred. Every time and all of the time. Confidence by staff that they are doing what they came into the NHS to do, are valued and are key in delivering the ambition to make NHS Scotland a world leader. A national pride in our NHS and a recognition that it is the very best it can be.

## Why do we need a Quality Strategy?

Quality matters. For many years we have been well aware of the challenges in delivering high quality healthcare services. Amongst these challenges include: increased public expectation around treatment; demographic change which will determine demands on our healthcare system; a population living longer and with complex and multiple long term conditions; and developments in technology and information.

These challenges all need to be considered in the current economic climate which brings with it a tightening of financial resources. The Quality Strategy has been developed to provide renewed focus and momentum on addressing these current and future challenges for our NHS.

By focusing on quality we can:

- Build on existing successes like the Scottish Patient Safety Programme;
- Give patients and staff a better experience;
- Make the right thing easier to do – for every person, every time.

## How do we define quality healthcare?

We already have an understanding of what people in Scotland think is important in terms of quality. They expect that we will:

- Show **care and compassion**
- Be clear in our **communications** and explanations
- Effectively **collaborate** as we work closely with others
- Provide **clean and safe** care environments
- Ensure there is **continuity** of care to support people
- Reliably maintain the **clinical** excellence patients have come to expect

The Quality Strategy will enable each and every one of us to do these things and more, building upon improvement initiatives such as the Scottish Patient Safety Programme which has already been implemented in many different settings over recent years, and is internationally recognised as a model for other healthcare systems to follow.

## How will we measure success?

Our approach to quality is based upon the Institute of Medicine's six dimensions of quality.

These six dimensions will also be the basis we use to measure the quality of our NHS. In order to meet patients' priorities, we need to prioritise work in three of these areas – safety, effectiveness and person-centredness.

The main aim of the Quality Strategy is to deliver the very best healthcare we can and to ensure that we are providing responsive world class care. By agreeing a set of measures that will track clinical outcomes as well as patient reported outcome and experience, we will be able to assure everyone that improvement is happening.

These quality measures will become part of NHS Boards' governance arrangements and you will be able to identify how you and your team are progressing at hospital, ward and practice level.

Progress will also be made in developing quality measures and in converging and aligning measurement systems, including HEAT, across NHSScotland.



## What can you do?

Every one of us has a personal responsibility to provide and contribute to high quality healthcare for our NHS. The Quality Strategy will mean that staff have more personal responsibility to make changes in the way they work and to have a greater sense of being valued.

During February, March and early April you will be asked to consider how you currently work and identify areas that you feel demonstrate high quality care as well as those areas which could be improved upon.

You are asked to consider the following questions and let us know what you think:

- What do you want to do differently, which would enable you to deliver a higher quality of care to patients - what is the first thing you would start with?
- What else needs to change to support you in delivering the highest quality healthcare?

It's often the little things that make a big difference to people's lives and make our own job worthwhile.

**By making these changes and working together and with the people of Scotland, we can put quality at the heart of everything we do, and together we can make our NHS the best it can possibly be.**



For more details on the Quality Strategy visit:

[www.scotland.gov.uk/NHSScotlandQuality](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/NHSScotlandQuality)