

**AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET**

**Name of Committee**                      **Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Date of Committee**                      **17<sup>th</sup> October 2006**

**Report Title**                                **Inspecting for Better Lives: A Quality Future**

**Summary**                                      This report summarises the recent Commission for Social Care Inspection's (CSCI) consultation document Inspecting for Better Lives: A Quality Future, which highlights proposals to introduce quality ratings. The report also includes a draft response and comments regarding the proposed changes to feedback to CSCI's consultation on next steps for how to regulate and inspect adult social care services

**For further information please contact:**                      Kim Harlock  
Service Manger  
(Commissioning)

Tel: 01926 731078

**Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?**                      No.

**Background papers**

**CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-**                      Details to be specified

Other Committees                             

Local Member(s)                             

Other Elected Members                       Councillor F McCarney, Councillor M Stanley, Councillor Mrs J Compton, Councillor R Dodd

Lead Cabinet Member                       Councillor C Hayfield

- Cabinet Member  .....
- Chief Executive  .....
- Legal  Jane Pollard, Alison Hallworth
- Finance  .....
- Other Chief Officers  .....
- District Councils  .....
- Health Authority  .....
- Police  .....
- Other Bodies/Individuals  .....

**FINAL DECISION YES**

**SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:**

Details to be specified

- Further consideration by this Committee  .....
- To Council  .....
- To Cabinet  .....
- To an O & S Committee  .....
- To an Area Committee  .....
- Further Consultation  .....

**Adult & Community Services Overview & Scrutiny –  
17th October 2006**

**Inspecting For Better Lives – A Quality Future**

**Report of the Strategic Director of Adult, Health &  
Community Services**

**Recommendation**

That the Committee consider and comment on the proposed response in paragraph 7.1 to the CSCI consultation on next steps for the regulation and inspection of adult social care services.

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Good quality social care has the potential to improve people's lives. Choice is an essential part of good public services. However choice is only a positive thing if people have good information to help them decide.
- 1.2 Currently, many people access CSCI's web site to find out about their local services. Whilst CSCI's inspection reports outline what a service does well and where it needs to improve, people also want to know more about the overall quality rating of a service. To address this, CSCI are proposing to introduce quality ratings to give people a simpler way of comparing services.

**2. Action to Date**

- 2.1 To date CSCI have made a number of changes to respond to feedback received from people who use social care services. Revisions include:
- A new, clearer format for inspection reports
  - Increased number of unannounced inspection visits
  - Involvement of people who use care services as "experts"
  - Listening to the views of people using care services through new types of surveys

- Introduction of new inspections for domiciliary care services and adult placement schemes
- Clearer and streamlined registration processes
- Review of how complaints are handled
- Enforcement action to stamp out bad practice

### **3. Quality Ratings**

3.1 CSCI aim to achieve a ratings system that:

- Is easily understood
- Providers and staff can relate to and that encourages them to improve their service
- Councils and health can use in deciding how to give incentives to providers to improve services
- Shows an open and transparent way of reaching the rating

3.2 It is proposed that a quality rating is published for all care services by mid 2007. This will be in two parts:

- A graph showing how well the service performs under 7 main headings called outcome areas
- An overall rating

### **4. Outcome Areas**

4.1 The outcomes areas will be based on those published in the Department of Health's publication "Our Health, Our Care, Our Say" plus a further judgement area related to leadership and management. This is similar to the proposed framework for the revised performance management framework.

4.2 The outcome headings listed below will be related to regulated social care as follows:

<b>Outcome Heading</b>	<b>Relationship to Regulated Social Care</b>
Quality of life	Promotion of independence
Exercising choice and control	Service users and carers having choice and access to responsive services that meet their individual needs and preferences.
Making a positive contribution	People seen as full members of their community and able to contribute to their roles as citizens
Personal dignity and respect	Privacy and dignity valued and protected. People free from abuse and neglect
Freedom from discrimination and harassment	Fair access to services. Services with clear, open and transparent ways for people to express concerns. People able to say "no" without fear of reprisal
Improved health and emotional well-being	Health and well-being needs appropriately addressed. Improvement in health encouraged. End of life care is managed sensitively; taking into account needs and preferences
Economic well-being	Access to advice and support. People feeling in control of their resources so they can make choices. Service users able to contribute to their community by carrying out paid and/or unpaid employment
Leadership and Management	People experience services that are well led. Well trained, competent, supported staff.

4.3 Rather than CSCI reporting against national minimum standards, inspectors will make an evidenced judgement whether services are excellent, good, adequate or poor. The judgements will be included and published in the inspection report summary in a graphical format.

## **5. Overall Ratings**

- 5.1 In forming an overall rating CSCI propose to pay particular attention to outcome areas that most affect people's quality of life. A star rating of 1 (a poor quality service) to 4 (an excellent service) is proposed as being the clearest and simplest way of describing the quality of a service, but CSCI is open to suggestions in alternative titles.
- 5.2 There will be times when a service has no quality rating. This will occur in the first year where many services will not have had their key inspection, which CSCI will make clear to service users on their web site. New services will not receive a quality rating until their first key inspection. Where enforcement action is in place, the quality rating may be suspended.
- 5.3 No quality ratings will be published in 2006, but CSCI will inform providers what they think about their performance and what quality rating this would mean. This will also be discussed with social care commissioners. In preparation for publishing quality ratings in 2007, CSCI will map the National Minimum Standards onto the new outcomes and work with stakeholders to get the grading and mapping right.
- 5.4 A long list of descriptions is available to help inspectors make consistent judgements about the performance of a service. The descriptors, called Key Lines of Enquiry, describe the features found in each outcome area. Providers will have the opportunity to comment on an inspection report's factual accuracy and a complaints procedure will be available.
- 5.5 Quality ratings will determine how frequently key inspections are undertaken. Whilst a 4 star (excellent) service will only have a key inspection once every 3 years, a 1 star (poor) service will have at least 2 inspections per year and maybe more. Where CSCi are considering enforcement action, they may undertake an even higher number of inspections over a short space of time.

## **6. Other Inspections**

- 6.1 In addition to key inspections, CSCI will undertake themed and random inspections to respond to serious complaints or check out specific issues. Themed inspections will be part of national investigations into specific aspects of social care services such as food or medication.

- 6.2 Such inspections will not be based on quality ratings and will not change the quality rating for individual services. However, such inspections and other pieces of information will be used, in between key inspections, to checkout judgements on when the next key inspection should be.
- 6.3 Where there has not been a key inspection in the previous year, an annual service review will take place on all care services, starting in 2007. This is not an inspection, but a review based on a summary of new information collected over the previous year. Where CSCI think there may be changes in how well the service is caring for people a key inspection may be undertaken earlier than planned.
- 6.4 It is proposed the Annual Service Review would provide information about changes of provider, feedback about what is good about a service and recent views expressed, weaknesses in the service, the outcome of random or themed inspections, whether information requested has been sent and if a good improvement plan has been provided if requested by CSCI.

## **7. Adult Health & Community Services Response**

- 7.1 CSCI are inviting feedback on the next steps for how they regulate and inspect adult social care services. Warwickshire's draft response is attached and members are asked to consider the following responses:

7.1.1 **Question 1 – Is a star rating the right description for the new social care quality rating?**

The new format for inspection reports is welcome as it is believed the proposed format will be easier to understand and will convey a clearer impression of the overall judgement of the home. This will especially benefit members of the public who are trying to establish how good a service is.

7.1.2 **Question 2 – Can you suggest an alternative title for the quality rating rather than “stars”?**

We do not consider “star rating” is the right descriptor and would propose “quality rating” better describes what is being quantified

**7.1.3 Question 3 - Do you think that the rules described give the right opportunity for services to be judged as 4 star?**

Whilst the rules described seem adequate, it will depend on the very detailed lines of enquiry that are referred to in the document and whether they do describe the consistency that is needed.

**7.1.4 Question 4 – Are the rules for the other services (1-3) fair?**

Ensuring consistent scoring and assignment of star ratings is a potential area of difficulty we anticipate CSCI may experience, particularly where a service performs inconsistently across outcome areas

**7.1.5 Question 5 – Do you think that it is correct for outcomes related to “personal dignity and respect”, “leadership and management” and “improved health and emotional well-being” to be highlighted as particularly important in deciding the overall quality rating?**

The centrality and greater involvement of service users is welcomed. Clearly the outcomes are based on the White Paper and we recognise and support the appropriateness of this. However, service users have very clear views on what outcomes are important to them too and we would ask that consideration be given to ensuring these are considered and appropriately weighted in the determination of a quality rating too.

**7.1.6 Question 6 – Do you think it right where legal action (enforcement) is being taken against a care service the quality rating is temporarily suspended pending the outcome, and that people are told that action is being taken?**

We would support information being provided to inform people where there is enforcement action or suspensions in place so that potential service users and carers are aware and that the information they receive is open, timely and transparent to enable them to make an informed decision

**7.1.7 Question 7 – Are there any comments you would like to make about the descriptions of the different levels of quality?**

The descriptors of different levels of quality are appropriate and easy to understand but some concerns have been expressed about the way in which these can be consistently applied, which may result in differences in interpretation of outcome judgements



**7.1.8 Question 8 – Do you think we have included the right information in the Annual Service Review? Does it give members of the public the right information about the service that has not recently had a key inspection?**

Where random inspections have confirmed weaknesses in the service, where there is an improvement plan in place that is not considered “good” by CSCI or enforcement action is being taken, we would expect this to be highlighted in the Annual Service Review

**7.1.9 Question 9 – Is there anything else you think we should say about a service in the Annual Service Review?**

No further comment

**7.1.10 Other comments:**

We would recommend more robust protocols be implemented between CSCI and Local Authorities to aid greater co-ordination and exchange of information to facilitate the management and improvement of poor performing services.

**Graeme Betts  
Strategic Director Adult, Health & Community Services  
September 2006**