



# Duty of Quality

We want to know what you think



This document was written by the Welsh Government. It is an easy read version of 'The Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act 2020. Consultation and implementation of the Duty of Quality, its guidance and supporting materials'.

October 2022

# How to use this document



This is an easy read document. But you may still need support to read it. Ask someone you know to help you.



Words in **bold blue writing** may be hard to understand. You can check what the words in blue mean on **page 30**.



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Where the document says **we**, this means **Welsh Government**. For more information contact:

**Website:** [gov.wales/health-and-social-care-quality-and-engagement-wales-act-summary](http://gov.wales/health-and-social-care-quality-and-engagement-wales-act-summary)

**E-mail:** [HSCQualityandEngagement@gov.wales](mailto:HSCQualityandEngagement@gov.wales)



This document was made into easy read by **Easy Read Wales** using **Photosymbols**. To tell us what you think about this easy read version, [click here](#).

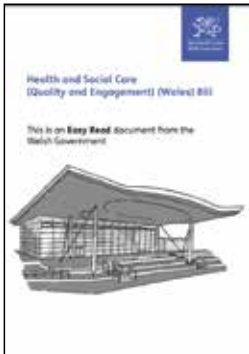
# Contents

	Page
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>What is The Duty of Quality?.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>What we mean by quality.....</b>	<b>8</b>
Quality enablers.....	9
Quality standards.....	13
<b>Who must follow The Duty of Quality.....</b>	<b>15</b>
Who is responsible for making sure the Duty of Quality is followed?.....	16
<b>Following the Duty of Quality.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Telling you how it is going.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Decision making and checking.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>How will the Duty of Quality affect different groups of people.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Hard words.....</b>	<b>30</b>

# Introduction



In Wales we have made a new law to make Health and Social Services better.



This is called [The Health and Social Care Act \(Wales\) 2020.](#)



The first part of the law changes the way the government and the NHS make decisions about health services.



It is called **The Duty of Quality.**



We have written a guide to help staff in health services put the **Duty of Quality** into action.



We want to know what you think about the guide.



Please read this document and then answer the questions in the response form.



Please send us your finished response form by **17 January 2023:**



**By email:** [HSCQualityandEngagement@gov.wales](mailto:HSCQualityandEngagement@gov.wales)



**By post:** Population Healthcare Division  
Health and Social Care Group  
Welsh Government Offices  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ



**Online:** Fill out the response form on the Welsh Government website.

# What is The Duty of Quality?



We want everyone in Wales to have good quality health services.



Good quality health care services are:

1. Safe
2. Effective
3. Person-centred
4. Provided at the right time
5. Well organised
6. Fair



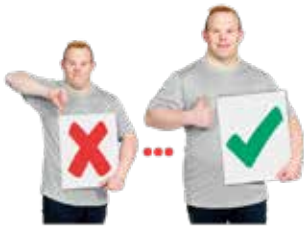
We call this the **6 domains** of quality.

**Domains** means areas.



The Duty of Quality is the rules for people who make decisions about your health services.

It says that people who make decisions about health services must think about:



- How their decisions will improve the quality of health services.



- How their decisions will improve the experiences of people using health services.



- How to keep up improvements to health services. This is called sustainability.

# What we mean by quality



When we are talking about quality in health services, we mean meeting everybody's health needs:

- Every time - **Reliably.**
- All the time - **Continuously.**
- In ways that we can keep up - **Sustainably.**

# Quality enablers

We think good quality health services must be supported by:



## 1. Leadership



## 2. Culture and valuing people



## 3. Collecting information to help understand the needs of the people using health services. We call this **Data to Knowledge**.



## 4. Using the information we have to improve services.



## 5. Thinking about how one thing might affect another when decisions are being made. We call this **whole-systems perspective**.



We call these 5 things **quality enablers**. We need them to make things better. We have described what we mean by each one below:

## Leadership



The organisation has clear aims and goals.



Leaders and managers have a long-term outlook. And they know how to manage and organise to achieve the aims and goals.

## Culture and valuing people



People work together to improve quality. They feel safe, supported, and included.



They can share ideas and tell people if they are worried about something.

## Data to knowledge



We collect data and make sense of it.



We share information with those who need it.



We use information to better understand our services. To learn, make decisions and improve quality.

## Learning, improvement, and research



We support people to learn and deliver improved quality services. And better outcomes for people.



We take part in research. And use what we have learned to improve services.

## Whole-systems perspective



We look at what is going on across our whole organisation.



And we pay attention to what is happening outside our organisation.



We work with partners across Wales to improve the whole healthcare system.

# Quality standards



We have the 6 **domains** that show us what good quality health care is:

1. **Safe**
2. **Effective**
3. **Person-centred**
4. **Provided at the right time**
5. **Well organised**
6. **Fair**



And we have **5 quality enablers** – the things we need to have to achieve the 6 **domains**.



The 6 **domains** and 5 **quality enablers** are big ideas for describing, supporting, and checking quality.



Together, the 6 **domains** and 5 **quality enablers** will be called the **Quality Standards**.



We want these new **Quality Standards** to replace the old [2015 Health and Care Standards](#).



We are also going to use the quality statements, written in [A Healthier Wales](#).



NHS services will be organised in a way that follow the quality standards and quality statements.



The 6 **domains**, 5 **quality enablers** and quality statements will all work together to help us improve quality.

# Who must follow The Duty of Quality

The people who must follow The Duty of Quality are:



- Welsh Ministers.

- Local Health Boards.



- NHS Trusts, like the Welsh Ambulance Service.

- Wales Special Health Authorities. Like Digital Health and Care Wales who help us use technology for better healthcare.

# Who is responsible for making sure the Duty of Quality is followed?



Responsibility mainly lays with Chief Executives of NHS Bodies.



To help them, Chief Executives should choose:

- A **lead officer** – a person in charge of overseeing the Duty in their services
- And a **senior operational lead** – a person in charge of making the changes needed to improve quality.



Boards of every NHS body are also responsible for making sure the Duty of Quality is followed.



The Duty of Quality does not apply to primary care services. These are the services you go to first. Like your GP, dentist, pharmacist, and optician.



And it does not apply to non-NHS services that are paid to provide NHS services by Local Health Boards.



In these situations, the Local Health Board, or NHS Trust in charge of providing the services are responsible for the Duty of Quality.

NHS and Welsh Government staff working in health must follow the Duty of Quality when they are:



- Buying services and equipment.



- Hiring other organisations to do work for them.



- Working with partner organisations. For example, charities and voluntary organisations.

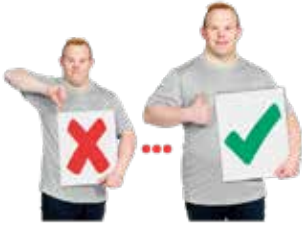


People do **not** need to follow the Duty of Quality if they do **not** work in:

- The NHS
- Welsh Government Health Services

# Following the Duty of Quality

The Duty of Quality says that NHS Wales and Welsh Ministers must:



- Make sure all decisions about health services focus on improving services. And improving the experience of the people using health services.



- Make sure improvements to health services are valued and sustainable.



- Regularly review how things are going.



- Report on how things are going and show how they are following the Duty. They must report to the people using health services. And Welsh Government.



- Make sure NHS organisations continue to focus on improving the quality of health services.



NHS services must be organised and provided in a way that allows us to keep improving.



All health staff have a part to play in improving the quality of services.



Health services must work together and learn from each other to improve quality across Wales.



The guidance describes 6 steps to take to help organisations do these things. They are:

### **1. Make sure the Board supports work to improve quality**



The Board sets the overall aims and goals for a service. They must be willing to invest time and money into work to improve services.

## 2. Making sure they are ready to follow the Duty of Quality



Organisations will need to check services, and measure outcomes to understand what their weaknesses are and where gaps in quality are.



They must think about if their staff team is ready to make the changes needed. As well as if they have the right plans and structures in place to support change.

## 3. Getting support from other people working in the organisation



Staff should feel motivated to improve quality. There should be leadership roles at different levels of the organisation.



Staff should have the opportunity and confidence to test new ideas. Leaders should celebrate staff teams that do well.

## 4. Developing skills and resources



There needs to be good systems in place to manage improvements. Teams should have the right level of skills to meet the demands of changes.



We should have ways of measuring improvements. We should all work in the same way so we can all deliver the same level of quality.

## 5. Agreeing a plan of action



Ideas and changes to improve quality should be linked with the overall aims and plans for the organisation.

## 6. Supporting an organisation wide approach



The Board must invest time and money into making improvements.



It will take time for improvements to become part of a usual way of working.



We need to keep staff motivated and celebrate things that are going well whilst supporting staff to stay focused on always working to improve quality.

# Telling you how it is going



NHS organisations and Welsh Government Ministers will need to work together to check how things are going.

This means checking:



- Decisions that support quality health services.

- How the Duty of Quality is being followed in all their services.



- What they have learnt.

- How they are supporting better experiences for people using their services.



- How they will keep up the improvements they have made to their services.

They must report how these things are going. They will do this by:



## 1. Writing a report every year.



## 2. Always On reporting.

This means collecting, checking, and making information about the quality of services available to people often, throughout the year.

They should use information in their reports that shows how they have:



- Followed the Duty of Quality when making decisions.



- Made changes based on what they have learnt.

- Made improvements to quality.



- Improved outcomes for people.



The yearly reports will be a short summary of what has happened.



They can tell readers to read the **Always On** reports alongside the yearly report. They will be written more often throughout the year and have more details about what has happened.



Welsh Ministers must tell the Senedd how well NHS organisations are following the Duty of Quality.

# Decision making and checking



Each NHS body and Local Health Board has a **Board**. They oversee how things are managed and run. They check the work of the organisation to make sure it is meeting its aims.



**Boards** are groups of people who meet to oversee the work of an organisation and make decisions on how organisations are run.



Boards **must** make sure the Duty of Quality is thought about in all processes and systems. And when making all decisions.



They must make sure work towards the Duty of Quality is checked. It should be thought about within systems already in place. And it should be made a part of all new systems and plans going forward.



Healthcare Inspectorate Wales will also think about the Duty when checking health services.

# How will the Duty of Quality affect different groups of people



We have tried hard to think about how the Duty of Quality might affect people who feel they belong to a certain group.



This is called **protected characteristics**. **Protected characteristics** are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Race
- Religion or beliefs
- Sex
- Sexual preference



We believe that the Duty of Quality will benefit everyone with **protected characteristics**.



We will continue to talk to people to make sure no-one is badly affected by the Duty of Quality.

# Hard words

## Domains

Domains means areas.