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**Self-evaluation and improvement plan FAQs**

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| **Question** | **Response** |
| What is self-evaluation? | Self-evaluation is where a service ‘systematically examines itself, achievements, and processes to assess whether it is meeting its stated objectives and outcomes efficiently and effectively’ (Audit Scotland).  In the context of care, self-evaluation is a continuous process aiming to deliver gradual improvements, prioritising areas that have a bigger impact on outcome for people using services or where there are risks of harm associated with under performance.  Self-evaluation is not undertaken solely for the benefit of the Care Inspectorate. It is a tool to help services to evaluate and identify where they need to target their efforts to support improvement.  We recently held a [self-evaluation in adult care services webinar](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=coZpWZwJie0). This gives an overview of the process, including the guidance and tools available for you to use. |
| Why are providers being asked to do self-evaluation when core assurances are already assessed during inspections? | We support improvement and want to empower services to evaluate their own performance. Some services already have well-established and effective processes for self-evaluation in place, but we want to get to a place where all services are engaged in self-evaluation.  We have chosen to start with self-evaluation of the core assurances as these are familiar to services and can be easily measured and validated. This will help us to establish a baseline and the next steps we will take to support services to adopt this approach.  The old-style self-assessment did not always accurately reflect what inspectors found on inspection and did not support improvement. We need to build trusting relationships that support effective self-evaluation and proportionate inspection activity. |
| Which types of services will be asked to complete a core assurances self-evaluation? | We would encourage all services to complete core assurance self-evaluation and have a service improvement plan in place. For the testing phase, we will focus on adult services. |
| How much time do providers have to complete this? | We notified providers in February 2024 to give them notice, but expect services will already be doing self-evaluation as part of their quality assurance activities.  We will ask some services for their core assurances self-evaluation and improvement plan from July 2024 onwards. |
| Will help and support be available to support providers with self-evaluation and improvement planning? | There are self-evaluation resources available to support each sector.   * [Self-evaluation guide and tools](https://www.careinspectorate.com/index.php/publications-statistics/152-professionals-registration/self-evaluation-guides-and-self-assessment-tools) * [Quality frameworks for care services](https://hub.careinspectorate.com/resources/quality-frameworks-for-care-services/)   In preparation for the test phase beginning in July 2024, we will hold learning events to support providers complete the core assurances self-evaluation and improvement plan. We will let providers know when these are taking place through the normal communication channels, including our provider updates and social media platforms. |
| Who should be involved in the self-evaluation? | We would expect providers to involve:   * people who use the service * families, friends and carers of people who use your service * the staff who work in your service (all levels and roles) * external professionals * other stakeholders   Providers can do this whichever way works best for them and the people included in the process. |
| How often should the core assurances self-evaluation be reviewed? | There is no time limit in terms of when the evidence for the core assurance self-evaluation was gathered, but providers should think about how current it is and if it still relevant to the core assurance being evaluated.  We would recommend services review and update their core assurances self-evaluation regularly as part of their ongoing quality assurance activities. |
| We already have our own quality assurance audit for the core assurances – do we need to use the Care Inspectorate’s self-evaluation tool? | Providers do not need to use the Care Inspectorate’s Core Assurances template for their service type. However, it would be helpful if providers are clear about what evidence shows that they meet the specific core assurance with their quality assurance records. |
| Do providers need to have a separate improvement plan relating to the core assurances self-evaluation or can we include the actions in our overarching service development/improvement plan? | There is no need to have a separate improvement plan for the core assurances. However, we would suggest providers reference the core assurance self-evaluation when adding improvement actions to their service development / improvement plan. This will help us to track that these improvement actions have come from their self-evaluation activities. |
| Will providers be asked to send our core assurances self-evaluation and improvement plan to the Care Inspectorate before our inspection takes place? | There are no plans to ask providers to formally submit their self-evaluation and/or improvement plans to the Care Inspectorate during the test phase. The inspector will ask to look at these during the inspection process. |
| What will happen during the inspection visit? | There may be additional conversations specifically around self-evaluation, but providers experience of the inspection should be the same as any other inspection. |
| How will inspectors validate providers self-assessment and improvement plan? What types of evidence will we be looking for? | We will evaluate the core assurances as we normally would during an inspection and compare your self-evaluation with our findings.  We will sample the evidence providers have included in their core assurances self-evaluation. Services should make sure managers and/or staff know where this is stored and how it can be accessed. |
| How much evidence do we need to include in our self-evaluation? | There is no set amount of evidence. Services will have different amounts of evidence available, depending on the type of service and the number of people experiencing care. It is important to think about the quality of evidence and how this is being used to support improvement, not just the quantity.  We understand that some services are in the early stages of their improvement journey and may have less evidence available during the test phase. |
| What will happen if providers have not completed the Core Assurances self-evaluation? | All services should be routinely undertaking self-evaluation as part of their quality assurance processes.  We strongly encourage providers to complete the core-assurances self-evaluation, but it is not compulsory at this stage. By taking part, providers will have the opportunity to get feedback and guidance from the inspection team to support development of their self-evaluation processes and improvement plans. |
| Will the service’s evaluations (grades) be affected if our self-evaluation and improvement plan does not meet the expected standards? | We will not be evaluating (grading) providers core assurances self-evaluation during inspections that take place during the test phase.  However, if we have any concerns arising from our assessment of a particular core assurance, we may decide to focus in on a specific quality indicator. This is already part of our methodology.  For example, if we had concerns that a service did not have safe and effective recruitment practices in place, we may decide to assess and evaluate ‘Key question 3: How good is our staff team?’ using quality indicator ‘ 3.1. Staff have been recruited well.’  Improvement plans are a core assurance and not having this in place may impact on the evaluations for Management and Leadership (key question 2). |
| How will the inspector’s validation of the core assurances self-evaluation be reflected in the inspection report? | We will include a short summary of our findings in the ‘Key messages’ section at the beginning of the inspection report. This will comment on the overall quality of the core assurances self-evaluation.  We will not comment on this within the body of the report as the self-evaluation will not be evaluated (graded) under the key questions. |
| Services have struggled to progress planned improvements due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Will this be considered during the inspection? | We understand the pressures the sector has experienced in recent years. We are adopting a phased approach to self-evaluation to support recovery and help services move forwards in their improvement journey. |