

National Care Standards Review

Update 1: October 2015

What are the National Care Standards?

The National Care Standards are a set of standards for care services in Scotland. The current National Care Standards were created by the Scottish Government under the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001. The standards were devised after considerable consultation with service providers, service users, various expert bodies and the public. There are currently 23 standards and these are subject to review and revision, as necessary. The National Care Standards are used by service providers to maintain and improve the quality of services provided. The Care Inspectorate is also required by law to apply them when regulating care services. The standards are based on care settings including childminders and nurseries, care homes, housing support, services for people in criminal justice supported accommodation and independent hospitals.

The standards, which are written from the point of view of people who use services, are one of the measures by which the Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland assess the safety, effectiveness and quality of care.

Why do we need new National Care Standards to be developed?

Since their introduction, the National Care Standards have not been reviewed, and so, in line with current expectations of compassionate, high quality, safe and effective care, Scottish Ministers committed to a review of the standards.

What has been the approach to a review of the standards?

A consultation was published in June 2014; it closed in September 2014. The document set out a range of human rights-based proposals for developing new standards that improve the quality of care and protect vulnerable people. It sought views on whether a shared set of standards for health and care should be developed so that people working in health and care services have a common understanding of what quality means and work to common core values.

The consultation received 475 responses from a wide range of service providers, professional and representative groups, service users and regulatory bodies. On the whole, proposals were very well supported with 92% of respondents agreeing that new standards should take a human rights-based approach. 89% of those who provided a view supported the development of overarching quality standards which apply across health and social care.

What has happened since the consultation?

Since the consultation, a National Care Standards Review Project Board has been established, to provide strategic direction to the review, with representatives drawn from organisations which support the delivery and improvement of health and care services in Scotland. The Project Board will be the decision making body and make recommendations to the Scottish Ministers regarding the new standards.

In January 2015, the Project Board discussed the process for developing new standards and recommended that the Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland lead the overall process for the development phase of the new standards, in conjunction with other stakeholders, and drawing on the views gathered through consultation.

Subsequently a Development Group, co-chaired by the Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland, was established with relevant key stakeholders. During 2015/2016, this group will identify networks for further engagement, consultation and testing.

What will happen next?

The Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland will work closely together to review and develop new standards; this will involve ongoing consultation with a range of stakeholders.

When will the new National Care Standards be introduced?

It is anticipated that the new National Care Standards will be introduced in 2017, with a further 12 months or so to full implementation.

Timetable for delivery of National Care Standards

