



Quality Improvement (QI)

Market Engagement Briefing Note

Introduction

The Care Quality Commission (“CQC”) is the independent regulator of health and social care for England. We employ around 3000 staff, 65% of whom are non-office based. Our 2016 – 2021 strategy – Shaping the Future - has four priorities. CQC will:

- Encourage improvement, innovation and sustainability in care;
- Deliver an intelligence-driven approach to regulation;
- Promote a single shared view of quality; and
- Improve our efficiency and effectiveness.

Through the **delivery** of these four priorities CQC makes sure that health and social care services provide people with safe, effective, compassionate, high quality care and encourage care services to improve. To do this we work with providers, users of these services and the public.

CQC has a clear strategy and purpose and four values that underpin how we work with each other, the services we regulate and people who use services. These are: excellence, caring, teamwork and integrity. CQC has also made a significant investment in developing leadership skills in all line managers. The focus of this leadership development programme has been to: build **coherence and capability**; increase our **agility and productivity** by distributing leadership; build **trusted relationships** by creating closer working relationships; equip us to be **adaptive** by adjusting and adapting in resilient ways to the continuous change we experience; focus us on being **purposeful**; and develop our **creativity** by strengthening our ability to embrace innovation, continuous improvement and experimentation. Alongside this we have undertaken a cultural diagnostic to understand the CQC culture and what enables people who work here to operate at their best.

Background

Our focus over the last four years has been to establish our credibility externally as an organisation that contributes to improvements in care. We believe we have done this. We are, for example, the only health and social care regulator in the world that has established a baseline for how well services are performing. But we can't stand still. The future of health and social care is changing. New care models are emerging and there is a greater focus on understanding how effectively the health and social

care system as whole is working for the benefit of people who use these services, rather than just individual providers. CQC leaders have undoubtedly benefitted from the leadership programme but we also recognise from the cultural diagnostic and our ongoing evaluation of the programme that we are on a journey. We still face some challenges in terms of delegation, making time for improvement activity, working across Directorates and being accountable for tackling problems and finding solutions. We also recognise that the quality of our judgements and performance varies across the organisation and the way we do some things at CQC holds the people who work for us back.

Therefore, CQC are now looking to invest in the next stage of our organisational development. We have looked externally at organisations, including some of those we regulate, who have found ways to continually build on improvements in both the way they work and the quality of services they provide. To make this happen in CQC we need senior leadership commitment to a culture where we continually improve how we work and the impact we have, a laser sharp focus on improvement priorities, a can do attitude, a clear framework and methodology for making improvements internally and most significantly we need to make an investment in our staff's improvement skills. To do this our teams will have to learn a new approach, including the CQC Executive Team. The role of leaders will change. They will need to set a clear framework that enables people at all levels to make decisions that will lead to improvements in the way we work and focus on removing barriers that exist within the organisation that prevent improvements from being made. People at all levels across CQC will need to lead and contribute to activities that improve the way we work – which in turn will make a positive difference to people's experience of care.

We believe we have the commitment and motivation to make this happen. People who work at CQC care deeply about what they do. The impact they can have on the lives of people who use health and social care services drives and motivates them to give of their best. Through the cultural diagnostic work, they have told us that when CQC is at its best we are **autonomous, curious, supported, knowledgeable, recognised and connected**. By investing in quality improvement we want to enable people who work for CQC to spend more time being at their best by making improvements to the way CQC works which in turn will make a positive difference to the lives of people who use the services we regulate.

CQC has already started on this journey. We have appointed a Quality Improvement Director. We have a business improvement team who are working on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of our processes around the organisation. We have a fantastic group of volunteers who are experienced or interested in quality improvement and who are starting to generate conversations about how people who work for CQC can make changes to the way we work. We also have a senior leadership team who see the benefits and want to make the investment.

Market Engagement Event

We recognise that we need external support to make a wholesale shift in the organisation's capability to make improvements. We believe we need a partner who can work with CQC in three main ways. Broadly these are:

1. To work with the Quality Improvement Director and the Executive Team to set a clear framework for improving the way we work, define a clear set of measurable improvement priorities aligned to our strategy and values and which enable our staff to spend more of their time making a difference to people who use the services we regulate. Alongside this, the Executive Team recognise that they will need to learn a new approach and will need coaching to create a culture where people at CQC feel engaged and empowered to make improvements to the way we work;
2. To work with the Quality Improvement Director to build a small expert team and design the QI framework and methodology that will work for CQC. Importantly CQC is an organisation where 65% of our workforce is based at home and is frequently out and about undertaking regulatory activities; and
3. To work with the Quality Improvement Director to build capability in everyone who works at CQC so that they are equipped to lead improvement activity. In turn this will enable people who work at CQC to share their expertise of making improvements to the way we work with those services we regulate and encourage improvement across the sectors.

To do this we believe everyone will need:

- To understand why we are doing this and how improving the way CQC works enables them to spend more time making a difference to people's lives who use health and social care services;
- A good understanding of quality improvement tools and techniques and how these are used in CQC to drive improvement activity in the way we work that links to our purpose and our improvement priorities;
- In light of changes to our external environment and the need to work across the health and care system, to develop an understanding of systems thinking so they can apply it to how we work and in their regulatory activities;
- To develop the behaviours and skills that enables them to lead and contribute to improvement activities within CQC.

To develop our thinking further we want to engage with organisations that have the expertise and the experience of working in partnership with organisations to create a quality improvement culture that is deeply embedded and sustainable.

CQC will be hosting market engagement events to provide further information on this published notice. The purpose of the event is to engage in discussions, to hear your ideas on how best we can partner with an organisation or organisations, and to answer any questions you may have. We do not have fixed views on how the Quality Improvement Programme should be done or where partners can add most value.

To express an interest, please send an e-mail (quoting reference CQC PSO 129) to commercialcontracts@cqc.org.uk

Come and join us in a discussion which will shape OUR future.