

Strategic plan 2005/2008

Foreword

Welcome to the new strategic plan for the Healthcare Commission. After our first challenging year, we are now at the start of a new era in the regulation of healthcare. We are determined to make a real difference to the delivery of healthcare and to promote continuous improvement for the benefit of patients and the public.

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Appendix 1: Our statutory duties

The Healthcare Commission was established on April 1st 2004 by the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003. Our main duties in England are to:

- assess the management, provision and quality of NHS healthcare and public health services
- review the performance of each NHS trust and award an annual performance rating
- regulate the independent healthcare sector through registration, annual inspection, monitoring complaints and enforcement³
- publish information about the state of healthcare
- consider complaints about NHS organisations that the organisations themselves have not resolved
- promote the coordination of reviews and assessments carried out by ourselves and others
- carry out investigations of serious failures in the provision of healthcare

In carrying out our duties, we are required to pay particular attention to:

- the availability of, access to, quality and effectiveness of healthcare
- the economy and efficiency of the provision of healthcare
- the availability and quality of information provided to the public about healthcare
- the need to safeguard and promote the rights and welfare of children and the effectiveness of measures taken to do so

The Healthcare Commission also has certain duties in respect to Wales, mainly relating to national reviews and our annual *State of Healthcare* report. However, local inspection and investigation of NHS bodies in Wales rests with the Healthcare Inspectorate Wales, while the Care Standards Inspectorate Wales inspects those organisations providing independent healthcare.

As a public body, the Healthcare Commission also has important positive obligations under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Human Rights Act 1998, to take active steps to promote respect for human rights and equality of opportunity and good relations between all racial groups.

The Healthcare Commission works in close partnership with the Mental Health Act Commission (MHAC), whose role is to ensure that there is adequate and effective protection of patients detained under the Mental Health Act 1983. Under the Government's review of legislation on mental health, it is expected that most of the functions of MHAC will transfer to the Healthcare Commission and that MHAC will be abolished, though not before April 2007. In the meantime, each organisation will maintain its separate statutory responsibilities but work together on a coherent overall programme for the assessment of the provision of care in the field of mental health.

³ These duties are set out in the Care Standards Act 2000

Appendix 2: Key activities and outputs in 2005/2006

Deliver fair, relevant and credible assessments of performance that promote continuous improvement				
Chronic care			Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease – national overview	Heart failure improvement review
Mental health	National survey of adult mental health outpatients – results from 2004	Results and later follow up on the first National Mental Health and Ethnicity Census (<i>Count Me In</i>), with MHAC and NIMHE	Community adult mental health services improvement review with CSCI	Second National Mental Health and Ethnicity Census
Public health	Joint report on childhood obesity – delivery chain analysis – with AC and NAO		Sexual health services in primary care improvement review	
			Tobacco control in primary care improvement review	
Older people	National survey of stroke patients – results from 2004		Older people services improvement review, with CSCI, AC	
Children		Children's hospital services improvement review	Reports from joint area reviews of children's services (led by Ofsted)	
Safety				Safety of patients: MRSA and infection control in acute trusts improvement review
Substance misuse			Substance misuse services improvement review with National Treatment Agency	
Ratings and assessments of compliance with core standards		2004/2005 annual ratings for all NHS organisations	Draft declarations on their performance in relation to the core standards by NHS trusts	Targeted follow up to draft declarations
Acute	National and local reports on A&E, ward staffing and day surgery (acute hospital portfolio)	Report of review of foundation trusts		National survey of patients – adult emergency and elective admissions – results from 2004 survey
				National and local reports on admissions to hospital, diagnostic services, medicines management (acute hospital portfolio)
Primary care			National survey of adult primary care patients – results from 2004 survey	
Surveys of healthcare staff	Survey of NHS staff 2004 – in depth results			Survey of NHS staff 2005 – preliminary analysis of results

Target inspections in independent sector and align approach	
Independent healthcare	Registrations, inspections and enforcement Registrations and inspections of all independent sector establishments, together with enforcement actions where necessary

Take robust, timely and effective action in response to complaints and concerns about potentially failures of services	
Complaints	Handling of complaints Resolution or referral of all complaints that reach us within agreed timescales and achieving our targets relating to complainants' satisfaction
Investigations and interventions	Respond to concerns, including full investigations Timely and appropriate action on concerns raised with us about potentially serious failures in services, resulting in actions being taken that deliver the required improvements. We expect to intervene, including full investigations, in 15 to 20 cases during 2005/2006

Maximise opportunities to make information accessible and available		
Information products	<i>State of Healthcare Report</i>	Additional publications Taking advantage of the wide range of information that we hold and which meet the needs of patients, the public and other key audiences in healthcare

Key

- Surveys and census
- Improvement reviews
- Other reports and publications
- Independent healthcare – registration, inspection, enforcement
- Handling of complaints
- Respond to concerns, including full investigations