

Office of the Chief Scientific Officer

Professor Sir Mike Richards
Chief Inspector of Hospitals
Care Quality Commission

Medical Directorate
NHS England
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Dear Mike,

Re: NHS England's position on accreditation schemes for diagnostic services

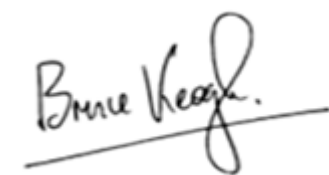
Following recent discussions, and agreement, with the Care Quality Commission (CQC), we write to outline NHS England's position on the use of accreditation schemes as quality indicators for diagnostic services.

As you will see from our position statement set out overleaf, NHS England **remains committed to, and strongly endorses participation** of diagnostic services in accreditation schemes (Appendix 1). Participants in these schemes undertake a rigorous review of their services at a point in time, but also set up systems for ongoing quality management and service improvement. We will therefore be asking **commissioners to consider these schemes as essential** when assessing good quality diagnostic services in future.

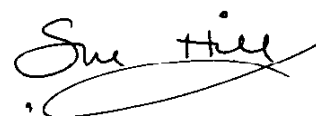
The CQC has agreed that its inspection teams will take account of accreditation status in their new inspection approach, as outlined in its recent strategy¹. We look forward to working with the CQC further in developing a 'single shared view of quality'.

Diagnostic services underpin 80% of clinical pathways and account for £8 billion of NHS expenditure. With improvements in diagnostics and targeted interventions, through the development of genomics, personalised medicine and enhanced treatments and therapies for cancer and other conditions, this is likely to increase in volume and complexity in the future. NHS England considers that this will need to be a key area of focus and importance in delivering the Five Year Forward View, and supporting new models of care and vanguard sites.

Yours sincerely,



Bruce Keogh, Medical Director



Sue Hill, Chief Scientific Officer

¹ P8, 'Monitor', *What our strategy means for the health and adult social care services we regulate*, CQC 2016 <https://www.cqc.org.uk/content/our-strategy-2016-2021>

NHS England's position on accreditation schemes for diagnostic services

The mandate from Government to NHS England sets out objectives to improve the nation's health and create the highest quality health care service. A significant number of organisations are already contributing to these objectives by providing high quality diagnostic services that are accredited under government-recognised schemes.

NHS England remains committed to, and strongly endorses, participation in accreditation schemes for imaging (ISAS), physiology (IQIPS), endoscopy (JAG) and pathology (CPA/UKAS ISO 15189) services.

We fully support a commissioning system focus on the prioritisation of accredited diagnostic services. We are confident that with continued resolute focus, accreditation will become the baseline standard for diagnostic services across the NHS in England.

NHS England will continue to promote inclusion in future relevant guidance and policy, and will work in partnership with health system partners to ensure this is a focal point for review and inspection.

Appendix 1 - Accreditation schemes endorsed by NHS England, and to be considered as part of CQC inspections:

1. Joint Advisory Group on GI Endoscopy (JAG) Accreditation

www.jagaccreditation.org

Covering endoscopy

2. Imaging Services Accreditation Scheme (ISAS)

www.isas-uk.org

Covering imaging (radiology)

3. Improving Quality in Physiological Services (IQIPS)

www.iqips.org.uk

Covering:

- Adult audiology
- Paediatric audiology
- Cardiac physiology – ECG, Echo, Vascular Ultrasound
- Gastro-Intestinal physiology
- Neurophysiology
- Ophthalmic and vision science²
- Respiratory and sleep physiology
- Urodynamics
- Vascular science

4. ISO 15189 Medical Laboratory Accreditation (Succeeding CPA accreditation)

www.ukas.com/services/accreditation-services/medical-laboratory-accreditation-iso-15189

Covering:

- Clinical Biochemistry – Toxicology – Endocrinology
- Haematology – Blood Transfusion
- Microbiology – Virology – Parasitology – Serology – Mycology
- Histopathology – Cytology – Mortuaries
- Immunology
- Genetics
- Andrology

² Yet to be launched at time of writing. For more information, contact askiqips@rcplondon.ac.uk.