

Easy Read



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Duty of Quality

Our Guidelines and Standards



This document was written by the **Welsh Government**. It is an easy read version of 'The Duty of Quality Statutory Guidance 2023 and Health and Care Quality Standards 2023, based on The Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act 2020'.

April 2023

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 33**.



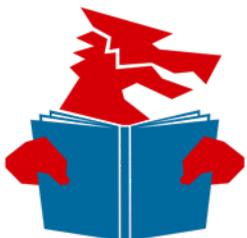
Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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

Website:

[Duty of Quality Statutory Guidance \(gov.wales\)](https://gov.wales)

E-mail: HSCQualityandEngagement@gov.wales



Hawdd ei Ddeall Cymru
Easy Read Wales

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

[Photosymbols Licence number 403527247](#)

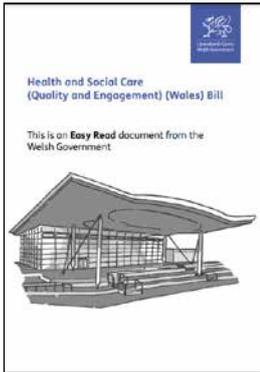
Contents

Introduction.....	4
Strategy and Policy	7
What does Quality mean?.....	14
Quality enablers	16
Quality standards	21
Meeting the Duty of Quality.....	23
Telling you how it is going	27
Decision making and checking.....	30
Welsh Language.....	32
Hard words	33

Introduction



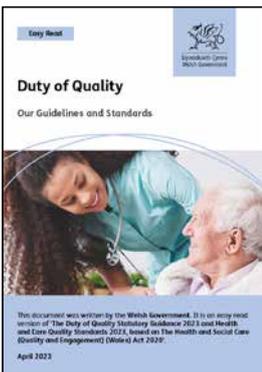
In Wales we have made a new law to make Health and Social Care better.



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



This new law makes the voices of people more important when the government and NHS want to make changes.



This document tells the NHS how to meet the **Duty of Quality**.



Duty of Quality means how the organisation, large or small, has a legal responsibility to work to try and improve the standard of services.

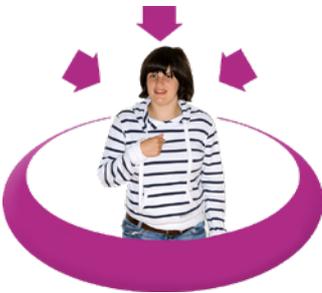
The **Duty of Quality** asks the Welsh Government and the NHS to work in a way that:



- listens to people and patients



- makes better decisions



- is **person centred**

Person centred means putting the person at the centre of planning for their lives.



- gives people the right care they need, when they need it



- is safe and effective



- provides all patients with the same level of safe care.



Making health and social care services better is the right thing to do.



This guidance document explains how they can make it better.



We will need to watch and see if these changes make a difference.

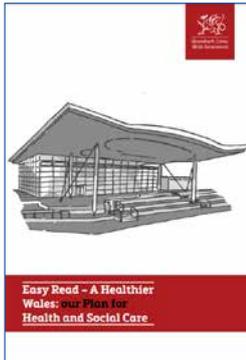


And the NHS and government will need to show how they have tried to make things better.



To do this they will write a report every year that tells people about how they listened to this Act.

Strategy and Policy



A [Healthier Wales: Our Plan for Health and Social Care](#) is our plan to make things better in health and social care.



It says how Welsh Government want to make things better.



And lists the values that the NHS should follow. These are:



- Quality and safety are most important.



- Making things better every day.



- Focusing on stopping people needing care, making care better and available to everyone.



- Working with other people together.



- Investing in our staff.



The **Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act 2020** helps to support **A Healthier Wales** as well as other health related policies.



It also asks the NHS to manage the way they work.



It says the NHS must learn from what they do to make the quality of services better.

Who is the act for?



The people who must follow the act are:

- Welsh Ministers
- Local Health Boards
- NHS trusts
- Special Health Authorities that work only in Wales.

The Duty of Quality and Welsh Ministers



Welsh Ministers must make sure that health services are organised and working to make things better.



They must think about making things better when they make decisions.



They must give guidance to the NHS so they know what they need to work towards.



They must write a report every year to say what steps they have taken to make improvements.

The Duty of Quality and the NHS



The NHS in Wales delivers services through 7 Local Health Boards and 3 NHS trusts.



These health boards and trusts also work with [Health Education and Improvement Wales \(HEIW\)](#) and [Digital Health and Care Wales \(DHCW\)](#).

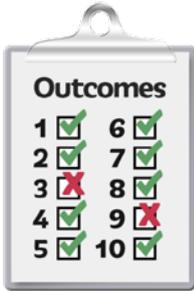


Some Local Health Boards also work with other organisations.



They must still make sure that they are making decisions that make things better.

The **Duty of Quality** is for local health boards who are responsible for:



- Making physical and mental health outcomes better.



- Promoting well-being.



- Creating **accessibility** for everyone.

Accessibility means services are easy for everyone to find out about, get to and use.



- **Commissioning** services that meet the needs of people.

Commissioning is the process of buying, organising, and planning services to meet people's needs.



Chief Executives of NHS Bodies are responsible for making decisions that make things better.

To help them, Chief Executives should choose:



- **Senior lead officers** – people in charge of making the changes needed to improve quality.



- **Designated operational leads** – a person in charge of overseeing the Duty in their services.



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



When non-NHS services are paid to provide services by Local Health Boards, the **Duty of Quality** applies to the NHS, **not** the non-NHS service provider.



But 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.

What does Quality mean?

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



- **Reliably** - Every time



- **Continuously** - All the time



- **Sustainably** - In ways that we can keep up

Good quality health care services are:



1. Safe



2. Provided at the right time



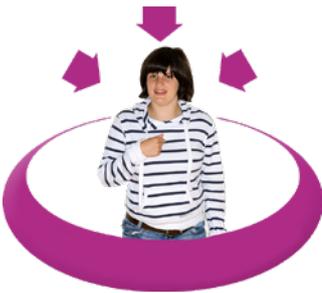
3. Effective



4. Well organised



5. Fair



6. **Person-centred**



We call these the **6 domains of quality**. We have the **6 domains** that show us what good quality health care is.

A **domain** is a particular area or things we want, to have good quality health care.

Quality enablers

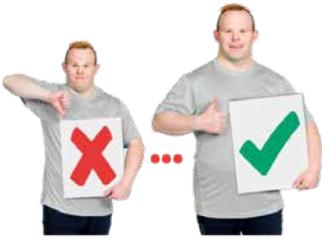
We think good quality health services must be supported by:



- **Leadership**
- **Workforce**
- **Culture**
- **Information**
- **Learning and improvement**
- **Whole systems perspective**



A **whole systems perspective** means looking at all health and care services together. Thinking about how all services link together and planning and making decisions that would make things better across the whole health and care system.



We call these 6 things **quality enablers**. We need them to make things better. We have described what we mean by each one below.



Sometimes one thing might affect another when decisions are being made.

Leadership



The organisation has clear aims and goals.



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



Workforce

Our staff are confident and skilled to deliver safe care.



We value our staff, and they should feel safe and happy at work.



They should have what they need to do a good job, including equipment and training.



Culture

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.

Information



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.



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



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



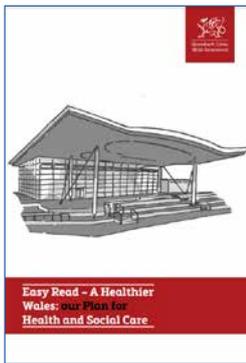
The **6 domains** and **6 quality enablers** are big ideas for describing, supporting, and checking quality.



Together, the **6 domains** and **6 quality enablers** will be called the **Health and Care Quality Standards 2023**.



We want these new **Health and Care Quality Standards 2023** to replace the old **2015 Health and Care Standards**.



We are also going to use the quality statements, required by **A Healthier Wales**.



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



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

Meeting the Duty of Quality

There are 6 steps the NHS can take to plan, deliver and make things better:

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.



They need to make sure they stick to the **Duty of Quality** when they make decisions.

2. Make 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. Get support from other people working in the organisation



There should be a clear plan for improving quality.



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. Develop 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.



A leader needs to check that the organisation aims and plans all work together.



And they should make sure they learn from what works well and what does not work well.

6. Support the organisation



The Board must invest time and money to improve things.



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



The Welsh Government Ministers will need to tell us how things are going in a report every year.



The report must say how the decisions they have taken have improved the quality of health services.



The Ministers must show the report to the Senedd.



The NHS organisations must also write a report to say how they have followed the **Duty of Quality**.



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

1. Writing the Annual Quality Report



It has to be written every year.



This report is a summary of:

- what has happened
- what went well
- what did not work well
- what they have learned
- what they plan to do better in the next year.

2. 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 organisations should use different pieces of evidence and different ways to check how they have met the **Duty of Quality**.

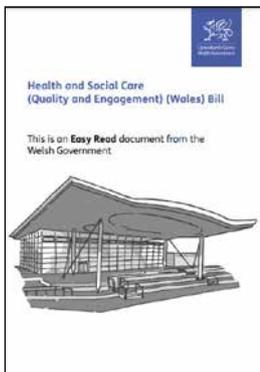
Decision making and checking



The **Duty of Quality** says the Welsh Ministers and NHS organisations must think about what is good for people in their areas.



They must involve people who use health services in their decision making.



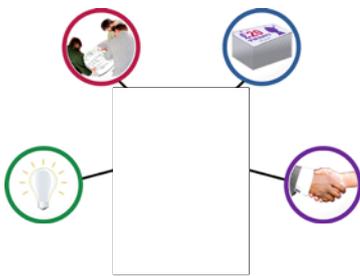
And they must think about the **Duty of Quality** both now and in the future.



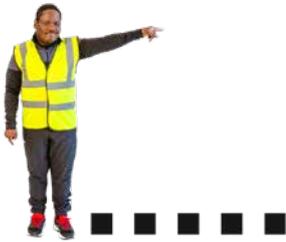
Boards **must** make sure the **Duty of Quality** is thought about in all processes and systems. And when making all decisions.



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 of Quality** when checking health services.

Welsh Language



Health services should be delivered in English and Welsh.



People should be offered to choose which language they can use.



The NHS has not been good at using Welsh in the past.



Welsh language must also be included in the quality reports.

Hard words

Accessibility

Accessibility means services are easy for everyone to find out about, get to and use.

Commissioning

Commissioning is the process of buying, organising, and planning services to meet people's needs.

Domains

A domain is a particular area or things we want to have good quality health care.

Person centred

Person centred means putting the person at the centre of planning for their lives.

Whole systems perspective

A whole systems perspective means looking at all health and care services together. Thinking about how all services link together and planning and making decisions that would make things better across the whole health and care system.