Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust
Quality Improvement Strategy
2015 - 2018

Quest for Quality Improvement

Consultation Document
September 2015
Welcome to our quality improvement strategy 2015/18 consultation document. This is the Trust’s first quality improvement strategy and is a key part of our journey to moving us forward to be the best we can be.

Feedback we have received indicates that the majority of our patients and services users are satisfied with the services we provide, but we do not always get it right and we need to be continuously looking for improvements in the quality of care we provide.

We are going through a period of significant organisational change, including modernising our Clinical Response Model (Emergency Services) and our Patient Care Services (Non emergency patient transport). Additionally we are reviewing our vision, purpose and values and behaviours with a strong focus on people and culture as the key drivers of us becoming a high performing, quality led organisation. This means being responsive to the needs of our communities and making a positive difference to the outcomes and wellbeing of our patients.

Our staff, service users and communities are pivotal to informing our services and we would be very grateful for your feedback.

Please email any comments to PPI.team@wales.nhs.uk with the subject heading "Quality Improvement Strategy Consultation” or call us on 01792 311773.

We are always seeking feedback so there is no closing date.

This strategy will be reviewed and refreshed as required in response to the feedback we receive from various routes.
# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are we trying to achieve?</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our approach to quality &amp; quality improvement</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do patients and service users say about our services?</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff engagement and feedback</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Quality Themes – What we want to achieve

- Making this strategy happen 8
- Governance, Leadership & Accountability
- 1. Staying Healthy 9
- 2. Safe Care 10
- 3. Effective Care 12
- 4. Dignified Care 14
- 5. Timely Care 15
- 6. Individual Care 16
- 7. Staff & Resources 17
- Listening & learning 18
- Key references 19
- Our contact details & information links 20
Purpose

The purpose of this strategy is to support our goal to be a high quality clinically led service.

We want to improve how we work with staff, patients, the public, local communities, our health service and emergency service partners and many other important people who will help us take this work forward.

The Trust Board are currently looking at our organisational vision, purpose and our values and behaviours, and providing high quality services are central to these discussions.

Feedback we have received tells us that the majority of services users are satisfied with the services we provide, but we do not always get it right and we need to always look to make things better.

Background

Our ambulance services are an key part of the ‘front line’ of seven healthcare systems in Wales.

This strategy is a key priority for 2015/16 in our Integrated Medium Term Plan and underpins our emergency services Clinical Response Model, Patient Care Services and NHS Direct Wales.

Additionally the strategy supports the requirements of our commissioners detailed in the CAREMORE® Quality and Delivery Commissioning Framework. See the Step 1 – 5 diagram below which tells you the different work projects that are part of the Framework.

We have multidisciplinary teams delivering our services including paramedics, emergency medical technicians, unscheduled care assistants, patient care service teams, doctors, nurses, call handlers and voluntary staff.
The Healthcare Foundation (2013) see quality as the degree of excellence in healthcare. Quality care includes the following: safety, effectiveness, timely, person centred, efficient and equitable.

To ensure we consider all of these quality themes as we plan our services we are using the Health & Care Standards and NHS Outcomes Framework as a framework to work in.

Our proposed improvements for each Theme can be found from page 9.
We would like to thank our service users, public, staff and partners for their contribution in developing our quality improvement strategy. A number of groups have contributed to this strategy, including:

*TBC post consultation*

**Our service users have defined ‘Quality’ as:**

- “Confidence to receive a prompt response”
- “Providing a prompt response appropriate to the needs of the patient”
- “Being able to get medical help as soon as possible and not wait”
- “To arrive in good time, administer appropriate treatment”
- “Being informed every step of the way, treated with courtesy and professional expertise”
- “Help when you need it and the ability to make a patient feel safe when they are at their most vulnerable i.e. when they are ill”
- “Meeting the patients needs”
- “Assurance that treatment/help will not be compromised”
- “Good communication with patient/family”

Feedback through our ongoing patient engagement work will shape this strategy. Common themes in our quarterly Patient Experience Highlight Reports are:

**What was good?**

- Professionalism and caring staff
- Excellent service
- Kindness of staff
- Treated with respect and politeness
- Knowledgeable staff
- Helpful and reassuring

**What could be improved?**

- ✔️ Longer than expected wait for ambulance
- ✔️ Hospital handover delays
- ✔️ Waiting times to be picked up
- ✔️ Long journeys
- ✔️ Anxiety for patients waiting to be picked up
- ✔️ Too many asked/repetitive questions on phone
- ✔️ Long wait for a call back

Many of the concerns raised by our service users will be addressed as we modernise our Clinical Response Model and through our other major change programmes.

Page 10 onwards describes in detail how we will make improvements in response to this feedback and how we will report & share improvements.
What staff have told us

We have multidisciplinary teams delivering our services including paramedics, emergency medical technicians, unscheduled care assistants, patient care service teams, doctors, nurses, call handlers and voluntary staff.

Our staff are our greatest resource and engaging, supporting and developing them is so important to quality improvement and change.

Feedback from staff from walkarounds, workshops, staff surveys, engagement events and other discussions identified the following areas to focus on:

1. Handover delays at Emergency Departments and the impact on the quality of care patients receive including delays in treatment, pain relief, continence needs, pressure area care, hydration and warmth and comfort;
2. Infection Prevention & Control practices with pressures to turn vehicles around quickly;
3. Involvement in shaping the clinical audit programme locally;
4. Time for training and continued professional development including clinical notices, alerts, and new guidance;
5. Improving organisational learning and sharing improvements;
6. Reducing waiting times in Patient Care Services and improve patient experience;
7. Improving and simplify the complaints process;
8. Our clinical team leaders who need time to undertake appraisals and support their staff;
9. Focusing more on the outcomes of the care they deliver, not just time related measures.
10. Fleet (vehicle) issues.

We have much more work to do to get continuous feedback from our staff and this will help shape our improvements. Page 10 onwards describes what we plan to do to make improvements in response to this feedback.
We want your views on the actions we’ve listed on the following pages (pages 9-17).

If you want to see a full version of this strategy, please visit our website
www.ambulance.wales.nhs.uk

Governance, Leadership & Accountability

Our improvements for Governance, Leadership & Accountability include:

- Looking at our committee structure
- Reviewing our governance framework
- Having a risk management strategy
- Having better document management systems
- Aligning our internal audit programmes to our quality assurance needs
- Having leadership development programmes
- Introduction of quality champions to health board areas
- Involvement in the NHS Wales Quality & Safety Forum
- Networking
- Using our information in better ways to provide assurances in relation to quality
- Working on the national Health and Care Standards (2015)
- More service user, community and staff engagement.

Our seven major programmes of work change will be key in delivering these improvements included in our Integrated Medium Term Plan.

**Outcome:** The right quality assured information is reported in a timely manner in a format that allows the Board and Executive Team to make informed decisions about the quality of the services we provide.
What do we want to achieve?

**Outcome:** Our service users and carers are well informed and supported to manage their own health

- Supporting our service users to ‘Choose Well’ linking to Step 1 of the Clinical Response Model
- Continued development of information through various media sources
- Further development of the NHS Direct Wales website.

Why is this important?

The provision of quality health information is an key part of engaging service users. Capturing and learning from their experiences is also an important aspect of quality improvement. Providing health information and engaging users effectively fosters better experiences and is more likely to enable them to make informed decisions about their health.

How will we know we are making progress?

- Over time there will be behaviour change in the type of services accessed and these will be appropriate to clinical needs
- There will continue to be increased visit numbers to the NHS Direct Wales website
- Positive feedback from service users, wider communities and stakeholders.
Safe Care

What do we want to achieve?

Outcome: We will only do what is needed and our service users are protected from harm and protect themselves from known harm

- Having an Infection, Prevention & Control Code of Practice & operational plan
- Using our information from incidents, complaints, mortality reviews, service and staff feedback and external & internal reviews more intelligently to improve the quality of care
- Strengthen our organisational learning, ensuring sustainable improvements through education, development and delivery plans
- No avoidable harm in our care
- Develop early warning systems to detect risks to the quality of care across all services
- Undertake a safety culture survey Trust wide
- Embed our quality impact assessment process
- Strengthen our Safeguarding systems for vulnerable adults & children
- Review our systems to ensure we provide appropriate services for service users with mental health problems
- Ensure we have safe and appropriate staffing levels
- Build strong connections from Board to clinical teams to Board.

Why is this important?

Our service users safety is paramount and first we must only do what is needed and do no harm. Healthcare can be complex and high risk and we know from national NHS reports that sometimes despite best intentions we cause avoidable harm. We must have systems in place to learn across the organisation and make sustainable changes.

Our systems need to support our staff with ever increasing demand and complexity and we must remove any barriers and make it as easy as possible for staff to do their very best for patients and eliminate avoidable harm.
How will we know we are making progress?

- We will review our planned and actual staffing levels at local health board level on a monthly basis and action accordingly.
- We will improve sustained learning across the Trust and monitor lessons learnt through clinical audit and staff & service user feedback.
- We will encourage incident reporting and aim to have an increase in reporting and a decrease in the severity of incidents, and monitor our harm footprint.
- We will develop a new quality report to monitor our plans and quality indicators and see demonstrable improvements.
- We will have established programmes of walkarounds which inform our improvements.
- We will hold our Quality, Experience and Safety Committee in public.
- We will report our achievements and future areas for improvement in our Annual Quality Statements.
Effective Care

What do we want to achieve?

**Outcome:** Our service users receive the right care and support as locally as possible and are enabled to contribute to making that care successful. We will reduce inappropriate variation through evidence-based care.

- A fit for purpose Clinical Response Model including embedding Paramedic Pathfinder
- A fit for purpose non emergency patient transport service
- Further develop our clinical & quality indicators with our commissioners
- Strengthen our clinical audit capacity & capability
- Introduction of digital technology (Digipens) to record clinical information
- Introduce mortality reviews
- Strengthen how we review and implement external guidance, including alerts, national reports & enquiries
- Ensure the implementation of the All Wales Handover Guidance at Emergency Departments
- Implement our new Research & Innovation Strategy
- Embed a Clinical Patient Pathway Approvals Group to govern any new or revised pathways applying the principles of Prudent Healthcare.

Why is this important?

An effective clinical model means patients receive the right care at the right time with positive outcomes and a good experience.

Monitoring the effectiveness of the care we provide is key to assuring we follow evidenced practice consistently and address any inappropriate variances.

We need to continue to develop a culture where research and innovation is a core Trust activity which promotes better quality of care for our patients now and in the future.
How will we know we are making progress?

- We will report on the effectiveness of the changes to our Clinical Response Model and undertake evaluations to inform continuous improvement in the services we provide.
- We will evaluate and continuously review the changes to our non-emergency patient transport services to inform continuous improvements.
- We will continue to report clinical and quality indicators through our Integrated Performance Report seeing demonstrable improvements.
- We will develop a quarterly quality assurance report to monitor our plans and quality indicators with baselines established and identify areas for improvement.
- We will review and monitor our audit programmes and ensure they are linked to our plans and identify any risks to quality and action accordingly.
- We will monitor compliance with Paramedic Pathfinder and outcomes for patients and make identified improvements.
- We will work with health board colleagues and monitor the implementation of the NHS Wales Handover Policy and see a reduction in waiting times and improvement in the quality of care patients receive.
**What do we want to achieve?**

*Outcome: Our service users are treated with dignity and respect and treat others the same*

- Continue to listen and engage with service users and obtain feedback on their care and make changes accordingly
- Ensure timely and responsive handling of complaints & concerns and implement the findings of our internal review
- Review our training & resources to ensure that patients with dementia receive appropriate care.

**Why is this important?**

Compassionate care is a pre requisite for delivering dignified care. Organisational culture, policies and processes can impact on the experiences of patients. Staff attitudes, behaviours and beliefs can also shape patients perceptions and experiences of the Trust.

**How will we know we are making progress?**

- Identify Dignity Champions across the Trust to take forward work
- Care of patients with dementia training will be delivered to all clinical staff – Treat me fairly package
- ‘This is me’ toolkit will be incorporated as part of engagement with patients
- ‘Hello my name is’ campaign will be demonstrated through patient experience surveys and audit
- Improved satisfaction with our concerns process and we will continually meet national requirements.
Timely Care

What do we want to achieve?

*Outcome: Our service users have timely access to services and we will care for those with the greatest health need first.*

*Our service users are actively involved in decisions about their care.*

- Transforming our Clinical Response Model to ensure our service users have timely access to services based on the greatest health need first, in line with the 5 Step Clinical Response Model
- Transforming our Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services Care, listening to patients to determine what changes are needed
- Commission ‘deep dives’ into quality of care issues and use peer review as appropriate to provide assurances regarding our services.

Why is this important?

Timely access to clinical care based on clinical need is key to the delivery of a quality service. To ensure we respond rapidly to service users with time critical conditions we need to review the appropriateness of our whole clinical model and implement changes accordingly.

Service users of our Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services need to shape the service to ensure an effective, efficient service with a positive experience is provided.

How will we know we are making progress?

- We will continue to monitor our response times 24/7.
- Response times and patient outcomes are formally reported in our Integrated Performance Report on a monthly basis and we will see incremental improvements in timeliness and outcomes
- Outputs of the evaluation work undertaken in relation to the new Clinical Response Model
- We will develop a quarterly quality report to monitor our plans and quality indicators focusing on outcomes in addition to targets and timescales.
What do we want to achieve?

**Outcome:** Our service users are treated as individuals with their own needs and responsibilities and we will work in co-production with service users, partners and stakeholders.

- Continued work in line with the National Service User Framework
- Closer working between the Partners in Healthcare Team (PIH) & Putting Things Right (PTR) team to enhance organisational learning capability
- Implementation of the Bevan Commission Framework & identify advocates across communities to influence the Trusts services and plans.
- Build on capturing ‘real time’ reporting working with partners including transformation programmes, projects and plans.

Why is this important?

We want people to experience personal care. Information provision will be tailored to the individual. We will see the person and not just the reported condition. Engaging with patients on an equal basis and ensures the service fits the needs of patients in line with Prudent Healthcare.

People will be treated with dignity, their privacy will be maintained, they will be respected.

How will we know we are making progress?

- We will develop and monitor the implementation our Community Engagement Strategy
- We will achieve Bevan Advocate status by August 2016 and Exemplar Status by August 2018.
- Experience reporting will demonstrate positive outcomes and individual experiences of using Trust services
- Higher levels of patient engagement and experience measures as part of the delivery of care.
Our Staff & Resources

What do we want to achieve?

**Outcome:** People in Wales can find out information about how our services are resourced and make careful use of them

- Our staff will be equipped with tools to improve quality through the continued implementation of Improving Quality Together (IQT) training
- Development of a senior management quality improvement team equipped with Silver IQT training
- Continued staff engagement programmes
- All staff have personal appraisal development reviews
- The study leave policy/process is embedded
- Continued delivery of the leadership development programmes.

Why is this important?

Staff education, training and development underpins our strategic plans, alongside workforce planning which focuses on having the right staff with the right skills at the right time.

Our staff are our greatest resource and engaging, supporting and developing them is crucial to quality improvement and sustainable change.

How will we know we are making progress?

- We will log and monitor all quality improvement projects and review the effectiveness and opportunities for wider implementation
- Staff development and personal appraisal development reviews will be monitored through our Finance and Resources Committee and engagement with the Partnership/Trade Unions Team
- We will have programmes in place to obtain staff feedback to continually inform this strategy
- We will develop a quality report to monitor our plans via quality indicators/measures which will be available publically.
Listening & learning

Listening to patients and learning from their experiences has been an important part of our work. Experiences of patients have been captured in various ways for example:

- Compliments
- Complaints
- Adverse incidents;
- Experience questionnaires and feedback;
- Patients have also shared their own personal stories at our Trust Board and committee meetings. Listening to patient’s voices is driving our model of delivering improved patient centred services.

We have built a strong foundation in our Partners in Healthcare Network that offers a menu of activities and opportunities for people to get involved in influencing the future direction of the service.

As part of our engagement activities we include and promote public health messages in line with ‘Our Healthy Futures’ and the ‘Annual Quality Framework’.
**National key documents**

Andrews & Butler (2014) *Trusted to Care*. Dementia Services Development Centre & The People Organisation.


Welsh Government (2013) *Delivering Safe Care, Compassionate Care*. Wales: WG.


Personal Experiences/Stories
To share your experiences/stories of using any of the Welsh Ambulance service you can contact our ‘Partners in Healthcare Team’

01792 311773

PPI.team@wales.nhs.uk

Compliment/Concern
If you wish to raise a compliment or a concern please contact the Putting Things Right Team

0300 321 3211

Amb_PuttingThingsRight@wales.nhs.uk

Follow us on Twitter: @WelshAmbulance
You can also follow the Trusts’ Engagement team: @WelshAmbPIH
www.ambulance.wales.nhs.uk

Find us on facebook: www.facebook/welshambulanceservice