



**Health  
Information  
and Quality  
Authority**

An tÚdarás Um Fhaisnéis  
agus Cáilíocht Sláinte

# **CORPORATE PLAN**

## **2019–2021**

*Safer Better Care*



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# 1 Foreword

We are pleased to introduce HIQA's Corporate Plan 2019–2021. This document outlines a clear direction for the coming three years, setting out the steps we will take to fulfil our mission. In the pages that follow, we reaffirm our core values, outline our operating environment and set out our strategic objectives.

HIQA was established in 2007. Since then our remit has grown substantially and we have firmly positioned ourselves as one of the key drivers of safety and quality in Ireland's health and personal social care services. We will build on this work over the lifetime of this plan, continuing to protect the public and improve the quality of services.

The significant work programme outlined in this plan is consistent with Government policy and is aligned to the objectives set out in the Department of Health's statement of strategy. Cognisant of the pressing need to modernise Ireland's health and social care system, we will engage with our stakeholders to give effect to the Sláintecare Report, and continue to respond to new Government policy and legislative requirements as they emerge.

HIQA has a broad and growing remit which encompasses a number of diverse functions. Over the next three years, we will pursue an ambitious agenda and strive to add value to the health and social care sector by consolidating our existing functions and assimilating new responsibilities.

In the years to 2021, we will seek to achieve excellence in our work, targeting our resources to areas of risk and working with our partners to safeguard people who may be vulnerable. We will continue to develop and utilise evidence in the conduct of independent health technology assessments and in the development of high-quality standards and guidance for health and social care services. We will also provide sound advice and strategic leadership in defining Ireland's health information landscape.

One measure of our success is how well we engage with the public, service users, organisations and other stakeholders. To be effective, we must draw on the strengths of our partners and seek new ways to listen to the views and experiences of patients and service users.

This plan has been devised following consultation with our stakeholders, with input and ideas from our staff. The extensive engagement from all corners shows a shared ambition for HIQA push forward with its overarching mission, making a real difference to people's lives.

We would like to thank everyone who was involved in developing this plan, and all those who took their time to shape our future direction.

**Pat O'Mahony**  
Chairperson

**Phelim Quinn**  
Chief Executive Officer

# 2 About the Health Information and Quality Authority

The Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) is the independent statutory authority established to promote safety and quality in the provision of health and personal social services for the benefit of the health and welfare of the public.

HIQA's mandate to date extends across a wide range of public, private and voluntary sector services. Reporting to the Minister for Health and engaging with the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, HIQA has responsibility for the following:

- **Setting standards for health and social care services** – Developing person-centred standards and guidance, based on evidence and best international practice, for health and social care services in Ireland.
- **Regulating health and social services** – Registering and inspecting residential services for older people and people with a disability, and children's special care units.
- **Monitoring services** – Monitoring the safety and quality of health services and children's social services, and investigating as necessary serious concerns about the health and welfare of people who use these services.
- **Health technology assessment** – Evaluating the clinical- and cost-effectiveness of health programmes, policies, medicines, medical equipment, diagnostic and surgical techniques, health promotion and protection activities, and providing advice to enable the best use of resources and the best outcome for people who use our health service.
- **Health information** – Advising on the efficient and secure collection and sharing of health information, setting standards, evaluating information resources and publishing information on the delivery and performance of Ireland's health and social care services
- **National Care Experience Programme** – Carrying out national service user experience surveys across a range of health services, in conjunction with the Department of Health and the HSE.

# HIQA's mission and values

## Mission statement

**Working to improve health and social care services for people in Ireland.**

## Our vision



## Values

HIQA is driven by its values, which reflect the essence of the legislation that defines our remit. They were developed by our Board and staff following consultation with external stakeholders.

In the development of this corporate plan, we reviewed these values to ensure that they remain relevant to our current and future work programmes. This corporate plan is underpinned by our values, set out below.

HIQA's values:	In practice, this means we will:
<b>PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST</b>	put the needs, voices, rights and protection of people who use health and social care services at the centre of our work.
<b>BEING FAIR AND OBJECTIVE</b>	be fair and objective in our dealings with people and organisations.
<b>BEING OPEN AND ACCOUNTABLE</b>	communicate the nature and outcomes of our work and accept full responsibility for our actions.
<b>STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE</b>	continually improve the quality of our work and use the best available evidence.
<b>WORKING TOGETHER</b>	listen to and work with those funding, planning, providing and using health and social care services.

# 3 Corporate Plan 2019–2021

## Development process

In May 2018, work began on HIQA's fifth corporate plan. HIQA's Board agreed a framework for the development of the plan and the Executive Management Team set up a working group, chaired by the Chief Executive Officer.

In developing our corporate plan, we considered our operating environment, our strengths and weaknesses, and how we can add maximum value to our health and social care system.

The working group oversaw comprehensive consultation and engagement with key stakeholders. These included the Department of Health, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, the Child and Family Agency (TUSLA), the Health Service Executive (HSE) and the Executive Director of Sláintecare. Internally, we consulted with Board members, the Executive Management Team and staff. Following these engagements, a draft corporate plan was developed for wider public consultation.

## Our operating environment

There are several external factors which have the potential to influence HIQA's programme of work and prioritisation process in the period to the end of 2021.

Ireland's growing and ageing population will result in an increase in the number of people requiring health and social care services. This changing demographic will pose a significant challenge to the delivery and the funding of these services. In recent years, there have been examples of service failures which have resulted in an erosion of public confidence in some of our health and social care services.

In terms of our legal remit and various functions, a number of initiatives announced by the Government will impact on the work of HIQA. These include:

- the progression of the Patient Safety Bill, which will extend HIQA's remit to private healthcare providers and will require service providers to report serious incidents to HIQA for information and action. In addition, the Patient Safety (Licensing) Bill will introduce a system of healthcare licensing to Ireland for the first time, with HIQA as the licensing body
- the Sláintecare Implementation Strategy, which sets out a framework for the reform of Ireland's health and social care system, as envisaged in the Oireachtas cross-party Sláintecare report
- regulation of medical exposure to ionising radiation
- a review of government policy on the provision of homecare, and plans for its regulation
- the development of government policy on adult safeguarding and the commencement of important aspects of the Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015, which will ensure that the rights of people accessing services that HIQA regulates are adequately promoted and protected
- the exploration and development by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs of more effective ways of assuring the quality and safety of children's social services

- introduction of the European Commission's Proposal for a Regulation on Health Technology Assessment (HTA), which will require standardisation of methods and processes and the use of common HTA tools
- the provision of digital health services, as outlined in the National Development Plan 2018–2027. This recognises the need for a new patient-centred health information policy for the digital age that ensures better patient care and an effective and modern health system.

Economic activity in Ireland is projected to remain robust but faces several uncertainties, particularly in light of the UK's proposed departure from the European Union. The improved economic situation of recent years has allowed growth in the financial and other resources available to HIQA, which has enabled the development of our capacity and capability in a range of areas. The positive economic situation has, however, led to a more challenging recruitment environment and increased staff turnover.

## Risks, challenges and opportunities

HIQA works within a broad and complex health and social care environment, involving many different stakeholders. This situation can create a range of challenges, risks and opportunities for both HIQA and our stakeholders, and must be actively managed in the years to come. These are broadly set out below.

### Collaborations

HIQA does not operate in isolation. We recognise that although our functions differ to those of our key stakeholders, our respective missions are often aligned as we work to improve the quality and safety of health and social care services in Ireland. By working in collaboration, we can harness the skills, expertise and insights of our partner organisations. By listening to the voices of others, including staff working in our health and social care services, we can gather important information that can help shape our collective efforts.

Over the last three years we have demonstrated how HIQA, together with our partners, can influence the delivery of safer, better services for the Irish public. Examples of these collaborations include a review of antimicrobial stewardship in public acute hospitals, the National Patient Experience Survey, the development of national standards for adult safeguarding with the Mental Health Commission, and HRB Collaboration in Ireland for Clinical Effectiveness Reviews (HRB- CICER).

In the coming three years we hope to further develop existing partnerships and create new collaborations to ensure that we are maximising the delivery of our legal functions and our corporate objectives. We also plan to foster partnerships with academic and research institutions to assist in the analysis and interpretation of data, to underpin our methodologies, to evaluate our effectiveness and impact, and to support and develop our staff.

Cognisant of the importance of the Sláintecare report, we will work with the Sláintecare Programme Office to provide support across all of our functions and competencies to effect the required change in our health and social care system. We will work with the Department of Health to ensure that the legislation guiding our programmes of regulation remains relevant to new service models, and engage with the Department, the HSE and Tusla to improve the quality and use of health and social care information.

In addition, memorandums of understanding and data sharing agreements will be developed with other public bodies and regularly reviewed to ensure that our work is well coordinated, and that information is appropriately shared to protect the health and welfare of people who use health and social care services.

### **Capacity and capability**

HIQA has a demanding and wide-ranging remit that has continued to grow and diversify since our establishment in 2007. This trend continues, with additional statutory functions planned in the coming years. As a result, the capacity and capability of HIQA to deliver our functions must be carefully scoped, planned and adequately resourced.

Over the next three years we aim to improve the experiences of those who interact with our processes through greater online functionality, making sure that our stakeholders experience streamlined, accessible and easy-to-use business processes. We will leverage available expertise in Ireland and in other jurisdictions so that the evidence underpinning our standards, guidelines and assessments is relevant and up-to-date. We will use information as business intelligence to target our resources effectively and in a way that achieves best value for money.

### **Adapting and responding to the needs of the environment**

HIQA needs the ability to respond effectively to a changing health and social care environment. As new policies are developed by Government, and legislation enacted by the Oireachtas, we must be alert to the resulting impact on our responsibilities and the delivery of our functions. In doing so, we will apply our experience and the knowledge leveraged from within our own and other jurisdictions to ensure that new policies and legislation relevant to HIQA are implemented in an effective and timely manner. People using services are at the heart of our work and we will continue to support and challenge the health and social care sector to provide high-quality, safe and person-centred care.

### **Compliance**

As a public sector body, HIQA is aware of its obligations to comply with all legislative requirements. Our focus on good governance and quality management practices ensures that we have the processes in place to achieve compliance. To assist us in this area we will ensure that our internal audit practices, our quality reviews and other evaluation processes are robust.

### **Reputation**

As our functions expand under existing and new legal frameworks, HIQA will face challenges to our processes, judgments and decisions. We recognise the potential risks to our reputation as a trusted State agency and continuously work to ensure that our processes are sound, can withstand scrutiny and challenge, and ensure we apply shared learning across the organisation.

## **Strategy map**

A strategy map has been developed to set out HIQA's mission statement, our aims and strategic objectives, and what we need to be successful.

# Working to improve health and social care services for people in Ireland

## OUR VISION



## OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



## WHAT WE NEED TO BE SUCCESSFUL



## Our strategic objectives

HIQA will achieve its vision by:

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### Advising on the effective use of information in health and social care services

**Over the next three years, we will:**

- continue to provide leadership in defining the health information landscape in Ireland by influencing policy and legislation. We will do this by engaging with informed and interested parties and developing recommendations in priority areas for health information
- support progress in the implementation of national priorities and forthcoming legislation by developing technical and information standards
- promote improvements in the quality of health information to underpin the delivery of safe care and informed decision-making.

**By December 2021, HIQA will have:**

- identified priority areas where recommendations are required to influence policy and legislation in the area of health information
- developed and tested quality-assured technical and information standards aligned to national priorities
- worked in collaboration to ensure the implementation of national eHealth initiatives
- demonstrated improvements in the quality and use of health information by reviewing and reporting on national data collections and developing supporting guidance for priority areas.

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### Assessing health technologies

**Over the next three years, we will:**

- produce high-quality health technology assessments (HTAs) and other evidence synthesis to inform major health policy and health service decisions, including National Clinical Guidelines and National Clinical Audit
- expand and consolidate capacity to conduct and use evidence synthesis and knowledge generation both in HIQA, and across the health system.

**By December 2021, HIQA will have:**

- developed and revised national HTA guidelines to promote the production of high-quality HTAs across the system
- conducted high-quality, effective HTAs and evidence syntheses which have been prioritised to add maximum value to healthcare decision-making and support the development of National Clinical Guidelines and National Clinical Audit

- maximised productivity by leveraging HTA work conducted elsewhere
- increased our capacity to synthesize evidence
- supported the development of national HTA- and other evidence synthesis capacity through education, training and research activities.

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## Collect service users views to drive improvements

### Over the next three years, we will:

- work with partner organisations to develop and implement a National Care Experience Programme to achieve measurable improvements for people using our health and social care system
- create a competency centre of international standing with the capacity, skills and expertise to extend the National Care Experience Programme to other health and social care areas
- use the voice of adults and children using and living in health and social care services to inform our monitoring and inspection programmes.

### By December 2021, HIQA will have:

- developed a roadmap for the National Care Experience Programme and implemented a prioritisation process for future programmes of work
- measured people's experiences of acute inpatient care, maternity services and two further prioritised services, and reported our findings to the public
- collaborated with national and international partners; published research findings; presented findings at conferences; and hosted seminars, conferences and workshops
- ensured the views and experiences of service users are evident in our inspection reports.

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## Regulating health and social care services

### Over the next three years, we will:

- carry out and further develop our programmes of regulation in line with our existing and future legal mandate
- predict and respond more quickly to services that are failing, or likely to fail, through the use of regulatory business intelligence
- use the full range of our enforcement powers where we find care is below standard, to make sure people's rights are protected and those responsible are held to account.

### By December 2021, HIQA will have:

- demonstrated a risk-based approach to registration and inspection that reflects the track record and fitness of a service provider

- used the regulatory framework to ensure that all regulated services clearly identify the person(s) with ultimate accountability for the service
- focused our hospital inspections on high-risk services, in line with the requirements of new legislation
- produced our inspection reports more quickly and in a more clear and concise manner
- improved the information we have about services and our ability to use this information to inform our regulatory programmes.

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## Setting standards and guidance for health and social care services

### Over the next three years, we will:

- work with those who fund, plan, provide and use services to identify and prioritise the areas within which HIQA will develop or revise national standards
- support the implementation of national standards through the development of guidance, digital learning solutions and self-assessment tools.

### By December 2021, HIQA will have:

- implemented a prioritisation process for the development of national standards and guidance for health and social care services
- developed evidence-based national standards and guidance that are aligned to Government and service priorities
- developed supporting material and guidance to improve understanding and implementation of standards and bring about better outcomes for service users.

## What we need to be successful

To enable us to achieve our strategic objectives, HIQA requires:

### Digital and data capability

**Over the next three years, we will:**

- define and deliver innovative and secure digital and data solutions to aid the effective delivery of our work and improve the way we interact with stakeholders.

**By December 2021, HIQA will have:**

- developed and implemented a digital and data roadmap, aligned to our corporate strategy and the eGovernment Strategy 2017–2020, that is suitable for the needs of HIQA and its stakeholders
- improved accessibility to and use of data to meet HIQA's ongoing needs
- enhanced internet-enabled technologies to ensure that the online channel is the most attractive option for external stakeholders to interact with HIQA.

### Leadership, governance and management

**Over the next three years, HIQA, led by its Board, will:**

- demonstrate that its systems of accountable decision-making and risk management continue to improve
- ensure our organisational structure supports the delivery of our strategic objectives and our legal functions
- ensure all of our staff live our values as set out in our codes of governance and business conduct.

**By December 2021, HIQA will have:**

- improved our organisation performance framework so that we can demonstrate our impact on the health and social care environment
- adapted our organisational structure to support the growth and diversification of our legal duties and functions
- continued to implement best practice in governance
- established mechanisms to ensure that all staff understand and represent the culture and the values of the organisation
- complied with relevant standards, regulations and legislation.

## Our people

### Over the next three years, we will:

- strive to become an employer of choice
- support our staff to develop their competencies and careers in line with our organisational need.

### By December 2021, HIQA will have:

- achieved external accreditation of our people management practices
- embedded a culture of listening and feedback throughout the organisation
- developed and utilised a competency framework for recruitment, performance management and learning and development
- developed accredited education programmes with academic partners.

## Operational agility

### Over the next three years, we will:

- ensure that HIQA is fully prepared for its role in the implementation of Sláintecare and other relevant legislation
- ensure the appropriate resources and systems are in place to support organisational change and growth
- remain responsive to issues and challenges in the health and social care environment where a HIQA response is required.

### By December 2021, HIQA will have:

- worked with relevant Government departments to prepare for our role in the implementation of new legislation, and to manage challenges in the wider health and social care environment
- developed and implemented a programme of work with the Sláintecare Programme Office as reflected in annual business plans
- developed accommodation and workforce models that meet the needs of the changing organisation
- undertaken annual financial, capital and workforce planning and forecasting exercises to ensure we have sufficient resources to deliver our functions
- have systems in place to manage diverse funding streams.

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## Quality and change management

### Over the next three years, we will:

- implement a business excellence framework
- ensure our work is reviewed and underpinned by our experience and the best available evidence, demonstrating consistency in our regulation and other business processes.

### By December 2021, HIQA will have:

- completed an external review or achieved accreditation in at least two of our functions
- achieved external certification in a business excellence framework
- managed change, growth and diversification utilising recognised methodologies
- evaluated and audited key elements of our regulation and other business processes.

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## Collaboration and constructive relationships

### Over the next three years, we will:

- develop, maintain and enhance relationships that focus on improving the safety and quality of health and social care services
- actively engage with the public and our stakeholders to communicate the values, work and remit of HIQA and maximise public and service user involvement in our programmes of work.

### By December 2021, HIQA will have:

- strengthened relationships with existing and new and stakeholders
- held forums for providers and people using services or their advocates
- worked collaboratively with partners on projects of mutual interest, and on the commencement of new functions
- established a citizen forum that enables increased public and service user involvement in our work
- delivered enhanced communications approaches that reflect our values, impact and work
- explored new ways of engaging with our stakeholders, including the use of new methods and technologies
- delivered and evaluated our customer action plan, which sets out our service standards
- built partnerships with academic bodies to drive innovation and excellence in the work that we do.

## 4 Resources

HIQA receives annual funding from the Department of Health and collects application fees for the registration of designated centres. In addition, a number of grants have been awarded to HIQA and we may apply for additional grants in the future to undertake work aligned to our mission.

The availability of human and financial resources is a prerequisite for the successful delivery of this plan and the achievement of our strategic objectives. This corporate plan has been developed on the basis of a number of assumptions, which include the following:

- The expansion of our remit will occur on a phased basis with sufficient time and additional resourcing provided to prepare for such work streams, including the supports required within our organisation
- Should they be required, additional resources will be identified and put in place to support unplanned activities
- Consideration of and response to sanction requests for staff will be timely
- The grant awarded to HIQA by the Department of Health over the coming three years will adjust in line with changes to public sector pay scales and general operating costs.

## 5 Implementation and monitoring

The implementation of this corporate plan will be monitored and reviewed by HIQA's Board and Executive Management Team on an ongoing basis. In addition, a performance delivery agreement is in place between HIQA and the Department of Health, which includes processes for monitoring performance.

The strategic objectives set out in this plan, together with government priorities and external challenges, will inform HIQA's annual business plans. The delivery of these business plans will ensure that our strategic objectives are delivered over the life span of this corporate plan. However, should HIQA be required to undertake an unplanned stream of work, the achievement of our strategic objectives may be delayed.