

WELSH HEALTH CIRCULAR



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Issue Date: 2 May 2023

STATUS: ACTION

CATEGORY: QUALITY & SAFETY

Title: Health and Care Quality Standards 2023 (replacing Health and Care Standards 2015 - WHC 2015/015)

Date of Expiry / Review No later than 2028

For Action by:
Local Health Boards and NHS Trusts, Special Health Authorities,

Action required by: 1 April 2023

Sender:
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Enclosure(s): None



Yr Athro/Professor Chris Jones
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 National Clinical Director, NHS Wales and Deputy Chief
 Medical Officer

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Dear Colleagues

As you are aware, the duty of quality has recently been introduced under the Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act 2020.

The health and care quality standards in the duty will now replace the 2015 health and care standards issued under WHC (2015) 015. The introduction of the duty of quality provides an opportunity to directly align the standards not only with the duty but with wider quality management practice in health. The revised health and care quality standards are designed to simplify the requirements and be flexible with the wide remit of the duty of quality.

These new standards set out the high-level standards that people in Wales can expect when accessing health services. They comprise six domains of quality (safe, timely, effective, efficient, equitable and person centred) supported by six quality enablers (leadership, workforce, culture, information, learning, improvement & research and whole systems approach). Detailed information on the domains and enablers can be found in section 6 of the [duty of quality guidance](#) and are illustrated in the below diagram:





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The wide remit of the standards is intended to provide a structure on which to implement the duty of quality, whether at national policy level or by service providers and they are intended to apply to all clinical and non-clinical services and settings. They integrate with the wider health system.

Quality statements, introduced in [A Healthier Wales](#) and described in the [National Clinical Framework](#), are aligned to the Duty of Quality and Health and Care Quality Standards and set out the policy expectations for the future planning and accountability arrangements for the NHS in Wales.

Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) will use the revised standards when undertaking reviews and investigations as part of their public assurance role.

The duty and the health and care quality standards are assets to be used to achieve our ambition of delivering ever higher standards of person-centred health services in Wales.

Yn gywir/Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Jones'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

YR ATHRO/PROFESSOR CHRIS JONES