



**Health
Information
and Quality
Authority**

An tÚdarás Um Fhaisnéis
agus Cáilíocht Sláinte

Health Information
and Standards

Outcome of prioritisation
process for national standards
for health and social care and
tools to support
implementation 2025-2027

Introduction

As set out under its functions in the Health Act 2007 (as amended), Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) develops national evidence-based standards for health and social care. It also develops guidance and tools to support the implementation of these standards into practice (full list in appendix A).

Standards are for providers of health and social care services. They are used in the monitoring of services and can also be used by the public to understand what to expect from services.

HIQA uses a principles-based framework for development of national standards, focused on outcomes and written from the perspective of the person using the services. These principles are: a human rights-based approach, accountability, responsiveness, and safety and wellbeing, all working together to ensure person-centred care. Based on findings internationally, standards should be high level, developed in collaboration with both service providers and people who use services, and should remain in place for a number of years to allow services to embed best practice. Work should also be done in collaboration with service providers in terms of what support is needed to help implement the standards into practice. Based on the barriers and gaps identified, targeted implementation support tools can be developed to address the specific issues identified.

From 2007 to 2024, a total of 11 sets of national standards and 55 sets of supporting guidance and tools were developed by HIQA's Health and Social Care Standards Team. It is timely to review the quantum and structure of existing national standards and implementation support tools to ensure they are up to date, fit for purpose and responsive to the needs of both those who use services and those providing services.

The purpose of this document is to:

1. Outline the work programme for national standards and implementation support tools.
2. Outline the methods used to select these programmes of work.

This document is set out as follows:

- Section 1 outlines the prioritisation process conducted in 2020 for developing new standards and updating existing ones.
- Section 2 outlines the review and prioritisation of all existing standards conducted in 2022 in order to establish a programme for updating.

- Section 3 outlines the review and prioritisation of all existing guidance and tools conducted in 2024 in order to establish a programme for updating.
- Section 4 outlines future direction for standards and guidance.
- Section 5 outlines a proposed three-year work programme in relation to standards and implementation support tools, based on these prioritisation processes.

1. Prioritisation process for development of standards

In 2020, HIQA conducted a prioritisation process for the development and updating of national standards and guidance. It was conducted in line with HIQA's Standards Prioritisation Process: [Prioritisation Process for the Development of National Standards and Guidance for Health and Social Care Services](#).

Stage 1 of the prioritisation process involves a screening process to assess if the proposal is aligned with the HIQA definition of standards and that the proposal is within HIQA's legislative remit. Proposals which meet both of these criteria progress to the next stage of the process.

Stage 2 of the prioritisation process involves an assessment of the proposals in key areas of impact including: potential for improved outcomes for people using services, evidence of effectiveness, alignment with national policy and legislation and feasibility of implementation. Each domain is scored high (3), medium (2) or low (1).

Three proposals met the screening criteria and were assessed. These are outlined in the table below in order of ranked priority, as well as current status.

Proposal	Proposed by	Current status
National Standards for Home Support Services in Ireland	Department of Health (Social Care)	Draft standards developed. Six-week public consultation completed in Dec 2024.
National Standards for the Assessment of Need, for people with disabilities (update of the existing 2007 standards)	Health Service Executive (HSE) and Ombudsman for Children	Scoping review completed in July 2024, submitted to the Department of Health and Department of Children, Equality, and Disability and published on HIQA website.

National standards for medication safety	HIQA Healthcare Regulation Directorate	No longer required as stand-alone standards.
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Home support: Following approval by the HIQA Board, the development of national standards for the first prioritised topic, National Standards for Home Support Services, commenced in 2021. This project has been progressing in parallel with the development of home support legislation by the Department of Health. The project was paused for a period in 2023-2024 while awaiting progression of the legislation. HIQA launched a public consultation on the draft standards for home support services from 4 November to 13 December 2024, with 118 written submissions received. Thirteen focus groups were also held with stakeholder groups.

Assessment of need: In 2024, HIQA conducted a scoping review to inform standards for assessment of need, to understand current systems and developments in the area of assessment of need. This review has been published on the HIQA website and describes both the national and international systems for assessment of need, and sets out current best practice internationally: [Scoping review to inform standards for assessment of need](#). The main findings were presented to the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth at a meeting in May 2024 and the scoping review report was submitted to that Department and the Department of Health. This research aims to inform next steps in relation to policy direction for assessment of need. This will inform the need for national standards for this area, so that any standards developed have the maximum benefit for people with disabilities and their families.

Medication safety: The standards prioritisation process in 2020 concluded that the proposal to develop national standards for medication safety had the potential to prevent harm and improve patient outcomes in a sizable population, but the most effective format of the resource should be explored further (such as implementation support tools or assessment tools). Discussions with the Healthcare Regulation Directorate concluded that work in this area has moved on, in both inspection processes and HSE programmes and that there may be greater advantage with principle-based overarching national standards to include medication safety, rather than a stand-alone set of national standards. Medication safety is currently monitored as a key area of inspections against the *National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare*, amended in 2024 in line with the Patient Safety (Notifiable Incidents and Open Disclosure) Act 2023. It is recommended that medication safety should be included as a core component in all new and updated national standards.

In conclusion, national standards for home support are in development, standards for assessment of need are on hold, and standalone national standards for medication management are no longer required.

2. Updating of existing standards

In 2022, a review of the 12 existing national standards was undertaken. This included 11 national standards published by HIQA for health and social care services and one set of standards not developed by HIQA, but subsequently endorsed by the HIQA Board (Standards for Assessment of Need, which were developed by the Department of Health and Children and the Department of Education in 2007). These 12 sets of standards are detailed in the table below. Two sets of standards were jointly developed with the Mental Health Commission (on adult safeguarding and conduct of reviews of patient safety incidents).

Title	Year Published
National Standards for Adult Safeguarding	2019
National Standards for Infection Prevention and Control in Community Services	2018
National Standards for Children's Residential Centres*	2018
National Standards for the Conduct of Review of Patient Safety Incidents	2017
National Standards for the prevention and control of healthcare-associated infections in acute healthcare services	2017
National Standards for Safer Better Maternity Services	2016
National Standards for Residential Care Settings for Older People in Ireland	2016
National Standards for Special Care Units*	2014
National Standards for Residential Services for Children and Adults with Disabilities	2013
National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare	2012
National Standards for the Protection and Welfare of Children*	2012
Standards for the Assessment of Need (developed by the Department of Health and Children and the Department of Education and Science. Adopted by HIQA in 2007)	2007

Standards marked with an asterisk will be replaced by the National Standards for Children's Social Services when these are approved by the Minister.

The 12 sets of national standards were assessed against four criteria:

1. Substantial changes in legislation or national policy
2. New evidence for quality improvement that current standards are no longer compatible with
3. Substantial changes to the health or social care landscape or structure of the service
4. Standards are no longer relevant and fit for purpose.

Consultation took place internally (with the Standards Team, the Healthcare Regulation Directorate and the Office of the Chief Inspector) and externally (through the Standards Programme Advisory Group) to determine if standards were still fit-for-purpose, or if they required:

- updating (either partially or fully)
- consolidating with other relevant standards developed by HIQA
- or retiring.

The outcome of this consultation is outlined in the table below.

Updating of existing national standards: results of stakeholder consultation 2022

Title	Year	Update required	Current status
National Standards for the Protection and Welfare of Children	2012	Yes	Currently being updated and consolidated: will be replaced by National Standards for Children's Social Services when approved.
National Standards for Special Care Units	2014	Yes	Currently being updated and consolidated: will be replaced by National Standards for Children's Social Services when approved.
National Standards for Children's Residential Centres	2018	Yes	Currently being updated and consolidated: will be replaced by National Standards for Children's Social Services when approved.
Standards for the Assessment of Need	2007	Yes	Scoping review completed in 2024 to inform next steps in relation to policy direction for assessment of need. This scoping review has been submitted to the Department of Health and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and published on the HIQA website in 2024.
National Standards for Residential Services for Children and Adults with Disabilities	2013	Yes	<p>There have been many changes in the disability sector in recent years, including a greater focus on a human rights-based approach to care, the commencement of the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015 and the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), in addition to changes in the structure of services.</p> <p>To inform next steps, HIQA will conduct an evidence review on residential services for children and adults with disabilities, commencing in 2025. This will help inform next steps and policy direction for the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and whether an update of the 2013 disability standards will be undertaken at this time.</p>
National Standards for Residential Care Settings for Older People in Ireland	2016	Yes	The Health Act 2007 (Care and Welfare of Residents in Designated Centres for Older People) is currently being reviewed. Standards to be updated following update of these regulations. An evidence review will be conducted to help inform next steps and policy direction for the Department of Health. In addition, an update will also incorporate

			dementia care, Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act and National Care Experience Programme's National Nursing Home Experience Survey findings.
National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare (scope updated in 2024)	2012	Yes	<p>In 2024, HIQA amended the scope of the National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare (NSSBH) to include private hospitals. These standards have been approved by the Minister for Health. This amendment of scope of the NSSBH was required to ensure the standards can be used for monitoring of private hospitals on commencement of the Patient Safety Act, which was commenced in September 2024.</p> <p>The commencement of the Patient Safety Act in September 2024 expanded the scope of HIQA's standard-setting and monitoring functions to private hospitals and future prescribed private health services. Ahead of the commencement of the Patient Safety Act, HIQA conducted a due diligence of the National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare to assess the applicability of each individual standard to private hospitals. This due diligence concluded that the standards are suitable for use in private hospitals, but the scope of the standards would need to be amended to include the private hospitals. The due diligence exercise also identified that a full update of the national standards is required in the coming years. This aligns with stakeholder feedback from the public consultation and recommendations from HIQA's Standards Programme Advisory Group.</p> <p>A full update of NSSBH is required in light of the Patient Safety (Notifiable Incidents and Open Disclosure) Act 2023 (the Patient Safety Act), which includes private hospitals¹. This update will incorporate learning from the new monitoring programme, input from new providers in the private sector and learning from National Care Experience Programme surveys. In addition, the following national standards will need to be scoped prior to updating the NSSBH:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National standards for the prevention and control of healthcare-associated infections in acute healthcare services

¹ Additional resources required for legislative commencements, including full update of NSSBH

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National standards for infection prevention and control in community services ▪ National standards for safer better maternity services ▪ National standards for adult safeguarding ▪ National standards for the conduct of reviews of patient safety incidents.
National Standards for the Prevention and Control of Healthcare-associated Infections in Acute Healthcare Services	2017	Yes	<p>National infection prevention and control guidelines have since been developed by the Health Protection Surveillance Centre in the HSE, and published as National Clinical Effectiveness Committee (NCEC) guidelines, which includes learning from the pandemic and the many changes in structures and processes since the pandemic.</p> <p>These standards apply to public hospitals only. In addition, these standards need to be considered in a consolidating exercise for the National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare.</p> <p>For the above reasons, a scoping exercise will be required. This will review feasibility, benefits, risks, implications and options of how they could be incorporated into new or existing standards, or dealt with by implementation support tools. This will entail engaging with three broad stakeholder groups – those that provide services, those that use the standards to monitor services and policy-makers. To revoke a set of standards involves a public consultation and notification to the Minister, as outlined in the new Patient Safety Act.</p>
National Standards for Infection Prevention and Control in Community Services	2018	Yes	<p>National infection prevention and control guidelines have since been developed by the Health Protection Surveillance Centre in the HSE, and published as NCEC guidelines, which includes learning from the pandemic and the many changes in structures and processes since the pandemic.</p> <p>In addition, these standards need to be considered in a consolidating exercise for National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare.</p> <p>For the above reasons, a scoping exercise will be required. This will review feasibility, benefits, risks, implications and options of how they could be incorporated into new or existing standards, or dealt with by implementation support tools. This will entail</p>

			<p>engaging with three broad stakeholder groups – those that provide services, those that use the standards to monitor services, and policy makers. To revoke a set of standards involves a public consultation and notification to the Minister, as outlined in the new Patient Safety Act.</p> <p>IPC will be strengthened as a core component in any new or updated standards (for example, home support, disabilities, older persons). The needs of community settings will need to be strengthened in any update. The National Standards for Infection Prevention and Control in Community Services are referenced in Regulation 27 of the Health Act 2007 (Care and Welfare of Residents in Designated Centres for Older People), which are currently being updated — there is an opportunity to examine the wording of this regulation in order to future-proof structure and nomenclature of the standards.</p>
National Standards for Safer Better Maternity Services	2016	No	<p>No update recommended to current standards at this time. The findings from the National Care Experience Programme’s National Maternity Experience Survey and National Maternity Bereavement Experience Survey will be incorporated into any update.</p> <p>These standards need to be considered in a consolidating exercise for National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare. For this reason, a scoping exercise will be required. This will review feasibility, benefits, risks, implications and options of how they could be incorporated into new or existing standards, or dealt with by implementation support tools. This will entail engaging with three broad stakeholder groups – those that provide services, those that use the standards to monitor services, and policy-makers. To revoke a set of standards involves a public consultation and notification to the Minister, as outlined in the new Patient Safety Act.</p>
National Standards for Adult Safeguarding	2019	No	<p>No update recommended to current standards at this time. Awaiting safeguarding legislation.</p> <p>However, this area will be strengthened as a core component in any new standards in development (for example, homecare, disability, older persons). The long-term plan</p>

			<p>would be to retire these standards when all national standards have strengthened this. These are joint standards with the Mental Health Commission.</p> <p>For these reasons, a scoping exercise will be required. This will review feasibility, benefits, risks, implications and options of how they could be incorporated into new or existing standards, or dealt with by implementation support tools. This will entail engaging with four broad stakeholder groups – those that provide services, those that use the standards to monitor services, policy makers and the Mental Health Commission. To revoke a set of standards involves a public consultation and notification to the Minister, as outlined in the new Patient Safety Act.</p>
National Standards for the Conduct of Reviews of Patient Safety Incidents	2017	No	<p>No update recommended to current standards at this time. Open disclosure requirements will need to be incorporated in any update of these standards. These are joint standards with the Mental Health Commission.</p> <p>These standards need to be considered in a consolidating exercise for National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare.</p> <p>For these reasons, a scoping exercise will be required. This will review feasibility, benefits, risks, implications and options of how they could be incorporated into new or existing standards, or dealt with by implementation support tools. This will entail engaging with four broad stakeholder groups – those that provide services, those that use the standards to monitor services, policy-makers and the Mental Health Commission.</p> <p>To revoke a set of standards involves a public consultation and notification to the Minister, as outlined in the new Patient Safety Act.</p>

Conclusion

The prioritisation process for updating of existing standards has highlighted the need for structured periodic review and update of existing standards, to ensure they remain fit for purpose. Opportunities for consolidating some existing standards will also be considered, as the standards become implemented into routine practice over time. The structure of standards across health and social care and across population groups will also be reviewed.

Standards for Children's Social Services are currently being updated and consolidated. It is planned that updating of national standards for disabilities and national standards for older persons will be commenced next. A scoping exercise will then be carried out to review updating, retiring or consolidation of the remaining national standards. A full update of the National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare is also required, following initial rollout and monitoring in private hospitals.²

3. Updating of existing guidance and tools

HIQA develops guidance and tools to assist the implementation of national standards into practice, in order to improve health and social care services. These range from video animations, leaflets and easy-to-read booklets to online learning (e-learning) modules. During the development of national standards, HIQA engages with stakeholders to identify potential barriers and gaps to implementing the standards. Findings from this engagement are used to inform the development of guidance and tools to address the barriers and gaps identified. HIQA uses an implementation science approach[‡] to develop guidance and tools to support implementation of national standards into practice and to support improvements in particular areas. Stakeholder collaboration is integral to the development of guidance and tools, and it ranges from high-level consultation with stakeholders, to co-design, to deeper levels of collaboration which require more active participation by stakeholders.

In 2024, HIQA undertook a review of all existing guidance and tools developed to support implementation of the national standards. Some of these had been developed before the establishment of HIQA's Health and Social Care Standards Team and a number of these were not aligned to specific national standards.

This review identified a total of 55 guidance and tools to support implementation of the national standards, which had been developed since 2012. A preliminary review

² Additional resources required for legislative commencements, including full update of the NSSBH.

[‡]An implementation science approach considers the mechanism of behaviour change and identifies what is needed to support the successful implementation of any intervention.

was undertaken of these guidance and tools and they were categorised according to whether they required:

- updating (either partially or fully),
- consolidating with other relevant guidance or tools developed by HIQA, or
- retiring.

Out of the 55 existing guidance and tools, eight guidance documents and tools were identified as being in need of immediate update and six were in need of retiring. These guidance and tools then underwent detailed review. The outcome of this process is set out in the table below. The full list of 55 guidance and tools is also detailed in Appendix A.

Review of existing guidance and tools: recommendations

Title	Year	Recommendation	Comments
National standards academic slide deck (for educators/lecturers)	2023	Update	Annual review needed
Human rights-based care academic slide deck (for educators/lecturers)	2020	Update	Annual review needed
Guidance on Communicating in Plain English (x 3 – adults, children and video)	2015	Update	Commence update in 2025
General guidance for providers on National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare	2012	Update	Review for update at time of full update of National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare
Guidance on Supporting People's Autonomy (x 2)	2016	Retire	Newer resources developed by HIQA
Guidance for designated centres: intimacy and sexual relationships	2014	Retire	Newer guidance available and in development by HSE
Guidance for designated centres: intimate care	2014	Retire	Newer guidance in this area by HSE
Guidance for designated centres: risk management	2014	Retire	Newer guidance in this area by HSE
Guidance for health and social care providers: principles of good practice in medication reconciliation	2014	Retire	Newer guidance in this area by HSE and Nursing and Midwifery Board of Ireland
Children's social services guidance x 8 for example, Your Guide to Children's Residential Care.	2012-2018	Retire	Retire when National Standards for Children's Social Services are published and replace with new tools.

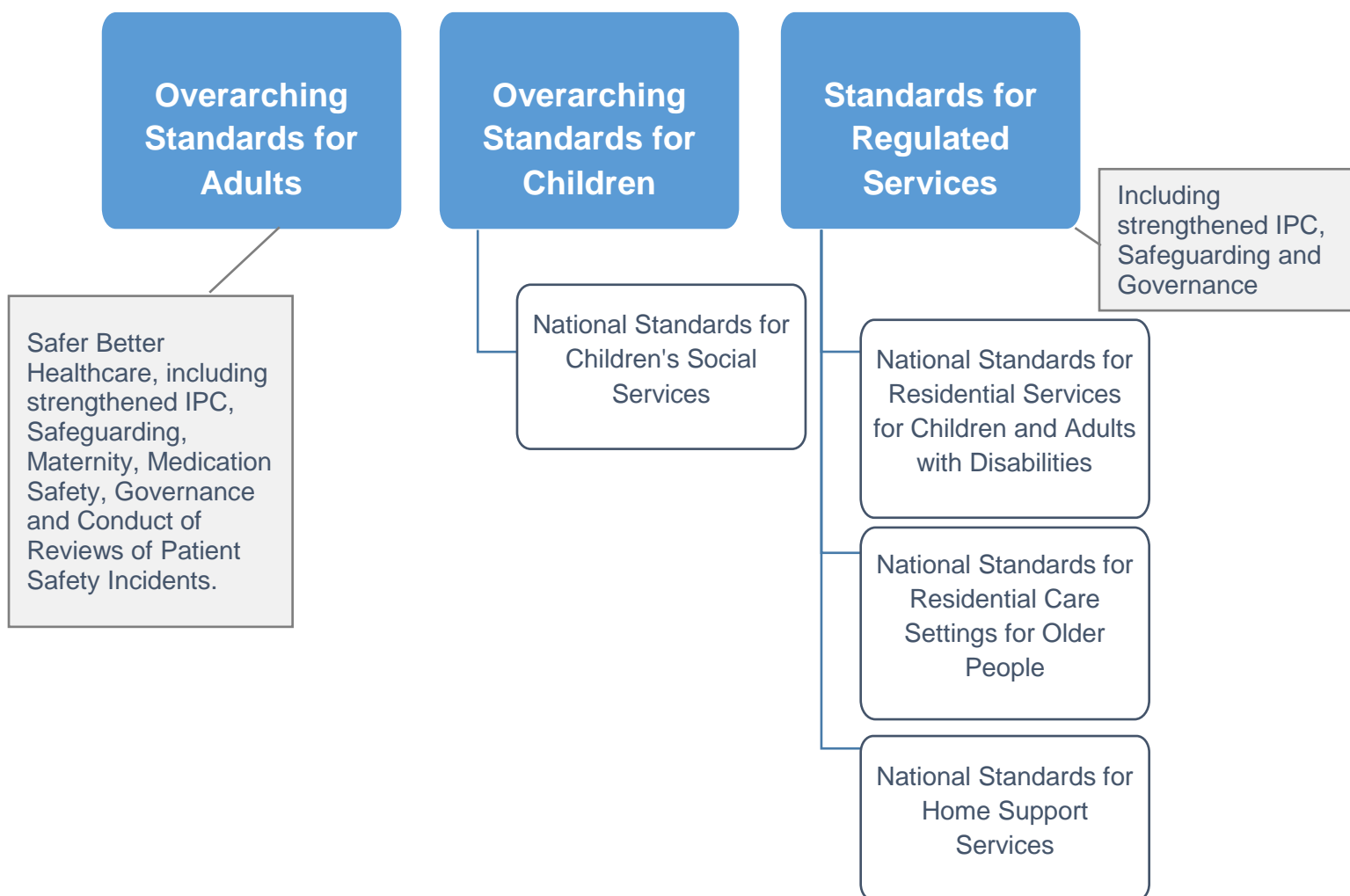
In summary,

1. Guidance to be retired: Guidance that has been identified as needing to be retired will be retired at the end of 2024 and removed from the HIQA website (n = 6). These include autonomy (x 2), intimacy and sexual relationships, intimate care, risk management, and medication reconciliation.
2. Guidance that needs to be updated: 3 sets of guidance have already been updated in 2024, the remaining sets of guidance requiring update will be updated in 2025 (n= 5). These include academic slide decks x 2 (human rights-based approach, introduction to national standards) and 3 resources on communicating in plain English.
3. All other guidance and tools will be reviewed for update as part of the rolling update of the associated national standards. These include in areas such as disabilities, older persons, safer better healthcare, maternity, human rights-based approach, safeguarding, and infection prevention and control.

4. Future direction for standards and guidance

Following on from our initial analysis, this would result in the following categories of standards:

1. Overarching standards
 - a. Overarching Standards for Adults: National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare (including strengthening of medication safety, infection prevention and control, safeguarding, maternity, governance and conduct of reviews of patient safety incidents).
 - b. Overarching Standards for Children's Services (with standards for children's social services underneath).
2. Standards for regulated services
 - a. Disability (strengthened in the area of governance, safeguarding and infection prevention and control [IPC])
 - b. Older persons (strengthened in the area of governance, safeguarding and IPC)
 - c. Home support (strengthened in the area of governance, safeguarding and IPC).



Additional national standards can be considered through the standards prioritisation process. Additional needs for implementation support tools will also need to be addressed and a prioritisation process conducted. Guidance and tools in particular areas such as governance, outcomes-based standards and safeguarding investigations have been highlighted as gaps.

5. Work Plan

Following completion of this 'stocktaking and updating' phase of the suite of existing standards, guidance and tools, a rolling programme of updating of existing standards will be scheduled. A review of guidance and tools will be undertaken in parallel with the updates of the relevant set of national standards. Going forward, HIQA will have a single prioritisation process for requests for both new standards and updating of existing standards and guidance.

Core components will be identified from inspection overview reports and National Care Experience Programme surveys for inclusion in all national standards, to ensure key risk areas are included.

The new Programme for Government may also have implications for our work.

The following projects are currently scheduled by HIQA over the next three years (2025 – 2027):

New Standards: Home Support

- Completion of new national standards for home support services.

New Standards: Children Standards

- Publication and dissemination of new overarching national standards for the care and support of children using health and social care services, and associated guidance.
- Development of guidance for foster carers (Department of Children, Equality, and Disability request) to support national standards for children's social services.
- Publication and dissemination of new national standards for children's social services and associated guidance.

Updating existing Standards: Disability Standards

- Updating of national standards for residential services for children and adults with disabilities, commencing with an evidence review.

Updating existing Standards: Older Persons

- Updating of national standards for residential care settings for older people in Ireland, commencing with an evidence review.

Update of Implementation Support Tools/Guidance

- Updating of the following guidance:
 - Guidance for providers of health and social care services: communicating in plain English (2015)
 - Guidance for providers of health and social care services for children: communicating in plain English with children and their families (2015)
 - Educational video on Communicating in plain English (2015).

- Academic slide-decks on Learning Hub x 2 (A human rights-based approach for health and social care services; national standards for health and social care services: an introduction).
- Review of existing guidance for disability x 4 (at time of update of the standards) and identification of any new guidance required.
- Review of existing guidance for older persons x 1 (at time of update of the standards) and identification of any new guidance required.

Proposed work plan for standards team for three-year period.

	Current role	2025	2026	2027
Team 1	Developing new national standards	<p>Publish and disseminate overarching children's standards and associated implementation support tools.</p> <p>Publish and disseminate national standards for children's social services and associated implementation support tools.</p> <p>Publish and disseminate home support standards.</p> <p>Scope the needs of the home support sector to implement the national standards. Identify key guidance and tools required to address risk areas.</p>	<p>Commence update of next set of existing standards (e.g. National Standards for Residential Care Settings for Older People in Ireland) by conducting an evidence review.</p> <p>Set up advisory group, draft standards and conduct focus groups for National Standards for Residential Care Settings for Older People.</p> <p>Review existing guidance and tools for older person's standards (x1) and make decision on whether to retire or update.</p>	<p>Complete update of National Standards for Residential Care Settings for Older People.</p> <p>Commence update of existing tools and identify requirements for new implementation support tools for this setting.</p>
Team 2	Updating existing standards	<p>Commence update of National Standards for Residential Services for Children and Adults with Disabilities by conducting an evidence review.</p> <p>Set up advisory group, draft standards and conduct focus groups for National Standards for Residential Services for Children and Adults with Disabilities.</p>	<p>Complete update of National Standards for Residential Services for Children and Adults with Disabilities.</p> <p>Review existing guidance and tools for disability standards (x 4) and make decision on whether to retire or update.</p>	Complete implementation support tools for national disability standards.

			Commence update of existing tools and identify requirements for new implementation support tools required for this sector.	
Team 3	Developing and updating guidance & tools to support implementation of national standards.	<p>Updating of 2 academic slide decks on Learning Hub (human rights based approach and National Standards for health and social care).</p> <p>Update guidance x 3 on communicating in plain English.</p> <p>Development of guidance for foster carers, as requested by Department of Children, Equality and Disability.</p>	<p>Continue scheduling of updating existing standards, based on outcome of scoping exercise (team 4 2025) - IPC hospitals, IPC community, safeguarding, conduct of reviews of patient safety incidents, maternity). Multi-year programme.</p> <p>Review existing guidance and tools in these 5 areas.</p>	<p>Continue scheduling of updating existing standards, based on outcome of scoping exercise in 2025 (IPC hospitals, IPC community, safeguarding, conduct of reviews of patient safety incidents, maternity). Multi-year programme.</p> <p>Identify requirements for additional guidance and tools as a result of retiring, updating or consolidating standards in these five areas.</p>
Team 4 (New)	Legislative commencements (subject to additional resources under Patient Safety Act).	<p>Scoping of remaining existing national standards to inform update, consolidation with NSSBH or retirement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ IPC hospitals ▪ IPC community ▪ Maternity ▪ Safeguarding ▪ Conduct of reviews of patient safety incidents. 	<p>Full review of the Patient Safety Act and the implications for standards, including prescribed private health services.</p> <p>Commence full update of National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare.</p>	<p>Continue full update of National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare.</p> <p>Review existing guidance and tools for NSSBH.</p> <p>Identify requirements for new implementation support tools for NSSBH.</p>

<p>Team 5 (New)</p>	<p>(subject to additional resources under Home Support legislation).</p>	<p>Commence development of implementation support tools for the home support sector, to address risk areas in this previously unregulated sector. (e.g. medication management, dementia, safeguarding, advocacy, communication, complaints, and governance).</p>	<p>Complete development of implementation support tools for home support sector to address risk areas.</p>	<p>Launch new prioritisation process (call for submissions for new or updated standards and guidance/tools).</p>
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Conclusion and next steps - areas for consideration

The following areas of work will be considered once the existing suite of standards and tools identified above has been updated.

- A new prioritisation process will be conducted and a workplan developed for both national standards and implementation support tools.
- An update of national standards in the area of older persons' and disability services is likely to highlight requirements for new guidance and tools.
- Retiring, updating or consolidating the following national standards is also likely to identify requirements for additional guidance and tools – infection prevention and control in acute healthcare, infection prevention and control in community services, safeguarding, conduct of reviews of patient safety incidents, and maternity.
- A catalogue of existing and retired resources to facilitate navigation and signposting to users is required. Engagement and dissemination plan required to increase penetration and reach.
- Embedding of national standards learning resources into curricula for health and social care students and practitioners, through collaborations with academic institutions and professional regulators.
- Explore the opportunities of emerging technology, including AI and machine learning, to enhance our processes.
- Develop international collaborations and academic collaborations.
- The following areas have also been identified as areas of priority:
 - Governance and accountability – general tools to support what this means in health and social care.
 - Outcome-based standards - guidance on how to assist services in looking at outcome-based standards and what measures to put in place.
 - Safeguarding investigations – guidance for providers.

Legislative commencements

The following areas of work under legislative commencements will be subject to additional resources and have been included in HIQA's workforce plan:

1. A full review of the Patient Safety Act and the implications for standards is required, for example, process for development of targeted

standards/guidance for future prescribed private health services, when prescribed.

2. Scoping of the remaining existing standards to make decision on next steps. Consolidation with the National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare to be considered, in collaboration with services, regulators and policy-makers:
 - National Standards for the Prevention and Control of Healthcare-associated Infections in Acute Healthcare Services
 - National Standards for Infection Prevention and Control in Community Services
 - National Standards for Safer Better Maternity Services
 - National Standards for Adult Safeguarding
 - National Standards for the Conduct of Reviews of Patient Safety Incidents.
3. Patient Safety Act: Full update of National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare, following initial rollout and monitoring in private hospitals.
4. Home support: Development of guidance and tools to support implementation of standards in this previously unregulated sector (for example, medication management, dementia, safeguarding, advocacy, communication, complaints, and governance).

It is noted that the new Programme for Government may also have implications for HIQA's work in this area.

Appendix A

Full list of 55 existing guidance and tools to support implementation of national standards.

Group	Associated standards	Guidance and tools	Developed by	Date Published
Overarching guidance & tools		National Standards academic slide deck	Health and Social Care Standards	2023
Overarching guidance & tools	National Standards for Adult Safeguarding HIQA	The Fundamentals of Advocacy in health and social care (online learning course)	Health and Social Care Standards	2023
		Advocacy booklet		2023
		Advocacy poster		2023
		Safeguarding Online learning module		2019
		Video animation		2019
		Poster		2019
		Safeguarding Information Leaflet		2019
		Interviews with people involved in safeguarding		2019
		FAQs		2019

Group	Associated standards	Guidance and tools	Developed by	Date Published
Overarching	Guidance on a Human Rights-based Approach in Health and Social Care Services HIQA	Guidance	Health and Social Care Standards	2019
		Animation		2019
		Online learning module 1		2021
		Online learning module 2		2021
		Online learning module 3		2021
		Online learning module 4		2021
		HBRA Academic slide deck		2020
		FAQs		2019
		Decision making flow chart		2019
		Video on decision making in health and social care services		2020
		Legal framework		2019
		The FAIR approach to decision making in health and social care		2019
		Linking National Standards to human rights		2019
		Guidance - Communicating in plain English for Adults	Safety and Quality Improvement	July 2015

Group	Associated standards	Guidance and tools	Developed by	Date Published
Healthcare	National Standards for infection prevention and control (IPC) in community services HIQA	Online learning course (2021, updated 2024)	Health and Social Care Standards	Aug 2024
		Animation		Sep 2018
		Poster		2018
		Information leaflet		2018
		Frequently asked questions		2018
Healthcare	National Standards for the prevention and control of healthcare-associated infections in acute healthcare services	No associated guidance or tools	N/A	May 2017
Healthcare	National Standards for Safer Better Maternity Services HIQA	Guide to the standards	Safety and Quality Improvement	Dec 2016
		Guide to maternity standards monitoring programme	Regulatory	June 2019
Healthcare	National Standards for Safer Better Healthcare HIQA	Audio guide (2012 - updated 2024)	Safety and Quality Improvement	2024
		Guide to the standards (2012 - updated 2024)		2024
		General Guidance		Sep 2012
Social Care	National Standards for Residential Care Settings for Older People in Ireland HIQA	Guide to the standards	Safety and Quality Improvement	2016

Group	Associated standards	Guidance and tools	Developed by	Date Published
Social Care	National Standards for Children's Residential Centres HIQA	Your guide to children's residential care	Health and Social Care Standards	2018
		Frequently asked questions		2018
		Interviews with people involved in the development of the standards		2018
Social Care	National Standards for Special Care Units HIQA	Guide to the standards	Safety and Quality Improvement	Nov 2014
		Poster		March 2015
Social Care	National Standards for the Protection and Welfare of Children HIQA	Audio guide	Safety and Quality Improvement	June 2012
		Guide to the standards		July 2012
		Audio version		June 2012
Healthcare and Social Care	Associated with children's standards	Guidance - Communicating in plain English for Children	Safety and Quality Improvement	2015
		Video - Communicating in plain English for Children		Nov 2015

Group	Associated standards	Guidance and tools	Developed by	Date Published
Social Care	National Standards for Residential Services for Children and Adults with Disabilities HIQA	Adults Guide	Safety and Quality Improvement	Jan 2013
		Children's Guide		Jan 2013
		Plain English Version		Jan 2013
		Audio Guide		Jan 2013
Social Care	Associated with Disability and Older Persons Standards	Guidance for Designated Centres: Risk Management	Safety and Quality Improvement	Oct 2014
Social Care	Associated with Disability and Older Persons Standards	Guidance for health and social care providers: Principles of good practice in medication reconciliation	Safety and Quality Improvement	May 2014
		Guidance on Intimate Care		Oct 2014
		Guidance on Intimacy and Sexual Relationships		Nov 2014
		Supporting people's autonomy: a guidance document		2016
		Autonomy Service User Leaflet		2015



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