



# Raising standards, putting people first

## Quick guide to our strategy for 2013 to 2016

People have a right to expect safe, effective, compassionate, high-quality care. As the regulator of health and social care in England, we play a vital role in making sure that care services meet those expectations.

Our strategy sets out what we aim to achieve in the next three years. In developing it we have looked closely at how we carry out our role, listening to what people who use health and social care services, providers of those services and others tell us about what matters to them.

It demonstrates our commitment to making major changes to what we do and how we do it. We will make sure that health and social care services provide people with safe, effective, compassionate, high-quality care and we will encourage services to improve. We will make sure that above all else our judgements are completely independent of the health and social care system and that we are always on the side of people who use care services.

We recognise that quality care cannot be achieved by inspection and regulation alone. The main responsibility for delivering quality care lies with care professionals, clinical staff, providers and those who arrange and fund local services. However, we will set a clear bar below which no provider must fall and publish clear ratings of services which will encourage and drive improvement.

### Being clear about our purpose and role

#### **Our purpose:**

We make sure health and social-care services provide people with safe, effective, compassionate, high-quality care and we encourage services to improve.

#### **Our role:**

We monitor, inspect and regulate services to make sure they meet fundamental standards of quality and safety and we publish what we find, including performance ratings to help people choose care.

## The changes we are making

- Appoint Chief Inspectors of Hospitals, and of Social Care and Support, and consider a chief inspector for primary and integrated care.
- Ask the following five questions of services:
  - Are they safe?
  - Are they effective?
  - Are they caring?
  - Are they well led?
  - Are they responsive to people's needs?
- Develop new fundamental standards that focus on those five areas, working with the public, people who use services, providers, professionals and our partners to do so.
- Make sure inspectors specialise in particular areas of care and lead teams that include clinical and other experts, and people with experience of care who we call experts by experience.
- In NHS hospitals, introduce national teams with specialist expertise to carry out in-depth reviews of hospitals, particularly those with significant or long-standing problems and trusts applying to be foundation trusts.
- In NHS hospitals, introduce a clear programme for failing trusts that makes sure immediate action is taken to protect people.
- Predict, identify and respond more quickly to services that are failing, or likely to fail, by using information and evidence in a more focused and open way, including listening better to people's views and experiences of care.
- Improve our understanding of how well different care services work together by listening to people's experiences of care when they move between different care services.
- Work more closely with our partners in the health and social care system to improve the quality and safety of care and coordinate our work better.
- Publish better information for the public, including ratings of services.
- Introduce a more thorough test for organisations applying to provide care services including making sure that named directors, managers and leaders commit to meeting our standards and are tested on their ability to do so.
- Strengthen the protection of people whose rights are restricted under the Mental Health Act.
- Build a high performing organisation that is well run and well led, has an open culture that supports its staff, and is focused on delivering our purpose.

The changes will come into effect in NHS hospitals and mental health trusts first because we recognise there is an urgent need for more effective inspection and regulation of these services. We will extend and adapt our approach to other sectors in 2014 and 2015.

We will continue to carry out our programme of unannounced inspection and enforcement across the sectors we regulate. We will also continue to publish our inspection reports, national reviews, and other information about the quality and safety of services. We will continue to involve people who use services and their families and carers in our work.

We will maintain our focus on human rights, equality and diversity.

In developing our plans, we have taken into account the transformation of the health and social care system, which makes it even more important that existing and new organisations work together efficiently and effectively. And we have reflected the Secretary of State's initial response to the landmark Francis Report into the failings at Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust, which set out important new responsibilities for us.

We have a real opportunity to make a difference and will work with pace, passion and determination to do so.