

Our role

NHS QIS' role is to lead improvement in the quality and safety of healthcare in Scotland.

Working with members of the public, patients and healthcare staff, we translate the latest scientific research, expert opinion and patient experience into practical improvements that can be implemented in the health service.

NHS QIS is a special health board. This means that although we don't treat patients or manage health services directly, we work with organisations that do, to help them improve the care they deliver.

We do this by performing five key functions:

- we provide advice and guidance on effective clinical practice
- we set clinical and non-clinical standards of care
- we monitor the performance of the NHS against our standards
- we support NHS staff in improving services, and
- we promote patient safety and implementation of clinical governance.

We ask five crucial questions:

- how can the outcome of care for patients, including issues like quality of life, be improved?
- how can we help to ensure that high standards are consistently delivered?
- how can we ensure that everyone has fair access to health services?
- how can patients' experience of using health services, including issues like waiting times and the quality of communication with NHS staff, be improved?
- how can we support NHS staff to provide the most effective care and make the best use of resources?

We are also an umbrella for other organisations that work to improve the quality of healthcare. These are: the Scottish Health Council (SHC), which monitors NHS boards to make sure they are involving patients and the public in decisions about services, and taking account of their views; and the Scottish Medicines Consortium (SMC), which advises on the clinical effectiveness and cost effectiveness of all newly licensed medicines.

If you would like more information about the respective annual reports of these two organisations, please see the Scottish Health Council's website at www.scottishhealthcouncil.org and the Scottish Medicines Consortium website at www.scottishmedicines.org.