

About the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA)

The Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) is an independent statutory authority established to promote safety and quality in the provision of health and social care 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, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, HIQA has responsibility for the following:

Setting standards for health and social care services

Developing person-centred standards and guidance, based on evidence and international best practice, for health and social care services in Ireland.

Regulating social care services

The Chief Inspector is responsible for registering and inspecting residential services for older people and people with a disability, and children's special care units.

Regulating health services

Regulating medical exposure to ionising radiation.

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 outcomes for people who use our health service.

Health information

Advising on the efficient and secure collection and sharing of health information, standards setting, evaluating 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 Quality Service Action Plan 2022-2024

HIQA's Mission, Vision and Values

Our vision

Safer services and better care for all

Our mission

Protecting service users, and working with stakeholders to enhance and enable equity, quality and safety of health and social care services for all people in Ireland.

Our Values:

Promoting and protecting human rights

We will work to promote human rights as well as identifying, challenging and reporting on breaches of rights in health and social care services

Putting people first

We will put the voice and needs of people at the centre of our work and strive to identify, challenge and report on breaches to agreed standards

Being fair, objective and equitable

We will be fair, objective and consistent in our dealing with people and organisations

Being open and accountable

We will communicate the nature and outcomes of our work in an open and transparent way, accepting full responsibility for our actions

Striving for excellence

We will continually innovate and improve the quality of our work through robust research, striving for methodical rigour and using the best available resources and evidence

Promoting quality

We will promote quality within our own organisation and across all health and social care services

Working collaboratively

We will engage and work collaboratively with all our stakeholders

HIQA's Quality Service Action Plan 2022-2024

Purpose of Customer Charters and Customer Action Plans

The *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies* requires all public service bodies to have a Customer Charter and a Customer Action Plan. A Customer Charter is a short document which acts as a public commitment to the customer on the level of service they can expect to receive when dealing with a State body. The Customer Action Plan is more detailed and describes how the customer charter commitments will be delivered and evaluated by the State body. HIQA is committed to providing a quality service to all its stakeholders and our action plan focusses on areas aligned to the Principles of Quality Customer Service, where additional improvements can be made. In HIQA, we refer to the Customer Charter as our *Quality Service Charter* and the action plan as our *Quality Service Action Plan*.

What quality means in HIQA:

Quality means delivering our work effectively, efficiently and consistently, to an agreed standard, while delivering our statutory requirements. It means our organisation is agile in responding to stakeholder feedback and in identifying and implementing continual improvement.

Code of conduct:

As a State body, HIQA is committed to acting in a consistent, ethical and prudent manner which aligns with our statutory responsibilities. Individual behaviour and practice can be a significant factor in the effectiveness of an organisation, its reputation and the level of confidence and trust the public has in it.

12 Guiding Principles of Quality Customer Service

The Quality Customer Service (QCS) initiative was established in 1997 and the network was set up in 2000 and is now facilitated by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

The network has developed 12 Guiding Principles of Quality Customer Service and these provide a common basis for driving quality improvements across the public service. HIQA uses each of the 12 principles to set out its commitment to QCS, and has identified key performance indicators to help benchmark our achievements each year over the three-year cycle of the quality service action plan.

Quality Service Standards	Equality/Diversity	Physical Access
Information	Timeliness and Courtesy	Complaints
Appeals	Consultation & Evaluation	Choice
Official Languages Equality	Better Co-ordination	Internal Customer

Corporate plan objectives 2022—2024

HIQA's corporate plan places a strong emphasis on quality and our corporate plan objectives (CPOs) and annual business plan objectives (BPOs) are referenced where appropriate in this Quality Service Action Plan.



Key enablers for achieving HIQA's Corporate Plan Objectives

Our Corporate Plan 2022 – 2024 has six key objectives. Strategic objective 6 ensures that our key enablers support us to innovate and to excel in the way we carry out our work. We have identified a range of supports to enable us to deliver our strategic functions efficiently and effectively, and to innovate and excel in the way in which we execute our work. These align with many of the principles of a quality public service and are as follows:

6.1 Motivated, skilled people

We will strive to have a culture that supports people in their work and in their development, to enable them to deliver personal and organisational objectives consistent with our values.

6.2 Research excellence

We will review and enhance our structures to ensure that we have the capacity and capability for research excellence.

6.3 Responsiveness, flexibility and agility

We will maintain the ability to respond and adapt, with speed, to changes in our legislative framework and in our wider operating environment.

6.4 Digital and data capability

We will continue to develop our digital and data capabilities using modern digital technologies combined with new ways of working in our business processes and in how we engage and interact with our stakeholders.

6.5 Collaborative, constructive relationships

We will work with all of our stakeholders, be cognizant of our distinct roles, in areas of mutual interest, to advance the quality and safety of health and social care.

6.6 Leadership, governance and management

We will provide ongoing assurance to our stakeholders as to the efficacy of HIQA's governance structures and operational processes as aligned to this strategy and in compliance with the relevant codes and legislation.

6.7 High-quality processes

The design, development and review of our work is underpinned by processes that ensure quality and consistency.

Significant achievements for HIQA during 2023:

1. ISO 9001:2015 accreditation for HIQA's quality management system. This accreditation demonstrates the quality of HIQA services through a framework of consistent service delivery.
2. HIQA has been awarded an NSAI 'Excellence Through People' award, achieving platinum accreditation. The award encourages HIQA to develop the full potential of employees, promote employee learning and development and acts as a business improvement tool.
3. HIQA has established a Community of Practice for Quality, which facilitates staff to share their knowledge and use best practice initiatives across the business areas.
4. HIQA has placed a focus on a human rights-based approach by providing training for inspection staff. To date, almost 200 staff have completed the training.
5. A stakeholder survey was issued to social care services in 2023. A summary of the findings will be included in the annual report.
6. HIQA is delivering a Digital and Data Transformation Strategy that will enhance HIQA's capability to increase digital collaboration capabilities and make better data-driven decisions. This includes plans for a new portal with extended functionality for providers to transact business with HIQA.

The following table provides a detailed update on the delivery of HIQA's commitments and associated performance indicators at the end of 2023.

HIQA's Quality Service Action Plan 2023

HIQA's Quality Service Action Plan 2023		
Principle: Quality Service Standard	<i>Publish a statement (Customer Charter) that outlines the nature and quality of service which customers can expect, and display it prominently at the point of service delivery.</i>	
Our commitment	Key performance indicators (KPI)	At the end of 2023, we have achieved:
<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate HIQA's commitment to quality through our Quality Customer Charter and Action Plan 2022- 2024. Set out our commitment to quality in our Quality Service Statement. 	<p>We will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Publish our Quality Service Charter 2022 – 2024 on our website. 2. Provide an update on the Quality Service Action Plan on our website annually. 3. Display our Quality Statement in each HIQA office. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Quality Service Charter and Action Plan 2022 - 2024 was published on HIQA's website on 9 December 2022. This followed a six-week public consultation. 2. Updates on achievements against key performance indicators (KPIs) for 2023 published annually. 3. HIQA's Quality Service Charter is displayed in the reception areas in the Dublin, Cork and Galway offices. It can be viewed online at Quality Service Charter 2022-2024.

Principle: Equality/Diversity	<i>Ensure the rights to equal treatment established by equality legislation, and accommodate diversity, so as to contribute to equality for the groups covered by the equality legislation (under the grounds of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller Community). Identify and work to eliminate barriers to access to services for people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, and for those facing geographic barriers to services.</i>	
Our commitment	Key performance indicators	At the end of 2023, we have achieved:
<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure our standards, guidance and inspection methodologies are underpinned by principles of equality and human rights. • Use focus groups, advisory groups and subject matter experts to contribute and advise on the development of work programmes such a national standards e.g. children’s standards. • Take action and report where we find the rights of people who use services are being infringed upon or threatened. • When undertaking health technology assessments we will conduct an ethical analysis with a focus on the rights of people. • Support a culture where the Equality Policy, and Dignity and Respect in the Workplace procedure are known, understood and adhered to by all staff. • Continue to build a culture and working environment that ensures HIQA employees feel engaged, valued, and 	<p>We will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote and publicise <i>Guidance on a Human Rights-based Approach in Health and Social Care Services</i> which was developed by HIQA with Safeguarding Ireland. 2. Provide human rights training to inspection staff. 3. Develop a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. 4. Work towards the Government’s commitment to increasing the public service employment target for persons with disabilities from a minimum of 3% to a minimum of 6% by 2024 on an incremental basis, under the <i>Comprehensive Strategy for People with Disabilities 2015 – 2024</i>). 5. Incorporate a focus on the rights of people in published ethical analyses by HIQA. 6. Incorporate a focus on the rights of people in our assessment and judgment 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Guidance on a Human Rights-Based Approach in Health and Social Care Services</i> is published on www.hiqa.ie. HIQA has published an e-learning course on a rights-based approach in health and social care services. It has four modules and is hosted on HSEland and HIQA’s Learning Hub. www.hseland.ie In March 2023, members of the Health Information and Standards (HIS) Directorate attended the University College Dublin (UCD) Legal Medicine: Human Rights and Medical Law: Law and Practice in Ireland Roundtable Discussion on Translating a Human Rights-Based Approach into Health and Social Care Practice. 2. HIQA has provided training for inspection staff on a human rights-based approach, since its introduction in 2021. To date, almost 200 staff have completed the training.

<p>fulfilled, and are equipped and supported to perform their roles to the highest standard.</p>	<p>framework for monitoring International Protection Accommodation Services.</p> <p>7. Include representation from the target stakeholder group when developing standards.</p>	<p>3. HIQA’s Board is actively committed to promoting diversity and inclusion within HIQA. A Diversity and Inclusion Group is active within HIQA. A People Strategy is currently being developed by the Human Resource Team which includes a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.</p> <p>4. HIQA is committed to increasing the public service employment target for persons with disabilities to 6% by 2024. This was last measured in March 2023 for the year 2022 at 5.32%. The 2023 figure will be available from March 2024.</p> <p>5. All health technology assessments (HTAs) undertaken by HIQA consider equality, diversity and inclusion appropriately and systematically. Ethical analysis is considered in every project and is included in publications, where appropriate.</p> <p>6. HIQA advocates for and promotes a human rights-based approach to health and social care services. The International Protection Accommodation Service (IPAS) assessment-judgment framework has been developed from a rights-based perspective, which incorporates the right to a voice for people living in accommodation centres. The Guidance for Assessment for Designated centres (for older people and centres for people with disabilities) have been updated to give further emphasis on rights of residents.</p> <p>7. HIQA holds public consultations on all draft national standards. The team utilises a number of</p>
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		cross-sectoral working groups to inform the development of tools to support the implementation of relevant standards into practice. These include staff, advocates and people with experience of using health and social care services.
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Principle: Physical Access		
<i>Provide clean, accessible public offices that ensure privacy, comply with occupational and safety standards and, as part of this, facilitate access for people with disabilities and others with specific needs.</i>		
Our commitment	Key performance indicators	At the end of 2023, we have achieved:
<p>We will comply with requirements of the Disability Act 2005 (the Act) by ensuring that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas in our offices to which the general public have admittance are accessible to people with disabilities (section 25). • All our offices are maintained to a high standard that comply with relevant health and safety legislation. • Our mainstream public services are accessible to people with disabilities insofar as this is practical and appropriate (section 26). • Information is provided in an accessible format to persons with disabilities (section 27). • HIQA’s Access Officer is responsible for providing and coordinating assistance and guidance to persons with disabilities accessing services. They will also act as a point of contact for people with disabilities wishing to access such services (section 26(2)). 	<p>We will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that any upgrades carried out on HIQA offices will take account of accessibility for all. 2. Provide clean, accessible office space that affords privacy to staff and visitors and complies with occupational and safety standards. 3. Promote information on how to contact the Access Officer in a more prominent place on our website. 4. Update Safety Statement and ensure detailed health and safety arrangements are in place. 	<p>Achieved in 2023:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HIQA’s three offices are accessible. Additional space in the Cork office was made available in 2023 and upgrades to the Dublin office are planned for 2024. A new office was opened in Galway in 2023 and this is fully accessible. 2. HIQA’s offices comply with all occupational and safety standards. The offices are also routinely cleaned at least twice a day. 3. Contact details for HIQA’s Access Officer and information on HIQA accessibility are available on our website at https://www.hiqa.ie/accessibility 4. HIQA reviews its Safety Statement annually and communicates same to all staff.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where possible, goods or services purchased by HIQA are accessible to persons with disabilities (section 27).		
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Principle: Information	<i>Take a proactive approach in providing information that is clear, timely and accurate, is available at all points of contact, and meets the requirements of people with specific needs. Ensure that the potential offered by Information Technology is fully availed of and that the information available on public service websites follows the guidelines on web publication. Continue the drive for simplification of rules, regulations, forms, information leaflets and procedures.</i>	
Our commitment	Key Performance Indicators	At the end of 2023, we have achieved:
<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a “digital enablement” approach to how we conduct business and implement online solutions and technologies to innovate how we work and engage. • Provide innovative digital and data solutions to significantly improve efficiency by eliminating paper-based interactions. • Provide a variety of formats so information can be widely accessed by a diverse population while being mindful that not everyone uses technology and prefer paper documents. 	<p>We will avail of information technology by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Working with stakeholders to deliver digital solutions for Regulation by Q1 2023. 2. Using information (business intelligence) to better inform our work. <p>We will facilitate public understanding of information by adhering to best practice on the provision of information (NDA toolkit):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Ensuring our website continues to meet Level AA Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). ii. Providing details of FOI requests received by HIQA in our annual reports and on our website. iii. Supporting our staff by providing guidance and training on communicating in plain English. iv. Using infographics and plain English summaries to communicate detailed and complex information. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Digital and Data Transformation Strategy supports key business capabilities that enable the business to meet its goals. <p>Business systems and infrastructure are operationally supported and aligned with our Digital and Data Transformation Strategy. This is to be continued through to 2024/2025. HIQA has implemented upgrades to VPN, key infrastructure/systems, Microsoft Teams and additional cyber security capabilities throughout 2023.</p> <p>Public understanding of information has been enhanced by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Website upgrades are continued to meet Level AA Web content for Accessibility and Guidelines (WCAG). ii. Details of FOI requests are provided in the Disclosure Log on the www.hiqa.ie: An overview of FOI requests is provided in HIQA’s annual report. iii. Training in house style and plain English was delivered to staff during 2023.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> v. Providing information in hard copy format where appropriate. vi. Adhering to our public duty as per the Irish Sign Language Act 2017, as appropriate. vii. Public consultations will be conducted through a range of different mechanisms to reach maximum audience. viii. Meeting our stated response times to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notifications • Registrations • Receipt of unsolicited information • Complaints • Parliamentary Questions • Freedom of Information requests. 	<p>Members of the Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Team received plain English training from National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA), the learnings from which were extended to other teams.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. Infographics have been used throughout the year to accompany the publication of a range of reports such as overview reports on children's services and on designated centres for people with disabilities. v. A range of booklets, leaflets, FAQs and other documents were printed and distributed as appropriate during 2023. Hard copies of reports and other publications were also distributed at stakeholder engagement events and to parties who contacted HIQA to request these. vi. HIQA ensured that all reasonable efforts are made to ensure that interpretation into Irish Sign Language is provided when requested. vii. In order to promote public consultations, a range of mechanisms were used including uploading information, feedback forms and infographics to our website, engaging directly with stakeholders, and promoting the public consultation through press releases and social media channels. viii. HIQA's Annual Report 2023 will contain details on HIQA's response times on information received from regulatory
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		<p>activities, complaints, P Q and FOI Requests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2023, HIQA received 49,635 pieces of solicited information. These were received via the provider portal were reviewed within 5 working days of submission to HIQA. • In 2023, The Chief Inspector within HIQA processed 879 Applications to register and renew social care services. Of these, 100% of Applications were processed within 5 days. <p>In 2023, HIQA received 1,879 pieces of unsolicited information. 96% of these were processed within two working days of receipt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIQA received 5 complaints in 2023. All complaints were responded to within response times outlined in the Complaints Policy available at https://www.hiqa.ie/reports-and-publications/corporate-publication/complaints-policy. • HIQA received 81 parliamentary questions in 2023 and these were responded to within the timelines agreed with the relevant Departments. • In 2022, all FOI requests received, a total of 118, were handled within the prescribed response time. Data on 2023 response times will be published in our Annual Report 2023.
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Principle: Timeliness and Courtesy		
<i>Deliver quality services with courtesy, sensitivity and the minimum delay, fostering a climate of mutual respect between provider and customer. Give contact names in all communications to ensure ease of ongoing communications.</i>		
Our commitment	Key performance indicators	At the end of 2023, we have achieved:
<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In line with our values, provide a quality service to all our stakeholders and interact with people in a clear, polite, accessible, professional manner. • Deal with your query as quickly as possible - if your query is unusual or raises complex issues, we may arrange a call back at a time convenient for you or we may ask you to write to us. This is so that we can give you the most appropriate answer possible. 	<p>We will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All emails to info@hiqa.ie will be acknowledged and sent to the relevant business area for a reply. 2. Provide customer service training to relevant staff. 3. Create awareness of revised Code of Conduct and in particular, awareness of the standards of professional conduct and practice for authorised persons. 4. Provide information on the number and type of unsolicited and solicited information received by HIQA in our annual report. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All emails received to info@hiqa.ie were reviewed and sent to the relevant business area for reply. A new auto response has been implemented on info@hiqa.ie to assure stakeholders that their query has been received and that HIQA is working on a response. 2. Training on customer service is integrated into our staff induction training. 3. A revised Code of Conduct was published in May 2023. Feedback was sought from all staff and the published version was circulated to all staff. New HIQA staff are provided with a Staff Information Guide on their first day of employment, which includes a description of the Code and a link to where it is located on HIQA's website. In addition, all new staff must complete the Corporate Governance e-learning module which explains staff responsibilities and the Code of Conduct to which staff are obliged to adhere. 4. The number and type of unsolicited and solicited information will be published in our 2023 Annual Report and Regulation Overview Reports.

Principle: Complaints		
<i>Maintain a well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of dealing with complaints about the quality of service provided.</i>		
Our commitment	Key performance indicators	At the end of 2023, we have achieved:
<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome comments, suggestions and complaints about the performance and conduct of HIQA in the discharge of its statutory duties. • We regard feedback and complaints as opportunities to review practice, procedures and identify areas for improvement. • Provide information booklets on our website to guide people on how to make a complaint about a health or social care service. • Regularly review our complaints process and make improvements based on feedback. • Ensure clear accessible communications channels that allow service users and other stakeholders to share their views, concerns and feedback. 	<p>We will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Publish our <i>Policy for the management of complaints about HIQA</i> on our website. 2. Provide the information on how to make a complaint to a more prominent place on our website. 3. Meet the timelines as set out in our Complaints policy for managing complaints. 4. Provide an overview on the number of complaints received in our annual report. 5. Provide feedback on the quality improvement initiatives put in place following review of complaints. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HIQA's Complaints Policy was updated in 2023 and the updated policy document is available on the HIQA website. 2. The complaints email address and how to make a complaint is prominently displayed on the 'Contact Us' page of HIQA's website. 3. All complaints received in 2023 were reviewed and responded to in line with the timelines in the Complaints Policy. 4. The number of complaints received in 2023 will be available in our annual report when published. 5. Feedback on complaints is taken as an opportunity for improvement and shared with relevant business areas and at meetings of the Executive Management Team.

Principle: Appeals		<i>Similarly, maintain a formalised, well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to use system of appeal/review for customers who are dissatisfied with decisions in relation to services.</i>	
Our Commitment	Key Performance Indicators	At the end of 2023, we have achieved:	
<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to underpinning the design, development and review of our work by processes that ensure quality and consistency. • Treat feedback and complaints as opportunities to review practice, procedures and identify areas for improvement. 	<p>We will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide information on how to appeal decisions made by HIQA to a more prominent place on our website. 2. Meet the timelines for our appeals process as set out in our policies in the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints • Freedom of Information • Recruitment • GDPR rights requests 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information on how to appeal decisions is included in the HIQA Complaints Policy which is available on the HIQA website. 2. Details of how to make a complaint and or appeal can be accessed at https://www.hiqa.ie/search?keywords=complaints <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All complaints and submissions are reviewed by the Senior Management Team and Executive Management Team, as appropriate. • In 2022, all three Freedom of Information (FOI) internal review applications were handled within the prescribed response time. • Recruitment: HIQA offers all unsuccessful candidates an opportunity to appeal. This is communicated via email. Information on the Authority’s appeal process is available @ www.cpsa.ie. In most instances, recruitment review and appeals are resolved through informal mechanism. All reviews and appeals are tracked by Human Resources. 	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• GDPR Rights Requests: HIQA receives GDPR rights requests and requests for deletion of information or correction of data. For these requests there is a monthly deadline set out in GDPR. In line with HIQA policy, the Data Protection Officer makes the decision on requests.• There is no internal review or appeal process, however requestors may lodge a complaint to the regulator, the Data Protection Commission if they are unsatisfied with the Data Protection Officer's response. https://www.dataprotection.ie/
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Principle: Consultation and Evaluation		<i>Provide a structured approach to meaningful consultation with, and participation by, the customer in relation to the development, delivery and review of services. Ensure meaningful evaluation of service delivery.</i>	
Our Commitment	Key Performance Indicators	At the end of 2023, we have achieved:	
<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to facilitating and supporting stakeholders to express their views and provide valuable input and feedback. • Speak with service users during the course of regulatory work in health and social care services and include their opinions and experiences when designing regulatory programmes and standards. • Seek feedback and take appropriate account of it in our planning and decision-making. • Ensure clear accessible communications channels that allow service users and other stakeholders to share their views, concerns and feedback. 	<p>We will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seek structured feedback from our stakeholders and use this feedback to improve the way we work. 2. Provide information in our annual report and overview reports on how we interacted with service users and used the information they provided us with to drive improvement in health and social care services. 3. Hold provider representative forum meetings and run roadshow events with providers and persons in charge, where applicable. 4. Integrate consultations routinely into key projects to inform our work, where appropriate. 5. Publish reports on the impact of our work in Health Technology Assessment (HTA) and Health Information and Standards (HIS). 6. Use focus groups, advisory groups and subject matter experts to contribute and advise on the development of work programmes. 7. Publish stakeholder involvement reports. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HIQA ensures clear and open lines of communication to hear the opinions and experiences of those using services. These include service providers, staff, the general public and other stakeholders. HIQA learns from them and acts on the feedback received. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. A stakeholder survey was issued to registered providers and providers of Children social care services in 2023. A summary of the findings were issued to each provider. The recommendations from the report will be implemented to improve the way we work in 2024. 1.2. During 2023, inspectors gathered information, through conversation with residents on inspection. Residents also completed questionnaires which are given in advance of announced inspections. Residents' families, friends and advocates can request to meet and talk to inspectors. 1.3. The HIS Directorate has established a number of cross-sectoral working groups to inform the development of tools to support the implementation of relevant standards into practice. These include staff, advocates and 	

		<p>people with experience of using health and social care services.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.4. HTA establishes expert advisory groups for each project. These groups consist of key stakeholders who provide expert input to the evidence synthesis and review the final report. The details of the expert advisory groups are included in the published documents available on the HIQA website. 2. HIQA's annual reports and health and social care overview reports routinely include information on how HIQA interacts with stakeholders and service users to help drive improvements in health and social care services. 3. Both the Disability Services Team and the Older Persons Services team held a range of events for service providers during 2023. These events include webinars, provider representative forums and roadshows. These events were well attended and address topics relevant to the provision of good, quality services and assisting providers to address issues that might arise for them. 4. HIQA consults routinely with Stakeholders on key issues or projects to inform our work, for example; the Children's Services Team met Tusla for discussions on a number of operational and strategic issues, including
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		<p>matters of concern that arise during the course of inspection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant consultation was also undertaken by the International Protection Accommodation Services (IPAS) Team to prepare providers for the Monitoring of IPAS services which commenced in January 2024. • A number of public consultations have taken place in 2023. Consultation is used by HTA and the HIS Teams to ensure key stakeholders have an opportunity to provide expert input and review final reports. • In 2023, HTA conducted a public consultation on the expansion of the childhood immunisation schedule to include varicella (chickenpox) vaccination in 2023. The statement of outcomes of the consultation was published subsequently. • The HIS Directorate held public consultations on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the draft <i>National Standards for information management in health and social care</i> ○ the recommendations for health information modelling ○ health and social care portals and ○ ICT enablement of older persons <p>5. HTA and HIS publish all reports and these are available to view on the HIQA website.</p>
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		<p>HTA and HIS published Knowledge Sharing and Impact Assessment Reports 2022. The HTA report outlines the metrics for measuring impact in terms of outputs, reach, engagement and change. The HIS report demonstrates the effectiveness of HIS work and provides examples of positive stakeholder feedback.</p> <p>6. HIQA's HIS and HTA Directorates use expert advisory groups consisting of key stakeholders for all projects. In addition, significant engagement is conducted for all HTA projects outside of formal expert advisory groups with subject matter experts for each project.</p> <p>7. The National Care Experience Programme has published four reports covering the findings of the first ever national survey of maternity bereavement care in Ireland at www.yourexperience.ie</p> <p>HIQA's annual reports and overview reports include information on engagement with service users to help drive improvements in health and social care services. These reports are published on the HIQA website.</p>
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Principle: Choice	<i>Provide choice, where feasible, in service delivery including payment methods, location of contact points, opening hours and delivery times. Use available and emerging technologies to ensure maximum access and choice, and quality of delivery.</i>	
Our Commitment	Key Performance Indicators	At the end of 2023, we have achieved:
<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through our Digital and Data Transformation Strategy take a “digital first” approach to how we conduct our business, implement online solutions and technologies to innovate how we work and engage. • Aim to ensure that our communications are channelled through a variety of platforms so they can be widely accessed by a diverse population while being mindful that not everyone uses technology. 	<p>We will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Operate a Provider Portal that allows online submissions of regulatory notification information from designated centres. 2. Provide a dedicated phone support service for users of the portal, five days a week during business hours. 3. Work to ensure that over the lifetime of this charter, through the implementation of HIQA’s digital and data strategy, that provision will be made to enable the submission of regulatory notifications via a provider portal for all services that HIQA monitors and regulates. 4. Hard copies of documents will be made available when sought. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HIQA’s portal for registered providers is continually utilised for regulatory notifications. 2. Portal support can be requested through portalsupport@hiqa.ie and call-backs are done where required. 3. The Digital and Data Transformation Strategy (DDTS) includes plans for a new portal with extended functionality and submission of information to HIQA. Collaboration technology capabilities were implemented to further enhance Hybrid working arrangements. 4. Hard copies of reports and other documents were provided when requested throughout the year.

Principle: Official Languages Equality		
<i>Provide quality services through Irish and /or bilingually and inform customers of their right to choose to be communicated with in one or other of the official languages.</i>		
Our Commitment	Key Performance Indicators	At the end of 2023, we have achieved:
<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strive to provide a higher standard of customer service through Irish to fulfil our obligations under the Official Languages Act 2003. • Do all that is reasonable to ensure that interpretation into Irish. • Sign Language is provided for a person who is competent in that language and seeks to avail of / or access to statutory entitlements or services provided by/or under statute by that public body as per the Irish Sign Language Act 2017. 	<p>We will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage staff members to complete the Certificate in Professional Irish. 2. Publish our annual report in Irish. 3. Post on social media in Irish. 	<p>HIQA continues to work to ensure it is meeting its obligations under the Official Languages Acts, including regarding signage, stationery and corresponding with public queries in Irish.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HIQA encourages the use of Irish language among staff and supports participation in Irish language courses. Seven staff members have completed this training to date. 2. HIQA's Annual Report 2022 is available on the HIQA website in both Irish and English. 3. HIQA continues to post on social media in Irish regularly. HIQA continues to work to ensure 20% of its advertising is in Irish, and 5% of advertising spend is in Irish language media. Advertising in HIQA is primarily in respect of job advertising and recruitment posts and promotion of a public consultation or public survey.

Principle: Better Co-ordination		
<i>Foster a more coordinated and integrated approach to delivery of public services.</i>		
Our Commitment	Key Performance Indicators	At the end of 2023, we have achieved:
<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore opportunities to consolidate and expand collaborations with national and international partners, including EU organisations, to enhance the continued quality and efficiency of our work. • Share relevant business intelligence with providers, people using services, policy-makers and the general public. • Expand and consolidate the capacity to conduct and use evidence synthesis and knowledge generation both in HIQA and across the health system. • Work with decision-makers to promote opportunities to embed the use of high-quality evidence synthesis outputs to inform key practice, planning and policy decisions. • Communicate widely our experience and learnings from the regulation of health and social care services. 	<p>We will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work collaboratively with other public, private and voluntary bodies in developing standards, guidance, patient experience surveys and informing policy. 2. Establish and maintain, where appropriate, Joint Working Arrangements, to ensure cooperation with our external partners, working effectively through maintaining Memorandums of Understanding. 3. Identify and participate in international fora/collaborations to develop links and share knowledge with international counterparts. 4. Submit academic papers on our work to international journals. Submit abstracts for presentation at international conferences or seminars. 5. Publish reports on evidence synthesis and stakeholder involvement and disseminate to international counterparts. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HIQA has worked with the Department of Health and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth to progress the development of national standards, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Children's Social Services, Overarching Children's Standards for the Care and Support of Children, and Home Support. Implementation of support tools such as guidance, animations, infographics and videos have been developed in collaboration with key stakeholders to help those working in health and social care settings to understand our programmes of work and to help them understand and implement the national standards applicable to their work. ○ HIQA has also participated in a number of expert advisory groups and committees relevant to its work programme, including: ○ National Clinical Effectiveness Committee (NCEC) ○ National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) ○ Expert Review Body on Nursing and Midwifery – Implementation Action Group

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP) Technology Review Group* <p>2. HIQA is continually establishing and maintaining joint working arrangements and memorandums of understanding (MOU). All are available on <i>'Who we work with'</i> on HIQA's website.</p> <p>In 2023, HIQA published the MOU with the Dental Council and an information sharing protocol between HIQA and the Office of the National Confidential Recipient.</p> <p>The HIS Directorate are involved in the following European working Groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ EU QUANTUM: Developing a Data Quality and Utility Label for HealthData@EU ○ EU TEDHAS II: EU Joint Action 'Towards the European Health Data Space' ○ EU working group on European 1+ Million Genomes Initiatives <p>3. HIQA is representing Ireland on the Coordination Group and its Joint Clinical Assessment and Methodology subgroups to guide implementation of the HTA Regulation which is due to be applied in January 2025. Members of the HTA Senior Management Team have attended six meetings for the Regulation</p>
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		<p>(EU) 2021/2282EN on Health Technology Assessment (HTAR) in 2023.</p> <p>The HTA Directorate also represented HIQA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Director HTA has participated in three meetings of the INAHTA Annual Congress Planning Committee. ○ The Director HTA has been nominated to represent Ireland on the EC HTA Committee which oversees the development of the implementing acts for the HTA regulation. ○ The Director co-chaired the ISPOR Europe HTA Roundtable. ○ The Director participated in a meeting of the ISPOR HTA Council and the ISPOR HTA Payer Summit Planning Committee. ○ A member of the HTA Senior Management Team has joined the GINAHTA Steering Committee, which explores common methods and facilitates collaboration and sharing of products between the HTA (represented by INAHTA) and the guideline communities (represented by G-I-N). <p>4. There is an 'Academic Publications' section on HIQA's website; all academic papers on our work published in international journals are available at Academic Publications</p> <p>In addition, the HIS Directorate presented lectures and seminars in academic institutions including: University College Dublin Legal Medicine on Human</p>
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		<p>Rights and Medical Law: Law and Practice in Ireland, Technical University Dublin to social care students, and Royal College of Surgeons Ireland to healthcare management.</p> <p>The HIS, HTA and Chief Inspector Directorates presented on their work at various conferences and fora relevant to their work programmes, such as: SPHeRE Network Conference, Smart Health Summit, ISPOR, National Patient Safety Office Conference, European Social Services conference, Irish Society for Clinical Microbiologists (ISCM), INAHTA, and MedTech Forum.</p> <p>The HTA and the HIS Directorates presented at over 70 conferences nationally and internationally in 2023.</p> <p>5. The HTA Directorate published 16 evidence synthesis reports in 2023 which included stakeholder involvement in expert advisory groups. Dissemination to international counterparts through international conferences, working groups and academic publications published on the HIQA website. Dissemination of HTA outputs is also conducted through the quarterly Evidence Synthesis Bulletin.</p>
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Principle: Internal Customer		<i>Ensure staff are recognised as internal customers and that they are properly supported and consulted with regard to service delivery issues.</i>	
Our Commitment		Key Performance Indicators	At the end of 2023, we have achieved:
<p>We will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the organisational structure, and the skills, competencies and behaviours of our people are true to our values and enable optimal delivery of our work. • Develop and support leadership to manage change and enable sustainable growth of the organisation. • Continue to build a culture and working environment that ensures HIQA employees feel engaged, valued, and fulfilled, and are equipped and supported to perform their roles to the highest standard. 		<p>We will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deliver a wellbeing programme for staff 2. Develop and implement an internal communications plan. 3. Continue to conduct regular staff surveys and communicate the actions taken to address the findings. 4. Use the Staff Suggestion Box to drive improvements. 5. Our Community of Practice for Quality will support staff to drive improvements within teams. 6. Provide quality improvement training for staff. 7. We will address staff training needs through our Performance Management and Development System and competency framework. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HIQA has a Wellbeing Programme for staff with events, courses, podcasts and other supports. HIQA has an Employment Assistance Programme (EAP) to assist staff and their family with personal or professional concerns. 2. HIQA has a published Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy 2022 - 2024. In line with the strategy, it implements an annual internal communications plan. The Chief Inspector issued an 'Internal Communication Pathways' document in May 2023 to support staff in processing correspondence efficiently and effectively. 3. In 2023, HIQA conducted an independent staff survey. The findings will be shared to all staff and actions arising will be addressed. 4. The suggestion box allows staff to submit suggestions for improvement, concerns, queries or general feedback. In 2023, HIQA

		<p>received 121 staff suggestions via the Staff Suggestion Box.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">5. The Community of Practice for Quality is part of HIQA's quality management system. It facilitates staff to share their knowledge and use best practice initiatives across the business areas.6. The fundamentals of Quality improvement is available to all staff, eight staff trained in 2023. Other quality training such as Six Sigma yellow and green belt certification are also provided.7. All staff participate in the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) which includes the identification of training needs. The process actively encourages management and staff to enhance performance and achieve business plan objectives.
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