

# NHS-funded Knowledge and Library Services

## Implementing the Quality and Improvement Outcomes Framework from 2023/4

### 1. Introduction: a service improvement focus

The NHS knowledge and library services team provides professional leadership, advice and support at every level of the system, to enable the NHS to extend, optimise and sustain knowledge services. As part of this role, on behalf of the NHS in England, the team leads on the quality assurance of NHS-funded knowledge and library services. The approach is focused on facilitating service improvement.

The Quality and Improvement Outcomes Framework for NHS-funded knowledge and library services is fully integrated into the quality processes for the NHS Education Contract, as part of the wider Quality Framework. The annual quality self-assessment survey, issued by regional Quality teams to organisations with an NHS Education Contract, requires the submission of a Service Improvement Plan for knowledge and library services.

The approach from 2023/4 has been developed from a review of options, in the light of feedback from knowledge and library services, the national quality team and the NHS knowledge and library service team. Plans for implementing the Quality and Improvement Outcomes Framework from 2027/28 onwards, including self-evaluation and the review of service improvement plans, will be informed by a refresh of the Framework in the light of feedback, current evidence on maturity models and the principles set out in Appendix 1.

### 2. Implementation from April 2023

- 1) **Biennial Service Improvement Review:** Each NHS organisation in receipt of NHS Education Contract funding is to submit a knowledge and library Service Improvement Plan, with supporting documentation, for review and discussion every two years.
- 2) **Submission of self-evaluation for validation:** The timelines and extent of submission of self-evaluation for validation will be reviewed following an update to the Quality and Improvement Outcomes Framework in the autumn of 2022, with the earliest potential date for self-evaluation submission being 2027/28.

### 3. A biennial review of Service Improvement Plans

From April 2023, a review of each Placement Provider's Service Improvement Plan for its knowledge and library service/s will be held every two years. The team will connect with the provider organisation to schedule the review meeting with the organisation and the manager(s) of the Knowledge and Library Service(s) which provide services to their staff and learners, giving 12 weeks' notice of the meeting.

The review will be based on submission and discussion of the following documents, which each organisation will be asked to submit:

- 1) The Service Improvement Plan in place for the organisation's knowledge and library service(s).
- 2) The most recent Knowledge and Library Service Annual Report.
- 3) Service Level Agreements: Copy of all SLAs for knowledge and library service provision, where these are in place. Each must be signed by both parties.

Organisations will be required to use the Service Improvement Plan template provided. This will mirror the refreshed Outcomes Framework, enabling the organisation to demonstrate activity and progress against the six outcomes. The template will incorporate opportunities to show how the organisation is thinking strategically about the provision of knowledge and library services for their staff and learners.

The organisation will be required to submit the documents no later than 3 weeks before the meeting date. The discussion will focus on:

- recent service improvements
- the plan for future development
- any risks and concerns with which the team may be able to help, including escalating issues to resolve with the support of HEE Quality and regional teams
- identifying good practice to celebrate and share with other knowledge services

#### **4. Self-assessment: Quality and Improvement Outcomes Framework submissions**

The Quality and Improvement Outcomes Framework will be refreshed in the autumn of 2022, following the baseline self-evaluation for 2020/21. This will then be reviewed, taking feedback from a range of organisations and knowledge and library services, ensuring that the mechanism meets the principles set out in Appendix 1. Detailed communications will follow.

#### **5. Supporting local organisations**

An *ad hoc* Service Improvement Review can be requested by the organisation at any point in the cycle where this might be helpful, perhaps at a time of significant change or to support a new service manager.

In the best interests of learners and staff, and aligned to the NHS Education Contract Quality process, the national team may request further evidence and a meeting at any point. In collaboration with regional Quality teams, a formal visit will be triggered where concerns are identified, or interventions need to be put in place.

Paper as agreed by the Knowledge for Healthcare Board 30 August 2022

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#### **Appendix 1. Principles underpinning this approach**

- Supporting the NHS to bring benefits to organisations, the workforce and through them to patients.
- Achievable and sustainable for NHS organisations, NHS knowledge and library services and validators
- Aligned and proportionate to the quality processes for organisations in receipt of NHS Education Contract funding
- Supportive of service improvement and development, enabling active engagement and good working relationships with a nominated development lead identified for each organisation
- Incorporating peer review