

## **NMC response to Care Quality Commission's consultation on shaping the future, the CQC's strategy 2016 to 2021**

### **Introduction**

- 1 The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) is the professional regulator for nurses and midwives in the UK. We exist to protect the public. We do this by holding and controlling access to the register of qualified nurses and midwives and setting standards of education, training, conduct and performance for nurses and midwives. If an allegation is made that a registered nurse or midwife is not fit to practise, we have a duty to investigate that allegation and, where necessary, take action to protect the public.
- 2 We welcome the opportunity to respond to this consultation. Our response is framed within the context of our remit as a professional regulator, and mindful of the expectation that professional and system regulators will work effectively together where doing so helps to protect the public. The NMC has a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the CQC<sup>1</sup> which ensures that we work together and cooperate when we encounter issues of relevance to each other's remit.

### **The CQC's vision for quality**

- 3 We welcome the CQC's 2016 to 2021 strategy and its commitment to improving the way it undertakes regulation, conducts inspections and monitors quality across the healthcare sector.
- 4 We believe that the vision outlined for what quality regulation should look like will help the development of a strong framework capable of ensuring that health and social care service deliver safe, effective, compassionate, high-quality care, while encouraging services to further improve.
- 5 We recognise that health and care needs are changing and that providers need to adapt how they deliver care to meet those needs. It is right that regulators also refresh their approach to oversight of the sector.
- 6 We believe that the public interest is best served by regulation that is consistent with the principles of 'right-touch regulation' as outlined by the Professional Standards Authority<sup>2</sup>, and should include the following essential elements:
  - 6.1 transparency;
  - 6.2 objectivity, fairness and consistency;

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nmc.org.uk/about-us/who-we-work-with/mous/mou-between-nmc-and-cqc/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/docs/default-source/psa-library/151020-right-touch-regulation-revised-final.pdf?sfvrsn=0>

- 6.3 proportionality;
- 6.4 outcome focused; and be
- 6.5 dynamic.

- 7 In addition, we believe that any regulation must be both cost effective and proportionate in terms of its regulatory aims.
- 8 We believe that the CQC's strategy for the next five years is consistent with these principles. It is right that the CQC should seek to identify and address risk as a key tenet of its regulatory approach and in doing work to eliminate or mitigate risk as a matter of public protection.

### **A single shared view of quality**

- 9 We support the proposed single shared view of quality based around the five questions currently used as the basis of its inspections, namely is the service: safe, effective, caring, responsive and well led.
- 10 We believe that this will provide the CQC with sound insight into the quality of care being delivered. Importantly this should both highlight where high quality care is being undertaken and provide information to identify providers and individuals where there are concerns.
- 11 Improvements to CQC's regulatory approach should provide the CQC with improved data and information, and we believe that this will also improve the quality of information being shared between the two organisations with positive outcomes for public protection.
- 12 Due to the broad range of providers that the CQC's remit encompasses, a single shared view of quality is an important starting point in order for the CQC to evaluate whether a service is protecting the public over the next five years, especially in a system which is likely to see significant change in how and where services are provided.

### **Information sharing and working together**

- 13 The consultation identifies improving the use of data and information as a key factor in developing the CQC model of regulation.
- 14 The NMC strongly supports the importance of data and information in efficient and effective regulation. Information and data sharing between different organisations is central to achieving this.
- 15 The NMC has a strong working relationship with the CQC and we hold regular meetings to keep the effectiveness of our collaboration under review.
- 16 We are keen to find ways to further develop this relationship and find new ways to improve our collaboration in the interest of public protection.