

# Achieving Quality and Safety Improvement

Improvement Cymru Strategy Summary  
2021-2026

**Our aim is to support the creation of the best quality health and care system for Wales so that everyone has access to safe, effective and reliable care in the right place and at the right time across the whole care system.**

**To achieve this we have three strategic priorities:**

- Support health and care organisations to redesign and continuously improve the service they provide.
- Support a focus on reduction in avoidable harm and safety within systems of care.
- Sustainably build improvement capability within the health and care system.

We are ambitious about our role in supporting the bold agenda set out in *A Healthier Wales* (2018) which describes a whole system approach to health and social care. Now in the context of this stage of the pandemic and moving into a recovery phase, it is essential that the support that Improvement Cymru offers to organisations is tailored and contextualized to local need to enable them to embed the Quality Act. This is why we have evolved our approach into one new programme: 'Safe Care Together.' Complemented by the wider work of Improvement Cymru, the Safe Care Together programme will offer bespoke support to organisations to identify and improve quality and safety priorities.

Putting quality and safety above all else is the first NHS Wales core value. This focus has been strengthened more recently through the *Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act* (2020), the *National Clinical Framework for Wales* (2021) and the *Quality and Safety Framework* (2021). Collectively these set out an aspiration for quality-led health and care services, underpinned by prudent healthcare principles, value-based healthcare and the quadruple aim.

**In response, and in the context of this stage of the pandemic and moving into a recovery phase, our evolved approach will:**

- Reflect a stronger focus on supporting organisations to drive their improvements rather than individual national programmes, and co-designing our work with them.
- Provide tailored support for senior leaders, managers and frontline staff to address their quality and safety challenges in the context of recovery and recent policy changes.
- Enable organisations to improve quality and safety, as defined by their service users, families, carers and workforce, and engage them in aspects of care at all levels and in all settings across the continuum of care including primary care.
- Support organisations to rebalance care away from hospitals and focus on preventing and reducing pre- and post-COVID19 harms across the continuum of care.
- Address the technical, social and cultural elements required to spread and scale improvements in any setting.

Our role is to coach and support organisations to make continuous and sustainable improvements. We work alongside organisations to apply evidence-based tools, techniques and methodologies to improve multiple pathways across the continuum of care. To ensure that improvements are sustained and systematic we work with multiple layers within organisations to focus on the whole quality cycle – from planning to improvement and control.

Together we can achieve improved outcomes in key system-wide safety areas such as falls, pressure ulcers, medicines safety, infection prevention and control, acute deterioration, and surgical complications. We bring together a suite of evidence-based enablers to test, spread and scale interventions in these safety areas.

By working locally and at every level in the system we are well placed to understand the context and challenges facing organisations, and we can more effectively provide support and coaching to drive improvement forward.

The new Safe Care Together programme will enable organisations to improve the quality and safety of care across their systems to embed the Quality Act. By joining the programme organisations will have the opportunity to work together with Improvement Cymru to make improvements in their patient safety priorities and the various elements of patient pathways that impact on and are impacted by safety and the challenges of the pandemic.

There are three components to the Safe Care Together programme which support organisations with their priorities to improve quality and safety – both vertically through the organisation's structure and horizontally across the continuum of care:

1. Developing an organisational approach to quality outcomes
2. Spreading and scaling safe care
3. A movement for quality, safety and improvement

**It is our ambition that by March 2026 we will have enabled:**

- Transformation in national safety outcomes through demonstrable and measurable system-level improvements in quality and safety.
- Organisations to achieve a mature and sustainable approach to building their improvement capability and applying it to their local quality and safety priorities.
- Organisations supported to embed the Quality Act in all their work.
- Wales to be an integral part of the UK improvement approach to safety.
- Impactful improvements evidenced through internal and external evaluation.

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Published September 2021

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