

Evidence Directorate Strategic Plan 2016-2020

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1. Purpose of this Strategic Plan

The appraisal and synthesis of clinical and health research evidence has a well established role in supporting policy development and the delivery of healthcare. In view of the specialist skills required to undertake these activities, it is appropriate that many of these are undertaken once for Scotland by a national organisation.

Evidence-based outputs include clinical guidelines, health technology appraisals and clinical standards, aimed at practitioners and policy makers at both local and national level. A range of factors needs to be considered in respect of effective implementation of evidence-based advice in policy or practice. These include the central role of patients or service users in decision making about their treatment and the need for advice to be timely and responsive in the increasingly dynamic healthcare environment. There are known to be many challenges in supporting effective uptake and implementation of advice in the health service and the integration of health and social care adds a further level of complexity.

This strategic plan outlines how the work, working arrangements and outputs of the Evidence Directorate will be developed to support patients, service users, clinicians, other health professionals and social care practitioners, as well as other teams in Healthcare Improvement Scotland to ensure we are maximising our resources in the support of the delivery of high quality care.

2. Role of Directorate

The Evidence Directorate serves a dual role in Healthcare Improvement Scotland. We develop and disseminate evidence-based advice for NHSScotland, such as guidelines, health technology assessments and clinical standards, and we provide internal evidence development, research and knowledge support for the other functions of the organisation. The appendix provides an outline of the current directorate infrastructure.

The approach to delivering our work has been through collaboration with national experts to identify, develop and share evidence-based advice to healthcare professionals across Scotland. The advice developed is provided in a variety of formats to support delivery of safe, effective and cost-effective care, and to provide the public with support for decision making regarding a wide range of treatments and interventions. The directorate also promotes approaches to the generation and use of knowledge and learning across the organisation and our work supports other Healthcare Improvement Scotland strategic initiatives including the medicines strategy, the non-medicines technologies strategy and the research strategic plan.

Driving Improvement in Healthcare, the Healthcare Improvement Scotland corporate strategy, emphasises the need to integrate our evidence, quality assurance and quality improvement support to work as one organisation to achieve our aim of driving the delivery of world-class, person-centred care. The Evidence Directorate also collaborates with partners in the UK and beyond to advance our approaches to evidence production and use, and we contribute to methodological research activity with international partners.

3. Our strategic aims

The nature of care delivery is changing with the implementation of the integration of health and social care; a review of public health; and, the publication of a new national clinical

strategy. These system changes and the recent imperative from the Chief Medical Officer to support the provision of 'realistic medicine' have implications for the directorate in both the nature of the advice we develop and how we respond to requests for support from the service.

Evidence underpins these activities and developments and the Evidence Directorate needs to evolve to ensure its activities remain relevant to all the work of the organisation. Over the next five years, therefore, we need to:

- provide timely evidence and economics support on a range of areas for quality improvement, including pathways of care, within and beyond Healthcare Improvement Scotland;
- identify and interpret the evidence base to underpin sustainable, safe, effective, efficient and person-centred care for integrated health and social care services;
- be responsive in our evidence activities to reflect the increasing need for advice in the face of rapidly developing medicines, technologies and treatments;
- refocus our outputs to provide shorter, more targeted, advice in clinical areas, reflecting key challenges such as the increase in multimorbidity, and incorporating consensus methods where advice based on evidence is not possible;
- strengthen evaluation to monitor the impact of and adjust our activities to maximise the benefit our work brings to the health and social care system;
- continue to contribute to global knowledge on the generation and use of evidence;
- continually improve our working practices to be efficient, effective, flexible and maximise our impact.

4. Our objectives

To meet these ambitious aims, we have identified a number of specific objectives:

- 1 Build on our existing knowledge to address the requirements of our stakeholders for evidence-based advice that is current, timely, and accessible, and in formats that will support ready implementation.**
- 2 Develop our current processes designed for healthcare improvement to provide evidence-based advice to support quality improvement and strategic development for a integrated health and social care system.**
- 3 Build on our medicines and non-medicines technology assessment work to better support early assessment and adoption of innovative technologies into health and social care.**
- 4 Develop processes to ensure our advice is focused on aspects of care where practice varies inappropriately or in which the evidence needs careful evaluation.**
- 5 Further develop our processes to provide support for, and application of, approaches to evaluating the impact of our work.**
- 6 Support research and innovation in the generation and use of evidence including through national and international initiatives.**

7 Ensure our staff and other resources are used to best effect by developing our people, operating within a flexible structure, and working with colleagues to deliver our corporate strategy.

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Our implementation plan 2016/18

No.	Objective	Deliverables	Lead unit/officer	With support from	Timescale
1	Address the requirements of our stakeholders for evidence-based advice that is current, timely, and accessible, and in formats that will support ready implementation.	1.1 A description of our stakeholders and their evidence needs 1.2 A prioritised work programme	Director of Evidence	Knowledge Management Team/Standards and Indicators Team	2016/17 2016/17
2	Provide evidence-based advice to support quality improvement and strategic development for a integrated health and social care system	2.1 A portfolio of recognised methodologies to respond to <i>ad hoc</i> requests for evidence support 2.2 A capacity planning process to support responding to requests 2.3 Processes to support use of knowledge for quality-improvement activity 2.4 Embedded Evidence and Evaluation Support Team working 2.3 A gap analysis of evidence requirements of integrated health and social care services 2.4 Processes for	Deputy Director of Evidence	Knowledge Management Team/Standards and Indicators Team/Health Economics Team/Health Services Research Team	2017/18 2017/18 2017/18 2017/18 2017/18

		system-wide use of evidence for decision making through participation in national initiatives eg Public Health Review			
3	Build on our work on medicines and non-medicines technology assessment work to better support early assessment and adoption of innovative technologies into health and social care	<p>3.1 Published methodologies for assessment of innovative technologies</p> <p>3.2 A process to identify and address gaps in current horizon scanning</p> <p>3.3 Proposed process for the routine consideration of Non Medicines Technologies within NHS boards</p>	SHTG/ SMC	Knowledge Management Team	<p>2016/17</p> <p>2016/17</p> <p>2017/18</p>
4	Develop processes to ensure our advice is focused on aspects of care where practice varies inappropriately or the evidence needs careful evaluation	<p>4.1 Further developed consensus methodologies</p> <p>4.2 Developed methodologies to produce shorter, targeted advice</p> <p>4.3 Processes to address multiple morbidities and reduction in health inequalities in advice development</p>	SIGN	Knowledge Management Team/Health Services Research Team, Scottish Antimicrobial Prescribing Group	<p>2017/18</p> <p>2016/17</p> <p>2017/18</p>

5	Further develop our processes to provide support for and application of approaches to evaluating the impact of our work	5.1 Applied evaluation frameworks to assess the impact of our work	Deputy Director of Evidence	Health Services Research Team	Q4 2016/17
6	Support research and innovation in the generation and use of evidence including through national and international initiatives	<p>6.1 Staff conducting, presenting and publishing research and hosting research conferences</p> <p>6.2 Contributions to international research activity through existing networks</p> <p>6.3 The application of appropriate digital technologies to support internal functions and system wider evidence use</p> <p>6.4 Identified potential income generation streams to support evidence generation development work</p>	Deputy Director of Evidence	All teams	<p>2016/17</p> <p>2017/18</p> <p>2017/18</p> <p>2017/18</p>

7	Ensure our staff and other resources are used to best effect by developing our people and working with colleagues to deliver our corporate strategy	<p>7.1 Our staff skill base and future skills requirements are defined</p> <p>7.2 Staff are deployed to projects based on skills and experience</p> <p>7.2 Management tools to deploy staff appropriately</p> <p>7.3 Established external relationships to access skills not available in-house</p>	Director of Evidence	All teams	<p>2017/18</p> <p>2017/18</p> <p>2017/18</p> <p>2016/17</p>
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Directorate Infrastructure

Evidence and Evaluation Improvement Team (EEvIT)

This group comprises staff from a number of teams across the directorate who have a specific remit to support the work of the Improvement Hub.

The Evidence and Evaluation for Improvement Team (EEvIT) provides analytical support for improvement work across the ihub. EEvIT includes experts in health economics, knowledge and information retrieval, health services research, evaluation and data analysis, drawn from across the evidence directorate. The team can help design and deliver improvement programmes and projects that are based on current evidence and incorporate approaches to monitoring and measuring their success.

Health Economics Team

The Health Economics Team provides support for the outputs of Scottish Health Technologies Group, Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network and Scottish Medicines Consortium, to ensure that the cost effectiveness of NHS resource use is integral to the advice Healthcare Improvement Scotland issues. In addition, the team regularly contributes health economic analyses to other organisational work programme areas as well as providing health economics advice to several national committees.

Health Services Research Team

The Health Services Research Team supports the Scottish Health Technologies Group through production of rapid evidence reviews, systematic reviews, full health technology assessments, a biannual horizon scanning report and other papers and reports related to the assessment of non-medicines technologies. The team also undertakes:

- literature reviews and syntheses in response to *ad hoc* requests from work programmes across the organisation;
- training and advice in research methods and writing for publication;
- training and support for the evaluation of projects.

Knowledge Management Team

The Knowledge Management Team provides a knowledge and information retrieval and dissemination service to support and underpin the delivery of the corporate priorities. This is based on the implementation of the NHSScotland 'Knowledge into Action' strategy which aims to develop a culture which values and promotes experiential learning, tacit knowledge use and the sharing of these through dialogue and collaborative working.

This team also provides organisational information governance support to ensure the necessary safeguards for, and appropriate use of, patient, personal and corporate information.

The Scottish Antimicrobial Prescribing Group (SAPG)

SAPG leads the national programme for antimicrobial stewardship to enhance the quality of antimicrobial prescribing and infection management in Scotland. The SAPG work programme

comprises surveillance of antimicrobial use and resistance, quality-improvement interventions and education of healthcare staff and the public across hospital and community settings.

Scottish Health Technologies Group (SHTG)

The SHTG is an advisory group set up to provide assistance to NHSScotland boards when considering selected health technologies, excluding medicines which will be reviewed by the Scottish Medicines Consortium. The remit of the SHTG is to provide advice on the evidence about the clinical and cost effectiveness of existing and new technologies likely to have significant implications for patient care in Scotland. This advice should support the planning and decision-making processes in NHS boards. This includes a horizon scanning function to provide early intelligence on health technologies in development.

Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN)

SIGN aims to improve the quality of health care for patients in Scotland by reducing variation in practice and outcome, through the development and dissemination of national clinical guidelines containing recommendations for effective practice based on current evidence.

SIGN involves patients and carers in all aspects of the guideline development process allowing their views and experiences to complement the evidence, and the knowledge and experience of healthcare.

Scottish Medicines Consortium (SMC)

SMC aims to benefit patients by providing NHSScotland with a single source of timeous advice about the clinical and cost effectiveness of all newly licensed medicines.

SMC also has a horizon scanning programme that supports financial and service planning for medicines in health boards across Scotland through the provision of early intelligence on new medicines in clinical development.

Standards and Indicators Team

The Standards and Indicators Team develops evidence-based standards and indicators to support local and national benchmarking and to aid the assessment of the quality of care. This work involves facilitation of groups of stakeholders including patients and service users to define those aspects of care that would be a barometer of quality and to develop these into measurable standards and indicators.

Research

The Evidence Directorate leads the development and implementation of the corporate Research Strategic Plan to promote the development, dissemination and use of research to support improvement in the delivery of safe, effective, and person-centred care. Teams across the Evidence Directorate participate in national and international research activity to further knowledge generation in areas including guideline and health technology assessment development and antibiotic prescribing.