

Photocall — Launch of National Patient Experience Survey



Tony O'Brien, Director General of the HSE; Minister for Health Simon Harris TD; Rachel Flynn, HIQA's Director of Health Information and Standards and Programme Director for the National Patient Experience Survey; and our CEO Phelim Quinn pictured in Dublin at the launch of the first ever National Patient Experience Survey

Message from the CEO



11 December 2017 marked an important day for HIQA and Ireland's health services as we published the very first National Patient Experience Survey. The national report and 39 individual hospital reports were launched by An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar and Minister for Health Simon Harris.

Their presence at the launch clearly demonstrated the Government's commitment to listening to the voice of the patient and ensuring that there is an appropriate provider and policy response to what patients are telling us through the survey.

HIQA is proud to lead on this major national initiative and looks forward to repeating the survey next year to assess progress against the findings. It is anticipated that a further survey in Ireland's maternity services will also commence next year.

Many thanks to all patients who took the time to complete the survey and hospital staff who actively promoted it.

This first such survey — a partnership between HIQA, the HSE and the Department of Health — gave almost 27,000 patients discharged from a public acute hospital throughout Ireland an opportunity to describe their experiences in order to improve our health service.

It is the largest single survey of the healthcare system in Ireland and received an exceptional 51% response rate. The results of the survey show that although many patients experienced good care, there is certainly room for improvement in key areas.

Therefore, we must now listen carefully to the voices of patients, people who use services, and use these survey results and those of future annual surveys to continually improve care. Survey action plans and follow-up surveys will be key drivers of improvement.

November and December were busy months for our Regulation Directorate. The directorate organised four major information events for providers and managers outlining enhancements to HIQA's monitoring approach in nursing homes and residential centres for people with disabilities.

These events were attended by approximately 2,000 people and enabled our staff to outline what these enhancements will mean for providers, and more importantly residents, once the new approach goes live early in 2018.

This issue of *HIQA News* reports that our Older Person's team are also working with providers to ensure that they have good arrangements in place to safely evacuate residents and staff in the event of a fire. We will continue to focus on this during 2018.

Our Disability team continues to inspect residential services for people with disabilities. Next year will see the requirement for decisions to be made on registration of services. Since our last issue, we have also published our overview report on the Áras Attracta campus.

Up to the end of November, our Healthcare team had inspected 19 hospitals against infection prevention and control standards, and the team will be extending our monitoring programme to decontamination of reusable invasive medical devices, which is due to start in early 2018.

Also on the horizon for 2018 will be the registration and inspection of special care units for troubled young people, when this function is commenced under the Health Act 2007. Our Children's Team inspected three units in 2017 against the National Standards for Special Care Units.

Finally, I want to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year.

Phelim Quinn, CEO

Photocall — Taoiseach at launch of National Patient Experience Survey



An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD addresses the launch of the National Patient Experience Survey. On left is our CEO Phelim Quinn.

Ireland's first ever national survey of patients' experiences in hospital launched



Sheila O'Connor of Patient Focus, the national patient advocacy organisation, and An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD pictured in Dublin at the launch of the first ever National Patient Experience Survey

The results of the first ever National Patient Experience Survey were launched on 11 December 2017 by An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar TD and Minister for Health Simon Harris TD in Dublin.

Welcoming the survey, the Taoiseach said: "We are constantly striving to improve our health service, so it is important that we have an accurate picture of the average patient's experience. This survey, the first of its kind here, provides us with very useful information on what works well within our health service, and what needs to be improved. I am glad to see that there is such a high level of trust in our doctors, nurses and other healthcare staff, and that most people who enter the health service have a good experience. The survey also underlines the fact that access remains the biggest challenge facing our health service. In 2018, with the largest ever budget for our health service, we will be introducing a range of measures to make it easier to access our health service at the times in your life when you need it."

This is the first time the survey has been conducted and this information will be used as a baseline in order to track progress on patients' experience over the next number of years.

Some 84% of the patients who completed the survey indicated that their overall experience of acute healthcare was either "good" or "very good". However, one of the main objectives of the survey was to listen to the voices of patients and understand how their experience of services could be improved. It is now important that these experiences are listened to and understood in order to make improvements to the quality and safety of Irish healthcare.

Speaking at the launch, Minister for Health Simon Harris TD said: "The findings of the National Patient Experience Survey are very encouraging in a number of respects. The fact that so many of our patients indicated that they were treated with respect and dignity is testament to the commitment and hard work of our staff. I think this shows that the efforts which have been made in recent years to put the patient at the heart of the health service, and to transform the culture in our hospitals, are bearing fruit. For those areas where improvement has been identified, I know that the HSE has already moved to develop its response, both at a national and an individual hospital level. I look forward to seeing those plans successfully implemented and reflected in further iterations of this survey."

[Read the press release here.](#)

HIQA hosts information events on new monitoring approach



Providers of services pictured attending one of our information roadshows on how we monitor and regulate residential centres for older people and people with disabilities.

We are enhancing various aspects of how we monitor and regulate residential centres for older people and people with disabilities.

We recently held a number of information roadshows for providers and persons in charge of those services to fully inform them about the enhancements.

In late November and early December, approximately 2,000 people attended these events across Cork, Galway and Dublin.

The enhancements include new functionality on the provider Portal, such as quarterly notifications, revised residents' questionnaires, introduction of the Registered Provider Representative and amendments to applications to register or renew registration.

News from our Disabilities team

As the legal timeframe for HIQA registration of residential centres for people with disabilities draws close, our inspectors have been liaising with providers of those remaining centres not yet registered with us.

At the end of November 2017, there were 1,093 designated centres in Ireland for people with disabilities in Ireland, an increase of almost 20% since registration of these centres started in 2013.

So far, 908 of these centres have now been registered with HIQA and some of those are currently preparing for renewal of their registration, which happens every three years.

Between 1 January 2017 and 30 November 2017, we carried out 807 inspections, and in that time published 714 inspection reports.

Of these inspections, 256 were registration-related inspections, which are usually announced, while we also completed 510 unannounced inspections.

Some providers continue to struggle to improve standards, and by the end of November 2017, HIQA had issued 45 notices of proposal to cancel the registration of such centres.

The providers of those centres have 28 days to make representation setting out the reasons why the registration for their centres should not be cancelled.

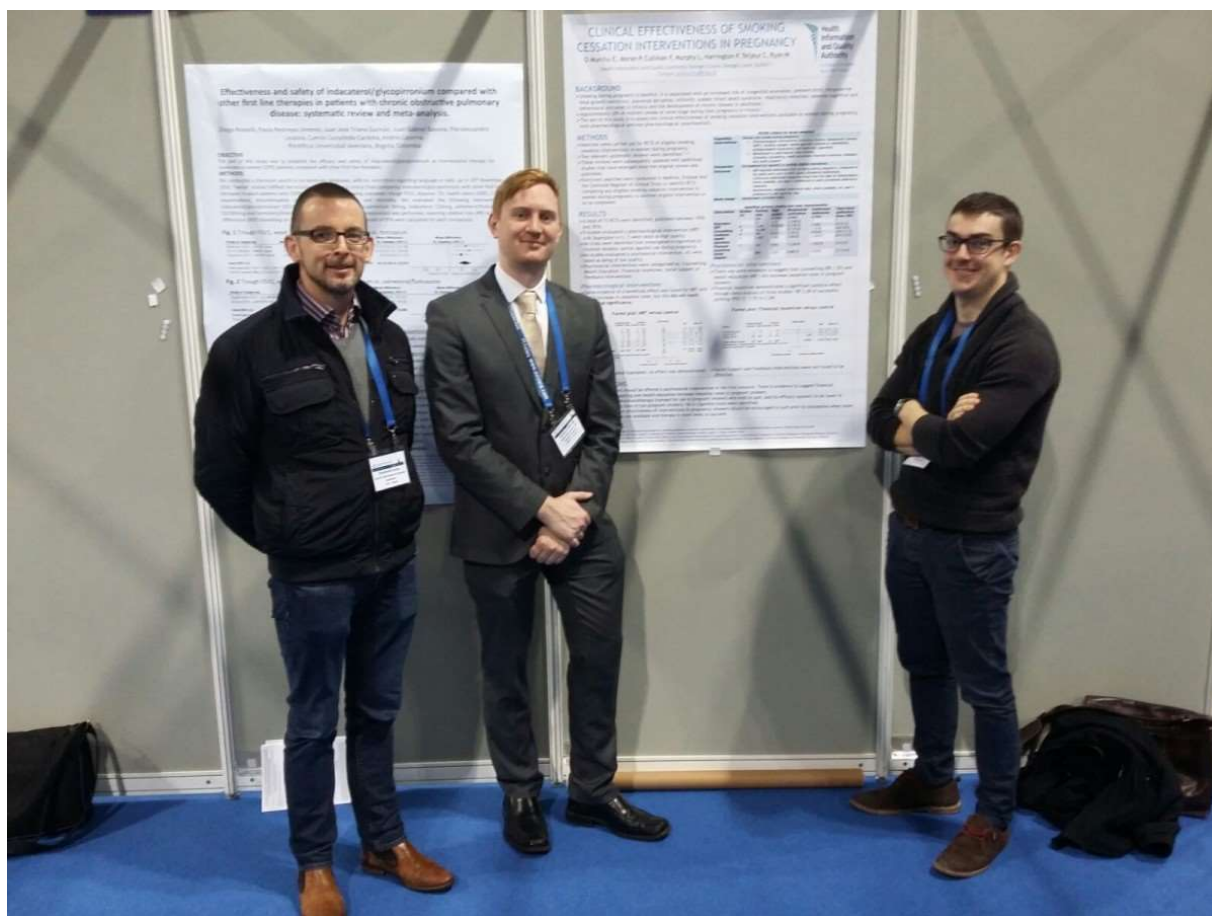
HIQA publishes overview report on Áras Attracta



Following the issuing of notices of proposal to cancel the registration of the three centres on the Áras Attracta campus, HIQA published an overview report of findings from inspections carried out since the Health Service Executive (HSE) submitted an improvement plan to HIQA in October 2015.

Overall, our inspectors found that there had been a failure to make adequate progress on improving the quality of care and support for most residents in the centre.

Photocall — ISPOR 20th Annual European Congress



Pictured at the International Society for Pharmacoeconomic Outcomes and Research (ISPOR) Congress in November in Glasgow, Scotland were Dr Eamon O Murchu from our Health Technology Assessment (HTA) team (middle of photo) who presented research on The Clinical Effectiveness of Smoking Cessation Interventions in Pregnancy, along with Des Lucey (left) and Paul Carty of our HTA team.

Health technology assessment of treatment and transport options for Priority 1 transfer patients

We have published a health technology assessment (HTA) that contains advice for the Minister for Health and the Health Service Executive (HSE) on the alternative options for the treatment and transport of Priority 1 transfer patients.

Priority 1 transfer involves the transport by air from Ireland to another country within eight hours of a patient requiring emergent medical or surgical treatment, without which the patient's life or health is significantly endangered.

To date, the majority of patients fulfilling these criteria have been children who require transfer to the UK to undergo heart or liver transplant surgery.

Based on the assessment, advice has been provided on immediate, short-term and long-term options for Priority 1 transfer patients. The [full report may be viewed here](#).

New draft guidelines on economic evaluation and budget impact analysis

We have published draft guidelines on both the [economic evaluation](#) and [budget impact analysis](#) of health technologies in Ireland.

The documents are part of a series of guidelines and limited to methodological guidance on the conduct of economic assessments.

Our health technology (HTA) guidelines provide an overview of the principles and methods used in assessing health technologies.

They are intended as a guide for all those who are involved in the conduct or use of HTA in Ireland, and promote the production of assessments that are timely, reliable, consistent and relevant to the needs of decision-makers and informed and interested parties.

Once consultation feedback is incorporated, final guideline documents will be published online.

Meanwhile, the HTA team is continuing its research on extending the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) immunisation programme to include HPV vaccination of boys.

The aim of this HTA is to investigate the clinical- and cost-effectiveness of expanding Ireland's national HPV vaccination programme to include boys.

PHOTOCALL — Health Information Seminar



Pictured at the second health information seminar entitled 'National Health Information — Better data, better decisions' held in Dublin Castle in October were Minister for Health, Simon Harris and our CEO Phelim Quinn pictured alongside speakers from the seminar

2nd Health Information Seminar – Better data, better decisions

We were delighted with the success of the second health information seminar entitled '*National Health Information — Better data, better decisions*', held in Dublin Castle in October.

Our Health Information Quality Team, alongside the Department of Health and the Office of the Chief Information Officer in the Health Service Executive (HSE), hosted the event.

Over 270 people attended the seminar, which was opened by the Minister for Health Simon Harris, to hear how Ireland can develop a coherent and integrated approach to health information.

A six-week consultation on the national health information policy framework was launched by the Department of Health at the seminar. People attending the seminar were also given the opportunity to provide feedback on it during the event.

The international keynote speakers, Tobi Henderson from the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) and Natalie Banner from the Wellcome Trust (UK), were extremely well received and their presentations provided an international perspective on health information.

Barbara Foley from our Health Information team also delivered one of the presentations at the seminar on the current work that HIQA is undertaking to promote improvements in national health information.

Photocall — HIQA @ Health Information Seminar



Pictured at the second health information seminar entitled 'National Health Information — Better data, better decisions' held in Dublin Castle in October were members of our Health Information Quality Team: Julie Arnott, Maria Ryan, Rachel Flynn, Aoife Healy, Barbara Foley and Cathy Duggan

Photocall — panel discussion at Health Information Seminar



Panel discussion with all speakers, chaired by outgoing HSE Chief Information Officer Richard Corbridge, at the second health information seminar entitled 'National Health Information — Better data, better decisions' held in Dublin Castle in October

Third version of catalogue of national data collections

We launched the third revision of the Catalogue of National Health and Social Care Data Collections at the second health information seminar entitled 'National Health Information — Better data, better decisions' held in Dublin Castle in October.

The the updated Catalogue and an online version of the Catalogue are an extremely valuable resource which informs and increases awareness on the existence, purpose and content of national data collections and how data can be accessed.

Photocall — Health Informatics Society of Ireland (HISI) conference



Pictured is Tess Huss from HIQA presenting at the Health Informatics Society of Ireland (HISI) conference in Croke Park. Aoife Healy, Kevin O' Carroll and Cathy Duggan from our Health Information and Standards Directorate also made presentations at the HISI event

National Standards for the Conduct of Reviews of Patient Safety Incidents



Pictured at the launch of the National Standards for the Conduct of Reviews of Patient Safety Incidents in Acute Services were Patricia Gilheaney from the Mental Health Commission; Rachel Flynn from HIQA; Minister for Health Simon Harris; Phelim Quinn from HIQA; and Rosemary Smyth from the Mental Health Commission

National Standards for the Conduct of Reviews of Patient Safety Incidents in Acute Services were launched by the Minister for Health at the National Patient Safety Office Conference in October.

This is the first set of standards that HIQA has jointly developed with the Mental Health Commission.

The Standards aim to promote a framework for best practice in the conduct of reviews of patient safety incidents and intend to set a standard for cohesive, person-centred reviews of such incidents.

The Standards are now available on both HIQA's and the Mental Health Commission's websites, along with a statement of outcomes of the public consultation and a background document outlining the evidence base for the Standards.

Draft National Standards for Children's Residential Centres



Deirdre Connolly and Linda Weir from HIQA were at the recent Empowering Young People in Care (EPIC) and Care Leavers' Ireland Conference aimed at young people moving towards aftercare. Deirdre and Linda encouraged young people attending to feed back to us on our Draft National Standards for Children's Residential Centres.

A national public consultation on the draft National Standards for Children's Residential Centres was carried out during a six-week period from September until November 2017.

In this time, all interested parties were invited to submit their views on the draft standards. Submissions were received from people with experience of care, practitioners and policy makers.

The feedback received has been reviewed and the draft standards have been revised accordingly. A summary of the feedback and the main amendments will be published in a statement of outcomes document along with the final standards following Ministerial approval.

The standards describe what a child-centred, safe and effective children's residential centre should look like. They will be a framework for improvement for staff and a guide for children and their families as to what they should expect from a centre. The standards will apply to all children's residential centres.

New guidance on privacy impact assessment in health and social care launched

The forthcoming EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) was an important theme during the second health information seminar entitled 'National Health Information — Better data, better decisions' held in Dublin Castle in October.

To help health and social care services meet the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation, HIQA launched updated guidance and a user-friendly toolkit on how to conduct privacy impact assessments in health and social care.

Consultation on eHealth interoperability standards

We recently undertook a public consultation on the development of eHealth interoperability standards over a six-week period.

This consultation aimed to find out about people's views about where they believe eHealth interoperability standards are required and where the work of HIQA and that of the eHealth Standards Advisory Group should be targeted.

A total of 24 submissions were received – 20 submissions came through our online survey and four submissions were received by email. Nine submissions were made by individuals while 15 were made on behalf of organisations.

Each submission was read in its entirety and broken down into individual comments. This yielded a total of 117 comments. Each comment was then initially classified into one of 10 themes, which emerged from analysis of the submissions.

The comments spread across themes including messaging standards, ePrescribing standards, terminology standards, requests for datasets to be developed, standards for electronic patient records and electronic health records.

Fifteen comments of a general nature were received. A full statement of outcomes document detailing the submissions received has been developed and is published on our website.

Following discussion with our eHealth Standards Advisory Group, our priorities include the development of standards in ePrescribing, terminologies and electronic health records.

Update from our Older Persons' team



As we draw closer to the end of the year, it is important to reflect on the work done by our Older Persons' team in 2017. Eight out of 10 nursing homes (83%) have had a HIQA inspection so far this year.

The Older Persons' team has completed 629 inspections to date this year. Out of these, 341 inspections were carried out to inform a new registration application, vary an existing condition or inform the renewal of an existing registration, while 179 inspections focused on monitoring compliance.

The remaining 109 inspections had a quality improvement focus and looked specifically at this area. In 2017, the Older Persons team maintained a focus on dementia care and the service offered by nursing homes to assist those residents who suffer with dementia. This is particularly important due to the increased vulnerability of people who have dementia.

The Older Person's team has continued to work with providers to ensure that they have effective arrangements in place to ensure that in the event of a fire they can safely evacuate residents and staff. These arrangements must be underpinned by a robust system of training. HIQA plans to continue to focus on this during 2018.

The Older Persons team also focused on the arrangements in place to safeguard residents' money, in particular where a nursing home was acting as a pension agent. This is particularly relevant where there are residents who have some form of cognitive impairment, such as dementia.

HIQA has seen a significant improvement in the systems in place in nursing homes to ensure that new staff do not start working there until a Garda Síochána vetting disclosure has been obtained as set out in the National Vetting Bureau (Children And Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012.

From 31 December 2017, registered providers of nursing homes are required to ensure that all staff (not just new staff) employed in the nursing home have Garda Vetting in place.

During 2017, the work of the Older Persons team showed that the overwhelming majority of nursing homes are demonstrating a commitment to providing a high quality of care to residents.

Decontaminating reusable invasive medical devices in hospitals

We have set up a new External Advisory Group to help us extend our monitoring programme in acute hospitals to the decontamination of reusable invasive medical devices.

Hospitals will be monitored in this area against the [National Standards for the Prevention and Control of Healthcare Associated Infections in acute healthcare services](#).

The team is due to start inspections in this area in early 2018.

News on medication safety in public acute hospitals



Our Healthcare team has continued to conduct inspections as part of our medication safety monitoring programme. It has published nine new inspection reports under this programme since October.

These reports relate to inspections in:

- Letterkenny University Hospital, Co Donegal
- South Infirmery-Victoria University Hospital, Cork
- Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda
- Mercy University Hospital, Cork
- Mayo University Hospital, Castlebar
- St Luke's Hospital, Kilkenny
- The Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital, Dublin
- The Midland Regional Hospital, Portlaoise
- The Coombe Women and Infants University Hospital, Dublin.

Sean Egan, our Head of Healthcare, comments: "In general, HIQA continues to find varying medication safety practices in hospitals inspected.

"Many hospitals have relatively advanced medication safety programmes in place, and in some instances we have seen that some hospitals have advanced their approach in this area in more recent times which is encouraging.

"However, we also found opportunities for learning and improvement in many of the hospitals inspected. For instance, HIQA found that there was scope for improvement in working to promote a more effective culture of medication-related incident and near-miss reporting to maximise overall learning in the hospitals inspected."

The Healthcare team intends to publish an overview report of our collective findings over the coming months.

Our medication safety monitoring programme aims to examine and positively influence the use of evidence-based practice in public acute hospitals in relation to medication safety.

Our [Guide to the Health Information and Quality Authority's Medication Safety Monitoring Programme in Public Acute Hospitals](#) outlines the requirements for hospitals under phase one of the inspection programme.

Update from our Children's Team on foster care services inspections

In 2017 to date, our Children's Team has completed 14 themed inspections focusing on particular areas of care and one follow-up themed inspection of Child and Family Agency (Tusla) foster care services.

These inspections have examined the recruitment, assessment, approval, supervision and review arrangements in place for foster carers.

Ten of these inspection reports are published on the HIQA website. The overarching findings from these published reports are that the quality of general foster carer assessments was good and that general foster carers completed foundational training prior to approval.

There were good initiatives in two areas in relation to training of foster carers. Foster carer reviews were up to date in the Mayo service area and the quality of reviews was good in several Tusla service areas, including Louth Meath, Mayo and Galway/Roscommon.

Non-compliances identified in a number of service areas included:

- inadequate responses to allegations and serious concerns against foster carers
- unallocated foster carers not receiving safeguarding visits
- no evidence of Garda Síochána vetting on files of some foster carers.

In a number of service areas, there were long delays in the assessment of relative foster carers, who already had children placed with them. There was also a backlog in completing reviews of foster carers in 9 of the 10 service areas and the quality of some reviews was poor.

In the absence of reviews of foster carers, no other mechanism was in place to complete tasks such as updating of Garda vetting, health and safety checks, or assessing carers' continuing capacity to provide good quality safe care.

One risk-based inspection of a private foster care service has been completed to date in 2017.

Meanwhile, our Children Team has completed inspections of 21 children's residential centres.

We are also continuing to work with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs to progress the transfer of the registration and inspection function to HIQA for those children's residential centres operated by the private and voluntary sector.

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