

Welcome

A warm welcome to the latest issue of *HIQA News*.

Since the previous issue, we have started on a new health technology assessment (HTA) and have published updated HTA guidelines for decision makers.

We are also finalising a review of the use of information for the regulation of health and social care.

In this issue, we report on recent work we have done to improve how we support services. This includes new guidance documents to support healthcare staff, and developments in how we inspect children's services and older persons' services, informed by feedback and discussions we have had with people providing these services.

We are also reviewing how we inspect hygiene in hospitals, and we report on the upcoming first inspection reports on residential centres for people with disabilities.

We review our first graduation event for health and social care staff who have completed the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) Open School initiative.

Finally, as I prepare to move on to a new posting in my native Wales, I would like to thank you all for your individual commitment to improving the quality and safety of our health and social care services during my seven and a half years as the Chief Executive of HIQA. I am immensely proud to have been involved in the establishment and ongoing development of HIQA and would like to thank all my colleagues in HIQA, and those across health and social care services who I've worked with over the years, and wish them and our services the very best for the future.

As always, we welcome your feedback so please write to us at hiqanews@hiqa.ie.

Very best wishes to all.

Tracey Cooper, Chief Executive

Portlaoise Hospital investigation confirmed

Our Board has agreed to a request from the Minister for Health to undertake an independent investigation into the services provided by the Health Service Executive (HSE) at Midland Regional Hospital, Portlaoise.

Our Board has agreed to a request from the Minister for Health to undertake an independent investigation into the services provided by the Health Service Executive (HSE) at Midland Regional Hospital, Portlaoise.

The investigation will include an assessment of the patient safety culture at the hospital and will seek to establish further facts on the safety and quality of services at the hospital. If risks to patients are identified, recommendations will be made to address them.

In addition, the Authority has agreed to examine the wider issues identified by the Chief Medical Officer with a focused programme of monitoring of compliance with the *National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare*, in line with the requirements of the Health Act 2007.

Phelim Quinn, HIQA's Director of Regulation, said: "The Investigation Team will review the arrangements for providing safe, quality clinical care which will include how the hospital focuses on the needs of patients, the management and leadership at the hospital. The Investigation Team will also review the systems and processes that support safety and quality and the communication between staff and patients, particularly when patient safety incidents occur and when complaints are made."



Phelim Quinn, HIQA's Director of Regulation

"As part of the investigation, the Authority's Investigation Team will also take into account the experiences of patients and their families."

The investigation will be conducted by a team appointed and authorised by the Health Information and Quality Authority in accordance with the Health Act 2007. The [Terms of Reference](#) have been published and the membership of the investigation team is currently being finalised and will be published when concluded. The investigation report, and its recommendations, will be published following the completion of the investigation.

Investigation Terms of Reference published

We have published the Terms of Reference of our investigation into the services provided by the Health Service Executive (HSE) at Midland Regional Hospital, Portlaoise.

We have published the Terms of Reference of our investigation into the services provided by the Health Service Executive (HSE) at Midland Regional Hospital, Portlaoise.

Following a request from the Minister for Health in accordance with section 9(2) of the Health Act 2007, the Health Information and Quality Authority (the Authority) will investigate the safety, quality and standards of services provided by the Health Service Executive (HSE) to patients in the Midland Regional Hospital, Portlaoise. The Authority will investigate and assess how local, regional and national clinical and corporate governance arrangements are supporting safe care in Midland Regional Hospital, Portlaoise (the Hospital). This Investigation will be further to and cognisant of the report of the assessment^[1] made by the Chief Medical Officer. The Investigation will be carried out on the basis of the following Terms of Reference:

1. To assess the patient safety culture in the Hospital.
2. To investigate and assess how local, regional and national clinical and corporate governance arrangements provided by the HSE are supporting the safety and quality of services at the Hospital for general and maternity patients, identifying whether risks to patients in the Hospital's models of service provision have been identified, assessed and mitigated. The Investigation will specifically include the:
 - a. Extent of serious adverse incidents at the Hospital
 - b. HSE's actions, inactions and governance response to serious adverse incidents and dissemination of learning
 - c. Associated relationship and communication between the HSE and patients and families and their experience.
3. To investigate what measures have been taken by the Hospital and the HSE in the implementation of national recommendations from previous investigations and reports including but not limited to:
 - a. *Investigation into the safety, quality and standards of services provided by the Health Service Executive to patients, including pregnant women, at risk of clinical deterioration, including those provided in University Hospital Galway, and as reflected in the care and treatment provided to Savita Halappanavar*
 - b. HSE Midland Regional Hospital, Portlaoise Perinatal Deaths (2006-date).
4. If, in the course of the Investigation, it becomes apparent that there are reasonable grounds to believe that there are further or other serious risks to the health or welfare of any person or persons receiving services, the Investigation Team may recommend to the Authority and/or the Minister for Health, that these terms be extended to include further investigation or that a new investigation should be undertaken, as appropriate.
5. The Authority shall, in good faith, prepare a report of the findings of the Investigation and make local and national recommendations as to the safety, quality and standards of services provided by the HSE, to the extent that the Authority considers appropriate. The report will be submitted to the Board of the Authority for approval. This report will be published in order to promote safety and quality in the provision of health services for the benefit of the health and welfare of the public.

This Investigation will be carried out in accordance with Section 9(2) and other relevant provisions set out in the Health Act 2007, as the Authority believes that on reasonable grounds there is a serious risk to the health or welfare of persons receiving services following consideration of, amongst other things, information and

correspondence received from the Minister for Health and the HSE.

The Investigation will be conducted by an Investigation Team appointed and authorised by the Authority in accordance with Part 9 of the Health Act 2007. The Team will carry out the Investigation and may exercise such powers as it has, pursuant to Part 9 of the Health Act 2007, including rights of entry, its rights to inspect premises, records and/or documents and its rights to conduct interviews and rights to require explanations in relation to documents, records or other information. In addition, the Authority (with appropriate Ministerial approval and in accordance with the Health Act 2007 where required) may engage such advisers as it considers necessary in the undertaking of this Investigation.

In addition to the Terms of Reference for the Investigation above and in recognition of the wider, national issues highlighted in recommendation O.R.8 in the Chief Medical Officer's report, the Authority will conduct a focused programme of monitoring of compliance with the *National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare* across maternity services nationally, pursuant to section 8(1)(c) of the Health Act 2007.

These Terms of Reference were approved by the Board of the Authority on 18 March 2014.

[1] HSE Midland Regional Hospital, Portlaoise Perinatal Deaths (2006-date).

Review of pre-hospital emergency care

The Authority has commenced the planning phase of its review of pre-hospital emergency care.

The Authority has commenced the planning phase of its review of pre-hospital emergency care.

The review was originally planned under the Authority's three-year assurance programme. The aim of the Authority's programme is to implement and report on the safety and quality of healthcare services in line with the requirements of the Health Act 2007, the *National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare* and other relevant healthcare standards.



Following a number of reported concerns, the Minister for Health Dr James Reilly asked HIQA to bring forward and prioritise its review of pre-hospital emergency care in Ireland.

This review of pre-hospital emergency services will use a range of assessment tools to examine the governance arrangements of pre-hospital emergency care services to ensure the timely assessment, diagnosis, initial management and transport of an acutely ill patient to an appropriate healthcare facility.

The objective of this review is for the Authority to seek assurance that the following are in place for the National Ambulance Service:

- clear strategic direction with implementation plans and control measures for the national service
- robust governance and leadership arrangements at all levels within the service
- clearly defined schemes of delegation
- appropriate controls in place through service level agreements with third parties delivering services on behalf of the national service
- appropriate quality and risk management arrangements
- workforce is well organised, skilled and there is a culture of continuous improvement
- the use of care pathways, clinical outcome and other performance indicators that the ambulance service is both safe and effective.

The assessment of the National Ambulance Service will commence in March 2014.

First graduates of IHI quality improvement course

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The graduates are health and social care staff from 10 pilot sites around the

country (six nursing homes/community hospitals and four acute hospitals), who undertook this course on a voluntary basis to learn about increasing the quality of care they provide.

The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) is an independent not-for-profit organisation based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which aims to drive healthcare improvement worldwide. It creates opportunities for healthcare professionals to learn from and collaborate with expert faculty and colleagues throughout the world.



Around 100 people from the 10 pilot sites attended the event, along with representatives from the IHI, Department of Health, Health Service Executive, amongst others. We will be further developing the IHI project in HIQA this year.

Marie Kehoe-O'Sullivan, Director of Safety and Quality Improvement with HIQA, commented: "This collaboration between HIQA and the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) is the first time that the IHI has worked in partnership on a national level to roll out this online programme. It represents an important, concrete step in supporting quality improvement in Ireland's health and social services."

Pictured at the HIQA/IHI graduation event in Dublin were, (l-r) Tracey Cooper, HIQA CEO, Noel Mulvihill, Assistant National Director for Older Persons, HSE, and Maria Lordan-Dunphy, Assistant National Director of Quality and Patient Safety, HSE

"HIQA has a responsibility to support quality improvement in Ireland's health and social services and this partnership with the IHI delivers that. It began for the first time last year, with participants completing a minimum of 16 modules in order to achieve the HIQA/IHI Certificate of Completion in Patient Safety, Improvement Capability, Quality Cost and Value, and Person and Family Centred Care."

Course participants are nurses, pharmacists, healthcare assistants, doctors, physiotherapists, dieticians, bed managers, administrative and management staff. They were given access to specific knowledge, skills and methodologies that have been proven to lead to positive changes in health and social care in other countries.

The participants were provided with the quality improvement knowledge and tools necessary to design and implement new quality improvement initiatives, measure how well they were meeting the standards, implement the changes needed and provide evidence of their progress.

Our CEO Tracey Cooper praised the initiative taken by people working in health and social care services who had taken part in the IHI programme. "The graduation event demonstrated a fantastic commitment by the staff involved. They were able to outline the real changes they'd made to their services as a result of this and were confident about the changes that had been made," Tracey stated.

Meanwhile, more than 200 participants have already enrolled in the next stage of the IHI programme in Ireland, with the focus in 2014 shifting to a programme for staff working in residential services for people with disabilities.

Marie Kehoe-O'Sullivan concluded: "We will continue to work with the IHI to promote a better experience for patients and residents in older persons' services and their families, and deliver improved outcomes from our health and social care services."

HIQA support for quality improvement projects

In line with our Safety and Quality Improvement team's core activity – supporting improvement – it is the policy of the Authority to support and enable a culture of safety and quality improvement internally within HIQA and externally within the Irish health and social care sector.

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To this end, we have trained facilitators within our Safety and Quality Improvement team and have a purpose-built Innovation Room within our Dublin office to create space to build capacity to support the implementation of sustainable improvements. Our team will provide this service to health and social care teams who have successfully applied to use this resource to support them as they are about to begin their quality improvement journey.

Marie Kehoe-O'Sullivan, Director of Safety and Quality Improvement with HIQA, said: "The ultimate purpose is to empower people with the skills, methodology and tools in quality improvement science so that they can in turn train their co-workers and build capability to improve the services. The idea is to 'create space' outside of the usual working environment where staff leaders can bring their team for a few hours or a day. Their meeting will be facilitated by us using the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) model for improvement in order to assist teams."

Marie commented: "We are now publishing a new policy and procedure document on the use of HIQA facilitator resources and our Innovation Room. It will apply to all our own employees within HIQA and external stakeholders within the Irish health and social care sector who wish to use the team facilitation resource and the Innovation Room to initiate a quality improvement project."

Applicants can complete an application form on our website, www.hiqa.ie, and submit it to us via post to Marie Kehoe-O'Sullivan, Health Information and Quality Authority, Dublin Regional Office, George's Court, George's Lane, Dublin 7 or email to mkehoe@hiqa.ie.

New economic evaluation and budget impact analysis guidelines

We have published updated health technology assessment (HTA) guidelines to assist decision makers in evaluating the cost-effectiveness and budget impact of health technologies.

We have published updated health technology assessment (HTA) guidelines to assist decision makers in evaluating the cost-effectiveness and budget impact of health technologies.

The guidelines follow a period of consultation to facilitate input from the general public and are aimed at improving the accuracy of HTAs – which can ensure that the resources available are used as effectively as possible – undertaken for the Irish healthcare system.

Dr Máirín Ryan, Director of Health Technology Assessment at HIQA, commented that at a time of ever increasing pressure on health budgets, it is of vital importance that treatments offered by the publicly-funded health system are cost-effective and provide greatest value for money. She said the purpose of the economic evaluation and budget impact guidelines is to promote the production of health technology assessments that are timely, reliable, consistent and relevant to the needs of decision makers and key stakeholders.



Dr Máirín Ryan, HIQA's Director of Health Technology Assessment

Dr Ryan continued: "There is a growing awareness of the relevance and value of HTA, so we need to ensure that best practice is adhered to. These guidelines present clear and robust advice to both the people who produce HTAs, and to those who have to make the hard decisions about funding healthcare technologies. The Authority believes that these guidelines contribute to better technology assessment and thereby help deliver safer better healthcare to the public."

Although these guidelines are aimed primarily at decision makers within the publicly-funded health and social care system, the findings of a HTA may also have implications for other key stakeholders in the Irish healthcare system. These include the general public, patient groups, clinicians and the manufacturing industry, among others.

The guidelines can be found here:

- [Guidelines for the Economic Evaluation of Health Technologies in Ireland](#)
- [Guidelines for the Budget Impact Analysis of Health Technologies in Ireland.](#)

HIQA Chief Executive moves on to new role

Our Chief Executive, Tracey Cooper, is moving on to a new role in her home country of Wales after seven and a half years as the head of HIQA.

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Tracey has been appointed as Chief Executive of Public Health Wales.

She said, "I am immensely proud to have been involved in the establishment and ongoing development of HIQA. I have learnt a substantial amount from many people over the last seven and a half years and especially people who use and work in our health and social care services. It has been a huge privilege to have worked with and been supported by two superb Chairpersons, Pat McGrath and Brian McEnery, highly-committed Board members, very dedicated and talented staff and an extremely exceptional senior team."

"HIQA has a very busy and important work programme ahead of it and my decision to accept the new role followed considerable deliberation. However, it is rare that an opportunity arises to become the Chief Executive of an organisation like Public Health Wales which is a substantial national agency in Wales with an extensive remit to improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities across the country."

"On a personal basis, it is a privileged opportunity to be able to contribute to improving healthcare in my home country."

"Prior to moving on from June, I will be supporting the Board of HIQA as it plans for the recruitment of a new Chief Executive. I have no doubt that HIQA will attract an excellent future leader for its new Chief Executive and the organisation will continue to make a substantial impact in improving the quality, safety and effectiveness of health and social care services in Ireland."

Brian McEnery, Chairperson of HIQA, said, "HIQA has been fortunate to have had such a committed and inspirational CEO whose focus has always been on promoting better safer care. The Board and Executive of the Authority are disappointed to lose a person of Tracey's abilities and passion. Tracey has led the Authority since its inception and has brought this important regulatory body from a new entity to a strong steady state. We wish Tracey the best of luck in her new role. We will immediately set about planning for Tracey's departure at the end of May."

Minister for Health Dr James Reilly acknowledged the contribution Tracey has made to the development of HIQA.

The Minister said: "I wish to pay tribute to Tracey Cooper. As the Chief Executive of HIQA she has played a crucial role in the Irish health service over the last seven years. This Government is engaged in a major reform of the health services with the clear intention of improving the outcomes for patients. HIQA is the key player in establishing and ensuring the maintenance of standards across the system to that same end."

He added that he has worked closely with Tracey and HIQA, and stated, "I look forward to having an equally productive relationship with her successor later in the year and I want to wish Tracey Cooper every success in her new role in Wales."



Tracey Cooper, HIQA's Chief Executive

New guidance on unannounced hygiene inspections

We have published *new guidance* on our unannounced inspections of how services are implementing the *National Standards for the Prevention and Control of Healthcare Associated Infections*.

We have published *new guidance* on our unannounced inspections of how services are implementing the *National Standards for the Prevention and Control of Healthcare Associated Infections*.

This is a guide to HIQA's programme of monitoring with the *National Standards for the Prevention and Control of Healthcare Associated Infections*, and relates to unannounced inspections only.

The guidance explains HIQA's approach to monitoring the compliance of service providers – including hospitals – with the Standards. In 2014, unannounced inspections will continue to be undertaken in acute public hospitals.



If the findings from an unannounced inspection are deemed to be unacceptable when assessed against environmental or hand hygiene standards, we will carry out a second inspection within six weeks of the first inspection. The second inspection will be tailored towards reviewing the issues identified during the first inspection.

Phelim Quinn, Director of Regulation at HIQA, said: “This approach intends to drive improvement between assessments. The reasons for the intended re-inspection, and general nature of that inspection, will be communicated to the service provider following the first assessment. The re-inspection themes will be based around the areas of environmental and hand hygiene as before. Our new guidance provides background information including the role of the Authority, quality and safety in healthcare and the role of standards and continuous monitoring in improving quality and safety in healthcare. It also sets out the programme’s aims and objectives, and the monitoring approach, our risk identification, our reporting process, the response expected from service providers, and our continuous monitoring approach post-inspection. The guidance will be a useful resource to people providing services.”

HIQA attends National Health Summit

eHealth – an emerging concept where health services and information are delivered or enhanced through the Internet and related technologies – has the potential to support the transformation of our healthcare system, our Director of Health Information, Professor Jane Grimson, has told a major healthcare management summit.

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Professor Grimson was among a distinguished panel of national and international speakers who addressed the recent 10th [National Health Summit](#) held in Croke Park. The event brought together a range of stakeholders in the management and delivery of Ireland’s health service to discuss the healthcare environment.

In a session on digital healthcare, Professor Grimson delivered a keynote address on ‘Building a sustainable health information infrastructure’. She outlined how the delivery of a modern safe and efficient healthcare system depends on the availability of good quality and timely information, whether that information is being used for direct patient care, quality improvement, planning of services, or for population health and research.



Professor Jane Grimson, HIQA's Director of Health Information.

The Government published a national eHealth strategy in December 2013. Professor Grimson said the current health information infrastructure in Ireland, despite pockets of excellence, is characterised by fragmentation and duplication, leading to major issues about the quality of the information and increased costs. “eHealth is a disruptive technology and has the potential to support transformation of our healthcare system to one which is truly centred on the individual citizen – to a system which focuses on supporting people to stay well and healthy,” commented Jane.

“Information is central to achieving this. We need an integrated information pathway which starts with the individual, supporting them to stay healthy, through to delivering care when they are sick and all the way through to providing information for national registries. Ireland is a late adopter of eHealth compared to other developed countries and we have the opportunity to leapfrog a generation and to build eHealth solutions which are genuinely centred on the individual,” she commented.

She remarked: “There is a need for a public debate on what type of electronic health records we should have. Should it be a summary record as in England, or an emergency record as in Scotland, or a medication record as in France? All these are principally focused on supporting the health professional to deliver appropriate care to patients. Or maybe the starting point could be a personal health record which is owned and controlled by the citizen and which starts with promoting health and wellness?”

Wide range of children’s inspections under way

Our Children’s Team has continued to undertake a wide range of inspections of children’s services within our remit, including designated residential centres for children with disabilities.

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inspections of children's services within our remit, including designated residential centres for children with disabilities.

The Team has also reviewed the way in which inspections are undertaken to promote a consistent and proportionate approach to regulation and risk. An updated guidance document and inspection assessment framework document are available on the Authority's website, www.hiqa.ie.



Children and family services functions of the Health Service Executive (HSE) are now part of the Child and Family Agency, Tusla, which was set up by law on 1 January 2014. Vicky Blomfield, HIQA's National Head of Children's Services Regulation, commented: "We have moved to inspect the child protection and welfare and foster care services provided by Tusla, the [Child and Family Agency](#). We will carry out announced child protection and welfare inspections against all the relevant standards. We will also conduct announced foster care inspections, which will focus on selected themes. Our inspections of children's residential services operated by Tusla will be a combination of full inspections and themed inspections and a mixture of announced and unannounced inspections."

"We have also taken the collective learning from our 2013 inspections to inform our new business plan and we will focus on some specific areas of child care provision in order to drive improvement within the sector."

Stakeholder engagement meetings have taken place with Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, and further meetings are planned for late March in our Dublin and Cork offices. These meetings will provide service directors, area managers and principal social workers with detailed information on our newly developed monitoring approach as it applies to children's services. We are also planning further meetings with private foster care providers, the State's children's detention school, providers of children-only designated centres for children with disabilities and other stakeholders, for example, the Empowering People in Care (EPIC) organisation. The Team has also recently published new reports on children's residential centres, special care units, and a high support unit. All of these reports can be read on our website, www.hiqa.ie.

Third phase of scheduled procedures HTAs

Our Health Technology Assessment (HTA) team is working on the third phase of our scheduled procedures assessments which will consider referral and treatment thresholds for certain pre-planned hip and knee joint procedures, which are common in the Irish healthcare system.

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Phase III will consider arthroscopies and arthroplasties. Knee arthroscopy is keyhole surgery that uses a tiny camera to look inside the knee to diagnose or treat an injury. Arthroplasty is a surgical procedure to restore function of a joint, through full or partial replacement of the joint surface or surfaces, such as total or partial knee replacement.

Phase II reports were published late last year, following a public consultation, which recommended referral and treatment thresholds for nine scheduled procedures to treat common hand and back conditions, such as chronic spinal pain, trigger finger and carpal tunnel.

We also published reports as part of Phase I in April of last year. Four high-volume surgeries were included in Phase I: varicose vein surgery (vascular surgery); tonsillectomy; grommet insertion and adenoidectomy; and cataract surgery. We hope to publish Phase III reports for public consultation in the coming months.

Over 100 inspections of residential services for people with disabilities

We have undertaken approximately 102 inspections of residential services for people with disabilities since we were given the legal power to inspect these services late last year.

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Since 1 November 2013, HIQA has been responsible for registering and

inspecting all residential services for children and adults with disabilities, including respite services, run by the Health Service Executive (HSE) or by providers funded by the HSE.

At the time of writing, we had conducted 77 inspections that monitor ongoing compliance with key regulations and standards. We had also carried out 14 full inspections of centres' compliance with all of the standards and regulations. Table 1 sets out some of the key areas assessed during a HIQA full inspection. HIQA has also undertaken 11 single-issue inspections.

Applications to register have been sent to 20 provider organisations in respect of approximately 130 designated existing centres. These applications, once returned to HIQA, will be processed, and the relevant centres inspected, over the coming months. We have also sent out five applications in respect of five new centres which providers are seeking to register. The first registrations are expected to be fully completed in early April.

The first inspection reports arising from all these inspections are currently being drafted, and it is intended to publish the reports in batches in the near future.

Meanwhile, we are keeping in regular contact with organisations providing services and organisations representing people with disabilities using residential services.

HIQA also hosts a standing stakeholder group, consisting of organisations providing services, which meets every two months. This includes representatives from the Not-for-Profit Business Association, the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies, the Disability Federation of Ireland, and the Irish Council for Social Housing.

We also facilitate a standing stakeholder group representing advocacy and representative organisations, which also meets every two months. Membership of this group includes representatives from Inclusion Ireland, the National Parents and Siblings Alliance, The Carers Association, and the Disability Federation of Ireland.

We also meet the HSE every two months, both as the funder of residential services for people with disabilities and as a service provider. We have also published an [updated Frequently Asked Questions for Providers of Residential Services for Children and Adults with Disabilities](#) and new guidance on the registration process. We have also published guidance on [notifiable events specifically for designated centres for children and adults with disabilities](#), and [notifiable events for designated centres for older people and children and adults with disabilities](#).

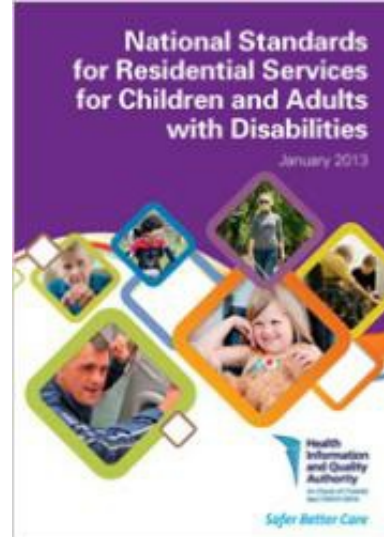


Table 1. Some key areas that HIQA inspects against during a full inspection

Residents' rights, dignity and consultation
Communication
Family and personal relationships and links with the community
Admissions and contracts for providing services
Social care needs
Safe and suitable premises
Health and safety and risk management
Safeguarding and safety
Notification of incidents
Healthcare needs

HIQA publishes updated catalogue of national data collections

We have just published an updated version of the [Catalogue of National Health and Social Care Data Collections](#) and would like to thank all those people who participated in compiling this catalogue.

We have just published an updated version of the [Catalogue of National Health and Social Care Data Collections](#) and would like to thank all those people who participated in compiling this catalogue.

A considerable amount of data is collected by these collections on a regular basis about our health and social care services in Ireland. This is used for many important purposes such as informed decision making, monitoring of diseases, planning of services, policy making, improving population health and for international reporting purposes.

The catalogue combines information about them in a single location, and should help to increase awareness and use of these national data collections. It is vital that there is confidence in all aspects of the quality of this information as the delivery of safe and effective healthcare depends on access to, and use of information that is accurate, relevant, valid, reliable, timely and complete.

An [interactive searchable version of the catalogue](#) is also available online, on [hiqa.ie](#), to make the data easier to access.

Professor Jane Grimson, Director of Health Information with HIQA, said: "Everyone involved in the delivery or receipt of health and social care services needs access to complete, valid and up-to-date information in order to make informed choices and decisions. Ultimately, the primary purpose of collecting this data is to improve the quality and safety of health and social care services."

The first version of the National Catalogue was published in 2010 and included 97 data collections. It was decided at the time to regularly update this document as data collections invariably change over time. This updated version includes a number of new additions, while others that appeared previously are no longer in operation. In total, 108 data collections are included in this catalogue as follows:

- national data collections of health and social care information in Ireland (n=74)
- national censuses (n=3)
- collections without national coverage/regional collections (n=7)
- systems that collated data from a number of different data collections (n=15)
- national surveys (n=9).

As these collections invariably change over time, HIQA will continually update the catalogue.



National roll-out of thematic inspections of nursing homes

In the final three months of 2013, we completed 52 inspections of designated nursing homes under the specific themes of end-of-life care and food and nutrition.

In the final three months of 2013, we completed 52 inspections of designated nursing homes under the specific themes of end-of-life care and food and nutrition.

A national overview report of the results of these inspections, called thematic inspections, will be published shortly. This approach to inspection was introduced to encourage improvement in specific areas of nursing home care.

An extended programme of thematic inspections, using the same themes, across the entire nursing home sector in 2014 is due to start in the coming weeks.

We have published guidance, self-assessment questionnaires, and the judgment framework to underpin the thematic inspection approach (see www.hiqa.ie). These documents will assist those providing nursing home services to prepare for the extended programme of thematic inspections.

John Farrelly, Head of Older Persons' Programme with our Regulation Directorate, said: "The thematic approach was found to encourage improvement within residential services for older people. Prior to commencement of inspections in 2014, HIQA has invited all designated centres, except those who were involved in the pilot for thematic inspections in 2013, to submit self-assessments on how they are meeting the standards in relation to food and nutrition and end-of-life care. As part of this submission providers are also asked to include an action plan on how they plan to address identified areas that they assess as requiring improvement. During 2014 HIQA will be examining the findings from inspections in order to identify what standards and themes will be used in our inspections in 2015."

New regulations on care and welfare of residents in nursing homes

The Department of Health has revised the [Care and Welfare Regulations for Older Persons' Centres](#). These Regulations come into operation on 1 July 2014.

The Department of Health has revised the [Care and Welfare Regulations for Older Persons' Centres](#). These Regulations come into operation on 1 July 2014.

The Authority is currently reviewing and aligning all documentation to the Regulations as set out.

Providers are advised to acquaint themselves with the revised regulations which can be found on the Department's website, www.dohc.ie.

In preparation for commencement, the Authority is updating all documentation used by inspectors to monitor compliance with the revised regulations. This includes inspection notebooks, inspection reports, assessment frameworks, judgment frameworks, notification forms and guidance documents. Updated documentation will be available for providers to download from our website well in advance of the commencement date of the revised regulations.

HIQA hosts seminars on themed inspections

In January, over 1,000 people attended information seminars for nursing homes, hosted by HIQA in Dublin and Cork.

In January, over 1,000 people attended information seminars for nursing homes, hosted by HIQA in Dublin and Cork.

The purpose of the events was to prepare providers who are operating nursing homes and their staff for the national roll-out of thematic inspections. These will focus on the standard themes of food and nutrition and end-of-life care. The key aim is to drive improvement in these specific areas of nursing home care.

Experts in the field of nutrition and representatives from the Irish Hospice Foundation gave presentations. Among the speakers were Niamh Rice (pictured here at one of the events), who is a Director and founding member of the [Irish Society for Clinical Nutrition and Metabolism \(IrSPEN\)](#).



Niamh Rice, speaking at one of our seminars

Further information will be available on www.hiqa.ie to update any people who were unable to attend the information seminars.

Health technology assessment priorities

A new policy for the Health Technology Assessment (HTA) Directorate to prioritise its schedule of HTAs is being developed.

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This policy sets out how the directorate selects topics that stand to benefit most from a HTA and how these will be prioritised for inclusion in the HTA work programme.

Meanwhile, our HTA of public access defibrillation is underway and is examining the clinical and cost-effectiveness of making automatic external defibrillators available in the event of a witnessed cardiac arrest in a public place.

In other HTA developments, work is also underway on revising the quality assurance framework for managing

the quality assurance of all HTA activities conducted by or on behalf of the Authority.

We are also continuing to support the work of the National Clinical Effectiveness Committee (NCEC) through participation in the Committee and its working group, by providing economics training for guideline developers at dedicated training sessions run by the NCEC, and by direct support to a number of guideline groups to ensure that their guidelines can meet the necessary criteria for them to be endorsed by the Minister for Health as national guidelines.

New guidance on classification and terminology standards for Ireland

We have published [guidance on classification and terminology](#) standards for Ireland.

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HIQA has developed this guidance to provide the health information community with an understanding of the systems and factors which need to be considered when adopting a classification or terminology. It is mainly targeted at people responsible for developing and implementing new health information systems and eHealth applications throughout Ireland.



Professor Jane Grimson, Director of Health Information with HIQA, said: “This guidance has been developed to inform key stakeholders, such as public and private service users and healthcare providers, about the proposed future direction of terminology standards in Ireland and to encourage wider participation in standards development.”

“The collection and analysis of basic clinical facts multiple times is needed from different perspectives and for different purposes across the healthcare system. By using classifications and terminologies together, they provide the common medical language necessary for epidemiological purposes, clinical trials, bio surveillance, reimbursement and ultimately an electronic health record.”

Professor Grimson concluded: “The guidance is based partly on guiding principles on interoperability standards developed by the Authority. By adhering to these principles we will follow best international practice and avoid duplication of effort, while ensuring that only tried and tested standards which are already available in software products are selected for use.”

Hospital hygiene inspections continue

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The hygiene inspection overview report summarises information from the individual reports on 54 inspections, covering 49 of the 50 public acute hospitals in Ireland, during a 14-month inspection period between November 2012 and December 2013. One inspection covered three hospitals.



Over the 14 months, 10 inspections were announced and 44 were unannounced. Seven hospitals were inspected twice by HIQA arising from initial checks, while 100 recommendations were issued to the 10 hospitals which had undergone an announced inspection.

Formal notifications of serious risks – identified in relation to the infection prevention and control standards and other areas during inspections – were issued to 13 of the 49 hospitals inspected. These risks related to

cleanliness, hand hygiene and on communicable and/or transmissible disease control.

Other risks included drug trolleys not being maintained in accordance with best practice guidelines, and inappropriate accommodation of patients. This included patients observed on trolleys located outside of screened treatment bays in the emergency department and on extra beds placed into wards.

Phelim Quinn, HIQA's Director of Regulation, said all hospitals were found to be partially compliant with the National Standards and most hospitals that required a second inspection had improved. Generally the feedback from the hospitals demonstrates a positive and constructive attitude to inspection, he said.

During the inspections, nearly 1,500 hand hygiene opportunities (key moments when staff should wash their hands and/or use appropriate hand-rub) were observed by the Authority. Of the hand hygiene opportunities observed by the Authority, an average of 69% were undertaken by hospital staff (see Figure 1 in image gallery). Of the observed hand hygiene opportunities that were undertaken (n=1,034), 79% complied with best practice (see Figure 2 in image gallery). "We found that non-compliances with best hand hygiene practice related to issues such as not taking long enough to perform the hand hygiene technique, not performing the correct hand hygiene technique or wearing a wrist watch, jewellery or long sleeves," Phelim Quinn commented.

He concluded: "This area of patient safety will continue to be a priority for the Authority and will remain a core focus in its standards monitoring programme in the next three years and as part of the future licensing of healthcare facilities when the appropriate legislation and regulation are introduced. The monitoring programme for 2014 will continue to include both announced and unannounced inspections."

Meanwhile, the next phase in the Authority's monitoring programme has recently started with a number of unannounced inspections having taken place. Following an internal review of how we conduct inspections, [new guidance on unannounced inspections](#) has been published. Hand hygiene and environmental hygiene will remain a particular focus during these inspections. Announced inspections will resume later in the year.

Health Information team projects

Our Health Information team is developing an ePrescribing messaging specification and standards for a national drug reference catalogue.

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In addition, we have begun investigating the implications of purchasing a national licence for SNOMED CT (Systematized Nomenclature of Medicine – Clinical Terms). SNOMED CT is an extensive clinical terminology – originally created by the NHS in England and College of American Pathologists – which is owned, maintained, and distributed by the International Health Terminology Standards Development Organisation (IHTSDO), a not-for-profit association based in Denmark.

We have also published the [National Standard Demographic Dataset and Guidance for use in health and social care settings in Ireland Version 1.1](#) (pictured). The purpose of this document is to remove the duplication and variation within and between service providers when collecting patients and service users' demographic data. Version 1.1 includes some minor updates and clarifications.



Update on Freedom of Information

The Freedom of Information Acts (FOI) 1997 and 2003 have played an important role in creating greater transparency of public bodies covered by the legislation since its inception.

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HIQA is subject to Freedom of Information, which permits access to information that is held by us that is not

routinely available through other sources.

In 2013 we received a total of 20 requests under the legislation. These requests were responded to appropriately and were managed in accordance with the legislation.

Of the 20 FOI requests received by HIQA, two were granted, 10 were part-granted, three were refused, one was withdrawn, one was transferred to another public sector agency, two were withdrawn and handled outside FOI, and one was carried over into 2014. The Authority was also involved in five informal consultations with other agencies in relation to FOI requests received by them, which had an impact on the work of the Authority.

Meanwhile, in 2013 the Authority increased its complement of FOI decision makers through the provision of appropriate training. During the year, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Brendan Howlin TD, published the Freedom of Information Bill 2013, which when enacted, will change a number of the current rules relating to the management of and access to information held by public bodies. You can access the Bill here: [Freedom of Information Bill 2013](#).

HIQA prepares for new research ethics role

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Dr Máirín Ryan, Director of HTA at HIQA, said it is the intention that HIQA takes over the function as supervisory body for research ethics for clinical trials and for other health research in Ireland.

“The Department of Health is working on amending the legislative framework so we can become the supervisory body for clinical trials. At the moment, this role is undertaken by the Minister for Health. We understand that we will take on the clinical trials function in the near future,” commented Dr Ryan.

We will be given responsibility for health research other than clinical trials under the forthcoming health information bill. When HIQA becomes the supervisory body for clinical trials and also other health research, this will entail HIQA having oversight of research ethics committee functions.

“This means we will set standards for research ethics committees and monitor the committees against the standards and legislative framework. HIQA will not be involved in assessing individual research applications to research ethics committees,” concluded Dr Ryan.

Newsletter for nursing home residents and relatives

We have published the [latest Reach newsletter](#) for the family and friends of those living in residential care centres in Ireland.

International News Round Up

Clean Your Hands global campaign, 5 May 2014

The World Health Organization's [SAVE LIVES: Clean Your Hands](#) global annual campaign on 5 May 2014 calls for healthcare facilities to join it in highlighting the role of hand hygiene in combating antimicrobial resistance.

For 5 May 2014, WHO will issue a number of tools and proposes a number of activities to support the call to action for this year's SAVE LIVES: Clean Your Hands campaign – 'No action today; no cure tomorrow – make the WHO 5 Moments for Hand Hygiene part of protecting your patients from resistant germs'. Two of the proposed activities are global surveys which are getting underway: a survey on multidrug-resistant organisms, and a global survey on use of surgical antibiotic prophylaxis (SAP).

International review of regulation

Our Health Information team has completed an international review on the use of information for the regulation of health and social care, which will be published soon.

This report explores the work of several international healthcare regulators and quality improvement agencies to see how they use information to improve the standard of health and social care in their jurisdictions.

Organisations from a number of jurisdictions were reviewed to produce this report, including New Zealand, The Netherlands and Denmark.

The report marks the first stage in an ongoing project to guide the Authority on the best approach to adopt to ensure information is central to its regulatory functions. It will also help to achieve one of our strategic objectives to begin publishing by 2015 an annual report which brings together information on the quality and safety of our health and social care services.

October date for Ireland PaSQ event

HIQA is continuing its work with the [European Union Network for Patient Safety and Quality of Care \(PASQ\)](#). We will be hosting an event in October 2014 with European delegates attending (watch this space).

Latest Tweets @HIQA

Terms of Reference for Portlaoise Hospital Investigation published on <http://t.co/dUhKkGxLwP>
4 hours ago · reply

Interested in working for HIQA? 16 Regulatory Officer positions available. Apply before 5pm 18 March
<http://t.co/sleHDljn Cv>
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