

Summary of comments made to Corporate Plan

Background

A total of 37 people answered our online survey, 'What's Next', to give their views on our latest corporate plan.

The majority of respondents were a regulator (48%). This was followed by care service staff (19%); people using care services (11%); carers, friends or relatives (11%); providers of care services (8%); and members of the public (3%).

The Care Inspectorate should start to...

Key findings

There was a strong focus from respondents on the need for the organisation to become better at communicating with services, particularly sharing good practice. It was suggested by a number of people that this should be in the form of sample tools and documents such as personal plans. One person suggested it would be useful if the organisation could demonstrate how following good practice relates to grading. Another person suggested that inspectors should meet with staff and managers outwith inspections to discuss good practice and to support improvement.

A large number of people said that inspectors should spend more time in services throughout the year, rather than just at inspection time, so that both staff and people using the service and their relatives become more aware of the Care Inspectorate and its role. People also felt that more time should be spent speaking to those using the service and their relatives / friends at inspection. It was suggested that this could be supported by an increase in the number of lay assessors.

A number of people also called for more user-friendly inspection reports. Suggestions made include easy read format, bullet points or a summarised version of the main report. People considered it important that as an organisation we are clear on the audience and purpose of our reports. Consistency of report writing was also raised as a concern.

A number of respondents suggested the following:

- Ensure consistency of inspection and grading across the country.
- Employ more professional advisors who can support inspections and work with services to improve.
- Become better at obtaining feedback and engaging with the public. This could include making more information available to the public via the media; reviewing the Care Standards Questionnaires; and distributing questionnaires to all service users at the end of an inspection.
- Visit more people who are receiving care at home services.
- Develop ICT systems to be responsive to the needs of people using services.

- Develop forums for providers, staff and service users to share knowledge and information. This could include national Care Inspectorate events that share sector findings, or performance development groups.
- Better support for inspection staff in their work. This could include team managers occasionally accompanying inspectors on an inspection or peer reviews.

Other suggestions:

A number of distinct suggestions were also made by respondents.

Staffing

- Monitor the health and wellbeing of staff and consider ways to encourage staff to look after themselves.
- Consider how parents are supported in managing their careers and whether they are missing out on opportunities for involvement / new posts due to time commitments away from home.
- Develop an up to date zero tolerance policy to protect staff, particularly when out on inspection.
- Support staff in their health and wellbeing.
- Apply the self-assessment framework to our own work and use action plans to address our deficiencies – make these available to the public.

Training and development

- Protect time for staff to research issues and update their knowledge of good practice.
- Provide staff with more training and development – locally if possible.
- Use improvements in dementia care as a vehicle to improve all care and develop the workforce.

Communication

- Improve communication within the organisation during a time of constant change.
- Improve the website, particularly its search function.
- Put alerts on the website for underperforming services so the public can easily see which services are poorly performing.

Methodology and scrutiny activities

- Inspect children's services more regularly.
- Consider how to prepare prospective applicants for registration prior to them submitting an application form – suggestion that moving to an online system has meant that the standard of applications is suffering.
- Increase the number of overnight and early morning inspections.
- Establish an independent body for grading appeals.

- Investigate complaints against social work departments.
- Shadow care staff for a day as part of the inspection process.
- Introduce geographically based caseloads for inspection staff.
- More impromptu chats with staff and service users outwith inspections.
- Speak to all grades of staff during an inspection without senior management being present.
- Develop a clear policy on how registration, complaints and inspection teams should work together.
- Ensure that the minimum number of staff in a service be reviewed in line with the higher dependency of residents being admitted to care homes.
- Introduce a structured approach to looking at the provision of / access to standard of healthcare within services.
- Support inspection staff in understanding the strategic inspector role – more input into strategic inspections from regulated care inspectors and sharing of knowledge.
- Introduce contact managers for all providers that have four or more services.
- Discuss whether it is a human right to access outdoor space independently.
- Decide whether we acknowledge Dementia Specialist Units and if so what is the criteria for such a unit.

Other

- Define what positive outcomes look like.
- Give equalities and human rights a higher profile.
- Include care home costs in the inspection report to allow prospective residents to take these into account when choosing their home.
- Learn from significant events and share this learning with services.
- Write clear guidance about the range of services that a person with dementia and their carers can expect to receive on the dementia journey.
- Work more closely with people with dementia and their families, firstly so that they fully appreciate what services should be providing and secondly to shape how services can be developed and delivered. Service users and their families through increased expectations can be the drivers of service improvement.
- Provide visual examples of good practice (e.g. care plans) and provide more best practice guidance.

The Care Inspectorate should stop...

Key findings

A number of respondents suggested that centralised planning and introduction of national teams is not working. They warned that the introduction of the national planning team had led to a loss of flexibility in planning and managing workloads. Others suggested that national teams had led to 'silo working'.

Aligned with this, one person suggested that few staff have the up to date experience and learning they require to claim 'expert' status, while a number of respondents questioned the allocation of inspections in a non-geographical sense, suggesting that this was not a good use of time or resources.

A number of respondents suggested the Care Inspectorate should stop the following:

- Using questionnaires to gather feedback – develop more effective tools in consultation with service users.
- Giving poorly performing services so much time to improve.
- Using the current inspection report format.

Other suggestions:

- Inconsistency between inspections.
- Waiting for others to lead the way, we can be the frontrunners of improvement and innovation.
- Investigating anonymous and online complaints.
- Using the current grading system.
- Development weeks – suggestion that these should be replaced with team development days throughout the year.
- Not allowing services to appeal grades.
- Trying to move forward too fast – no consistency for staff or their admin.
- Using words that are open to interpretation such as 'adequate' or 'appropriate'.
- Grading individual child minders.
- Moving people into posts they do not have the experience to be in.
- Being process driven – allocate time for inspectors to do improvement work.
- Promoting and signposting through the website / magazines and instead be out there in public, meeting providers face to face.
- Engaging with people who already know who we are.
- Keeping inspectors / inspections and strategic inspectors / inspections so separate.
- Carry out investigations immediately rather than keeping to the policy that we cannot investigate a complaint about a local authority until it has carried out its own investigation.

The Care Inspectorate should keep doing...

Key findings

A large number of respondents were supportive of unannounced inspections and believe these should continue.

Several people suggested that it was important we keep moving forward with the improvement agenda.

Other suggestions:

Staffing and organisational culture

- Developing the expertise of the workforce.
- Specialist teams – should improve consistency, quality and development for staff in the longer term.
- Recruiting more staff with the skill set / experience to match the new specialist team structure.
- Developing and enhancing the role of admin staff.
- Communicate to all staff internally and service providers externally about the work being done to improve.
- Learning from the mistakes of predecessor organisations.
- National teams.
- Creating an organisation that has service users at its heart – ensure that the new National Care Standards are based on what is important to service users and carers.

Regulatory activities

- Targeting inspections with a risk based approach.
- Striving for consistency across the country.
- Spending time in services using lay assessors.
- Involving professional advisors to support frontline staff on inspection.
- Tighter registration processes.
- Investigating complaints.
- Using its position to raise expectations.
- Involvement.

Other

- Continue to evaluate the work of the dementia consultant and dementia leads with the acknowledgement that dementia and the ageing population is one of the most pressing issues for society.
- Continue to make connections and links with the wider dementia community, this will allow the Care Inspectorate to be aware of innovation and best practice, which we then can pass onto people with dementia and their families as well as providers.