



Leading quality health and care for Scotland: Our Strategy 2023–28



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Setting the scene

We are the national improvement agency for health and care in Scotland. Our strategy is to secure lasting, positive and sustainable improvements across the whole health and care system. We are uniquely placed to identify the connections and opportunities created by system-wide working and to collaborate with all boards and other national organisations to deliver a relentless focus on the safe delivery of effective care.

To deliver our strategy we will draw on our significant experience and bring together knowledge and skills from across our organisation to target our resources where they will have most impact in reducing waste, variation and harm. As an evidence-based organisation, we will be transparent in evaluating our effectiveness.

We are committed to being a visible, dependable, trustworthy and proactive partner in supporting the recovery and renewal of our post-pandemic health and social care system. We will work closely with our colleagues delivering health and care and do our best to support them.

We will, over the lifetime of this strategy, focus our strengths and resources on addressing challenges to secure positive, sustainable change in the health and care system.

We will be bold in the actions we need to take to improve health outcomes and provide practical support to design and implement changes that will lead to improvement. And we will reduce inequalities in care by making sure the views of diverse and seldom-heard groups are listened to and acted upon.

By taking a whole system approach, we will use our evidence-based insights to devise actions that support the delivery of person centred, safe and effective health and care services.

As well as focussing on the 'horizon one' immediate challenges we will also look to 'horizon two' intermediate innovation and 'horizon three' longer-term transformational change. With this perspective, we will be able to adapt our strategic approach to ensure we continue to address the challenges in the system and maximise our impact now and into the future.

We will provide independent assurance of the quality and safety of the care provided by Scotland's health and care system and measure how outcomes for people are improving and inequalities reducing. With partner organisations, we will consider how services are working together as an integrated system to implement improvements.

To help ensure everyone in Scotland receives the same standard of care and is able to thrive, we will provide national leadership and insight as part of our contribution to the programme of adult social care reform. And, although there is no one single step to achieving higher quality care, we will support those who provide care to make evidence-based choices and decisions about how to tackle problems and challenges that confront them.

At the end of the period this strategy covers, we will be able to demonstrate that, through a comprehensive and focused set of deliverables, we have supported improvements in front line care as well as leading on the larger scale changes necessary across Scotland.





Our strategic approach



Our purpose

Our purpose is to drive the highest quality care for everyone in Scotland



Our vision

A health and care system where:

- people can access safe, effective, person-centred care when needed
- services are informed by the voices of people and communities and based on evidence about what works
- those delivering care are empowered to continuously innovate and improve



Our values

- care and compassion
- dignity and respect
- openness, honesty and responsibility, and
- quality and teamwork.



Our contribution

Healthcare Improvement Scotland exists to lead improvement in the quality and safety of health and care for the people in Scotland using our skills and knowledge to tackle the quality challenges being faced. Our role is to be at the heart of national efforts to understand and shape the quality of health and care, and with partners, to embed quality management across the provision of health and care.

Our support for the system is underpinned by a number of statutory duties and powers¹, including:

- to further improve the quality of health and care
- to provide information to the public about the availability and quality of NHS services
- to support and monitor public involvement
- to monitor the quality of healthcare provided or secured by the health service
- to evaluate and provide advice to the health service on the clinical and cost effectiveness of new medicines and new and existing health technologies





1. Our statutory duties can be found in the Operating Framework between HIS and Scottish Government

our strategy in action

Connecting scrutiny with improvement support

As a national organisation we can look right across Scotland at the safe delivery of care from issues we identify during inspections. We also have a responsibility to give leadership by bringing it into the spotlight.

Our scrutiny work is able to identify serious concerns relating to the safety of patients and staff and where necessary we will call upon all of Scotland's NHS boards to review their systems and procedures, and do this publicly.

Our inspections also identify good examples of staff working together, in difficult circumstances, to manage and mitigate risks. Despite the challenges associated with patient flow, waiting times and workforce pressures, inspections will continue to highlight the many positive and caring interactions between staff and patients, with staff working extremely hard to deliver safe care.

In addition, staff wellbeing continues to be a prominent feature of our inspections, with staff expressing feelings of exhaustion and concerns around their ability to provide safe patient care, to escalate concerns and feel that they are being listened to.

We will continue to share the learning from our inspections over the coming years and offer ongoing improvement support to the system. We can provide a range of techniques and approaches to support, promote and share practice across NHS boards.



Our functions and approach



Across our functions, we work to ensure that the design, delivery, improvement and assurance of care are underpinned by:

- the **voice** of people needing, using and delivering care
- evidence about what works and how
- **data** to understand where to focus change and whether change is leading to improvement, and
- a **culture** which enables continuous learning, innovation and improvement.

We are increasingly aligning all our activities so as to most effectively target support to meet the greatest challenges facing the safety and quality of care.

The quality of care we see in the system will also directly inform the prioritisation of our work.



What we mean by quality

Across health and care there is no universally accepted definition of quality. We use the following to guide our work, which is based on the Institute of Medicine's Six Dimensions combined with the Quality Dimensions proposed in the Independent Review of Adult Social Care in Scotland.

High quality health and care means it is:

- **Safe** individuals using health and care services feel safe and the care they receive does not harm them.
- Effective providing care based on evidence and which produces a clear benefit.
- Equitable providing care that delivers equity of outcomes for everyone, which recognises the different needs of protected characteristics.
- Person centred and personalised providing care that responds to individual needs and preferences, ensuring individuals are partners in its planning and delivery.
- Accessible and timely ensuring people can access care when and where they need it.
- Efficient and Preventative maximising the benefit from available resources, responding early to prevent longer-term negative outcomes, and avoiding unwarranted variation and waste.
- **Integrated** individuals receiving a range of care provision experience it as joined up and easy to navigate.

our strategy in action

How lived experience influences service improvement

The voices of people with lived and living experience are critical to the success of service transformation because they help us understand what happens within the health and care system.

That first-hand experience of using a service or having a health care need gives unique and valuable insights into how health and care systems perform and how people feel when engaging with it.

Bringing these people together with our multidisciplinary professional teams to shape and refine our delivery approach, is how we approached our work on **Reducing Harm Improving Care (RHIC)**.

Working with four health and social care partnerships, our team engaged with 53 people who were experiencing homelessness and were currently using, or had previously used, drug and/or alcohol services.

What we heard helped us create user experience maps to show complexity of the patient journey and that in turn has given a clear direction to the service improvement work.



Extract from a user experience map

Practical support may be necessary for people in recovery: "As in budget my money, make sure I'm getting my food properly, maybe some meetings and all that, about the drugs and things like that, you know."

> Difficulty in avoiding drug dealers hanging around drop-in centres and pharmacies: "Can't get a proper doctor, and I'm having to come back to this [drop-in clinic], and as soon as I walk up to the ...door, I'm getting offered 'Do you want any, do you to buy any valium, do you want to buy any heroin, do you want to buy any crack?' Listen man I'm trying to get clean.' "

Our Quality Management System

High quality care requires Scotland to embed quality management at every level of the health and care system. Our **Quality Management System** brings together the key activities that drive improvement in health and wellbeing outcomes:

- **Quality planning** identifying priorities for improvement and designing appropriate changes to achieve them.
- **Quality improvement** practical implementation of changes through repeated testing and measurement.
- **Quality contro** proportionate routine monitoring of 'day to day' quality of services to ensure they're good enough.
- **Quality assurance** independent assessment of the both the quality of care and the enablers of high quality care.

It recognises the vital role of **leadership** and **organisational cultures** in the delivery of high quality care alongside the importance of **working in partnership** with **people who need**, **use and deliver services** to design and implement change.



our strategy in action

The Quality Management System in action

Joint and collaborative working by a range of teams within Healthcare Improvement Scotland, and in partnership with NHS boards and other bodies, delivers the Quality Management System in practice, for example, where a safe delivery of care inspection (Quality Assurance) highlights quality issues within an NHS board.

Where bespoke support is needed to support identified improvement areas, we will bring together the right mix of expertise and evidence base which may include (among others) the <u>Healthcare Staffing Programme (HSP)</u>, and <u>Excellence in Care (EiC)</u>. We will work with the senior leadership and clinical teams for a short but intensive period to focus on the relevant key areas of improvement.

Here's an example: In an acute hospital, staffing has been identified as a particular challenge and having a detrimental impact on quality of care. Two areas where the expertise from our HSP and EiC teams could support improvement are:

- Implementation of real-time staffing assessment
- Workforce and quality review

As a first step, **(Planning for Quality)** we meet with key stakeholders from the hospital to build relationships, share intelligence, agree roles and responsibilities and begin process mapping. We'll set out to understand the current real-time staffing arrangements and start the process of gathering information and data to support, enable and empower teams and inform the workforce and quality review. It is essential to understand the current situation and local context as this informs our understanding of the impact upon quality outcomes for patients and staff wellbeing. This will in turn support identification of priority areas for improvement.

Continues on page 11



The Quality Management System in action (continued)

Following the implementation of the Health & Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019, NHS Scotland boards will be legally required to ensure they are appropriately staffed at all times in order to provide safe, high quality care which improves outcomes for service users.

The Healthcare Staffing Programme supports NHS boards to prepare for the legislation, through the provision of training and support, educational resources and through the development of staffing level tools and workforce planning methodology. We will support NHS boards to apply the principles of the Common Staffing Method which also aligns to the Quality Management System.

"The real-time staffing resource we will be able to use will help reduce the need for numerous conversations regarding staffing levels, acuity of patient, professional judgement etc and capacity to support..." Interim Deputy Nurse Director

Our priorities 2023-2028

Recognising the serious challenges facing the health and social care system, and the needs of our stakeholders in meeting those, we will maintain a relentless focus on quality and safety, with the following priorities:

1	Enable a better understanding of the safety and quality of health and care services and the high impact opportunities for improvement.
2	Assess and share intelligence and evidence which supports the design, delivery and assurance of high quality health and care service.
3	Enable the health and care system to place the voices and rights of people and communities at the heart of improvements to the safety and quality of care.
4	Deliver practical support that accelerates the delivery of sustainable improvements in the safety and quality of health and care services across Scotland.

Appendix one sets out our planned actions in support of these priorities.

our strategy in action

Improving access to general practice

Patients and primary care teams across Scotland are realising the benefits of using seven-week improvement sprints to improve patient access. We help the teams use data to understand their demand, capacity, activity and queue, and find ways to manage it differently, freeing up staff time to see more patients.

In one practice, for example, the lack of available routine appointments led to patients with non-urgent requests being added to the duty team's daily urgent triage list and taking up urgent appointment slots. The practice wanted to reduce their triage list and free up the clinical duty team's time to ensure patients could access the appropriate appointment.

The practice found that 46% of patients did need urgent treatment, 36% did not need urgent treatment but did need to see a GP or Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP) and 18% could have been seen in a non-urgent appointment by someone other than the GP. To help patients access the right care at the right time, the practice decided to test a minor illness clinic.

Capacity (up)



The practice created 15 ANP-led minor illness appointments per day, or 75 over the week.

Demand (down)



In the first week, 62 patients were seen in the new clinic and did not use an urgent GP appointment slot.

We are continuing to support teams to use this approach to address their access challenges and we are training and supporting local QI teams to deliver the approach in their areas.

Because of the importance of the patient voice, we will from time to time conduct a 'gathering views' exercise to obtain opinions from members of the public. We'll specifically focus on the area in question – in this case access to GP services and the draft principles developed that aim to improve primary care services. This may also include seeking views from the Citizens Panel.

Our reach and delivery partners

We work at every level in the health and social care system in Scotland which means we are well placed to identify common challenges across Scotland and to work with the public sector, the third sector, the public and communities to make and share improvements.



We are a collaborative national organisation. Partnerships are a strategic and operational element of how we organise, plan and undertake our work. At times we will lead, at other times we will support, but it is through this kind of team work that we can unite our expertise and insight with that of the system, to deliver better outcomes.

We are already working closely with other national boards to support the delivery of safe health and care and national improvement priorities, including Public Health Scotland and NHS Education for Scotland, and we collaborate with the Care Inspectorate and other national agencies in relation to scrutiny of health and social care services, to ensure consistency and avoid duplication.

By working in this way, not only are we aiming to have a positive impact on Scotland's National Outcome for Health, but to also contribute to many other <u>National Performance</u> <u>Framework</u> outcomes including children and young people, communities, education, human rights and poverty. Many of these can only be achieved through collaboration with other bodies.

our strategy in action

Children's voices build the Bairns' Hoose

In all our standards-development work we aim to be inclusive of partners and take a person-centred approach around those who will be impacted. We ensure that our methodology is underpinned by international principles for standards development and this is routinely evaluated as part of our commitment to continuous improvement.

Healthcare Improvement Scotland has worked with children and young people, third sector colleagues and other partners in health, police, social work and justice to develop the <u>Bairns' Hoose Standards</u>, based on the Barnahus model.

We took a trauma-informed approach to this work, to ensure that we did not add to the negative experiences of children and young people and which enabled them to genuinely influence the development of the standards.

Before the formation of the Bairns' Hoose Standards Development Group, children and young people across Scotland were asked one key question: 'what would you like to see in the standards?' Following that, participation and rights workers from six organisations supported children to play an active role throughout the standards development period. Through creative sessions, play, videos, group work and one-on-one sessions, children input their ideas into the standards and fed back on their experiences to the Standards Development Group at every meeting. A children's version was published for the consultation and organisations were offered financial support to run sessions or workshops with young people across Scotland.

Children and young people will continue to work with our communications team to create an alternative format version of the children's standards which meets their needs. We will also work with children's rights organisations to support the children and young people to give their thoughts on the applications for pathfinder sites. Where appropriate we will work with third sector organisations to offer a Living Wage. Children and young people will continue to be a central part of the plans to test and implement the standards as the first phase of rolling out a national Bairns' Hoose model begins. These are key tenets of the model and also key tenets of our work to develop standards.



How we will organise ourselves to deliver

As an improvement organisation we need to work within our resources and be agile in response to changing circumstances while at the same time maintaining a focus on our strategic priorities.

We aim to have a streamlined and transparent operating model which enables HIS to work in an efficient, effective and value-added way, with clear lines of responsibility and investment for the delivery of all of our activities.

Our workforce is our greatest asset. We attract people who are passionate about what they do and about driving improvements in health and social care. We will focus on how we support and develop our staff to work across and between internal boundaries, and remain a flexible, agile, high-performing workforce with the right skills and expertise to support changing organisational and national priorities.

To sum this up, our ambitions for ourselves are to:

- be innovative, flexible and responsive to changes to the context in which health and care is delivered.
- be an exemplar public sector employer, and
- play our part in building a more equitable and environmentally sustainable future for Scotland.

By setting high standards for ourselves, we aim to give leadership to others through our culture, our performance record, and through the way we develop, support and ensure the wellbeing of all of our staff.

We prioritise the learning and development of our staff, recognising that the skills and experience gained with us can be deployed in a wide range of health and care settings. In addition we aim to celebrate diversity and ensure equity and inclusion in all of our activities.

We will

- Implement our 'One Team' organisational programme of work which will ensure that our structures, processes and cultures allow us to work collaboratively – and to maximise our impact on the quality of health and care services.
- Continue our work to be an anti-racist organisation and attract a greater diversity of people to work or volunteer with us, and through sharing their relevant lived experience actively shape and strengthen Healthcare Improvement Scotland's activities.
- Invest in our digital capability to ensure secure, resilient and sustainable systems and that our staff are digitally empowered.
- Develop digitally-connected, accessible information systems that inform our work and stakeholders, including our intelligence and web presence.
- Create a renewed focus on the impact of our work on society and the environment, placing emphasis on sustainable, good value and ethical practice.





Reviewing progress and learning

We will measure and report on our progress towards achieving our strategic ambitions as part of a coherent framework which aligns the strategy with our governance structures and processes and our accountability arrangements with Scottish Government.

In support of this, we will be articulating how our Annual Delivery Plan and quarterly performance reporting align with the strategy and how its implementation can be reflected across our planning and prioritisation over the next 5 years. Annually, we will review our planned actions to deliver our strategic priorities.

This will be within the context of the '**learning system**' approach which is central to the Quality Management System. Our <u>Good Practice Framework for Strategic Planning</u> highlights the importance of the following in reviewing progress:

- Demonstrating how strategic implementation is leading to improved outcomes and key stakeholder objectives
- Actively involving stakeholders in monitoring delivery
- Regularly reviewing and adapting strategic plans and priorities in response to external or internal drivers
- Honestly and openly identifying where there have been barriers to implementation or unintended consequences and addressing them
- Continuing to ensure energy is focused on strategic implementation
- Identifying, sharing, celebrating and, where relevant and appropriate, replicating good practice

This also reflects an 'active' approach to governance that anticipates and responds to risks and opportunities which could have a significant impact on the delivery of corporate objectives, the Board's relationships with stakeholders and the management of the organisation's reputation².

^{2.} NHSScotland Blueprint for Good Governance (2nd edition)

Towards the future

We are committed to delivering our strategy and to driving the highest quality of health and care for all. We are also committed to engaging with our staff, strategic partners and stakeholders as we implement our strategy to ensure that our actions reflect their priorities and needs.

In particular, we need to continue to recognise the pressures faced by the service and workforce, including our own staff, and to work in partnership. We will need to be clear about our priorities and be flexible and responsive to changes in the external environment, while remaining focused on our core purpose.

At the beginning of our strategy we set out our intentions to focus on the 'horizon one' immediate challenges, while looking for ways to deliver 'horizon two' intermediate innovation and 'horizon three' longer term transformational change. It is this perspective we will use to adapt our strategic approach to ensure we continue to address the challenges in the system and maximise our impact year after year.

We see a number of issues on each of those horizons. We understand the issues currently impacting on the NHS and social care workforce and can anticipate the profile of the workforce changing, as well as an increase in multi-disciplinary teams delivering care. All of this will lead to many challenges as well as opportunities, and we will work with our NHS board partners to support that evolving workforce.

The next few years will require us to continue to be vigilant about the threats to public health. Health technology will also continue to advance and it will be more important than ever to ensure that new treatments are developed and delivered sustainably, not only to provide safe and effective outcomes for patients but to minimise impact on the environment and cost to the public purse.

Patient safety will remain at the forefront of our priorities. We are already seeing a rapid expansion in the independent healthcare sector and increased use of private healthcare and rise in online services, such as pharmacy. This creates new pressure on quality assurance and quality improvement because these are environments where safety issues can arise. Care pathways will also change.

By the end of the period this strategy covers, we will be able to demonstrate that, through a comprehensive and focused set of deliverables, and by evolving along the way, we supported improvements in front line care as well as leading on the larger scale changes necessary across Scotland.

Appendix 1 Actions to deliver our priorities 2023-2028

Priority 1 Enable a better understanding of the safety and quality of health and care services and the high impact opportunities for improvement

We support health and care providers to deliver safe and accessible care. As Scotland emerges from the pandemic, it is clear that the NHS and social care are facing serious and sustained challenges. These challenges are deep seated and complex and are directly impacting on the safe provision of care and staff wellbeing. We will drive a stronger and more consistent focus on safety at a national level and support a better understanding of what actions are needed to deliver sustained improvement.

In addition, by 2028, Healthcare Improvement Scotland will have:

- established a stronger, more visible leadership and systematic approach to the improvement of safety in NHSScotland
- undertaken a range of thematic reviews of the quality of care in NHS Scotland, which informs priorities and policy.
- worked with partners to ensure that progress in creating a safe, effective and person-centred NHS can be measured using a consistent range of quality indicators

- Provide national leadership in further advancing a safety culture in NHSScotland including development of a national safety strategy.
- Undertake assurance of health care, including independent providers, in a way which makes best use of intelligence, and is focused on the key dimensions of our Quality Framework including leadership, workforce and safety.
- Help NHS boards to improve workload and workforce planning to ensure they have the right people, with the right skills, in the right place at the right time (in line with the Health and Care (Scotland) (Staffing) Act 2019).
- Collaborate with other bodies to ensure an approach to scrutiny and assurance which reflects the journey people take through health and social care services.
- Seek to support those that are most at need in our society to access and receive the highest quality of care.
- Provide the evidence to support safe professional practice.

Priority 2

Assess and share intelligence and evidence which supports the design, delivery and assurance of high quality health and care services

A robust evidence base is an essential component for delivering sustainable, high quality care and improving outcomes for all. Our extensive experience in this, along with our strong partnerships with other organisations, means we have a lead role in supporting transparent and consistent decision-making across Scotland. We ensure the latest medicines and technologies can be safely used by the NHS, enhancing the options for patient care across a whole range of conditions.

We work with national programmes, networks and groups (for example on Value Based Health and Care), providing timely evidence and intelligence to support ongoing improvement of people's experiences and outcomes.

In addition, by 2028, Healthcare Improvement Scotland will have:

- ensured our expertise in the provision of evidence is systematically used to enable informed decision making about the provision of sustainable and valued-based health and care
- supported the creation of a national pathway for the evaluation and adoption of service innovation
- built a digitally-enabled intelligence base to inform our priorities and support the provision
 of information to stakeholders on the quality and availability of health and care in Scotland.

- Provide timely knowledge and evidence to support the needs of decision makers and frontline staff, including evidence from engagement with communities.
- Evaluate promising technological and service innovations and practices that improve health and wellbeing outcomes, provide value for money and support a sustainable health and care service.
- Develop digital capability that gives frontline staff access to high quality online and up-todate resources to inform professional decision-making, including implementation of the Right Decision Service.
- Ensure our assurance and improvement activities benefit from the most up to date evidence and intelligence available, so we can target our work for the greatest impact.
- Support and enable health and care providers to share knowledge and experience about how to improve outcomes through national learning systems.

Priority 3

Enable the health and care system to place the voices and rights of people and communities at the heart of improvements to the safety and quality of care

We will enable inclusive engagement of people and communities in health and care services through evidence, improvement and assurance. Meaningful engagement matters because it leads to services which are person-centred, high quality, safe and improve outcomes for communities. The pandemic has highlighted and in some cases led to greater health inequalities and it is essential that there is a sustained effort to design and deliver person-centred care.

Our statutory role to support, ensure and monitor NHS legal responsibilities around public involvement is one way we help ensure health and care services co-design changes with those who rely on them to ensure we place their needs, rights and preferences at the heart of the delivery of services.

In addition, by 2028, Healthcare Improvement Scotland will have:

- become the go-to place for evidence we build from engagement, and about how to engage effectively
- created a learning system that supports us and stakeholders to learn, develop, improve and spread best practice in engagement – this includes applying learning from our work, testing innovation, and adopting rights-based and trauma-informed approaches
- implemented a standardised approach to supporting services to meaningfully engage people in the design and delivery of their care at a local, regional and national level, including ensuring the voices of marginalised individuals and communities are heard and acted on.

- Have a coherent, proactive plan for building local, national and international engagement evidence that prioritises significant national and more locally-agreed community needs.
- Ensure that the voices of marginalised or seldom heard communities are heard by supporting innovative approaches to inclusive engagement in the design, delivery, improvement and assurance of health and care.
- Empower people and communities to be partners in their own care, including through the promotion of accessible, easy to navigate services.
- Embed best practice in listening, understanding and acting on the views of people who need, use and deliver services.
- Provide strategic support and governance on engagement to our partners across health and care.
- Embed high quality, consistent, person-centred approaches to service redesign in Scotland, using the Scottish Approach to Service Design combined with Quality Improvement methods.

Priority 4

Deliver practical support that accelerates the delivery of sustainable improvements in the safety and quality of health and care services across Scotland

We use evidence-informed and internationally-recognised quality improvement methodologies to work with those delivering services to make changes which help them deliver better outcomes. We recognise the challenge of designing and implementing changes that will deliver sustainable improvements in a complex system, which is why we engage directly with the workforce and offer tools and resources tailored to the needs of any set of circumstances. We continually improve our own knowledge and capability, and aim to lead improvement by example across Scotland.

In addition, by 2028, Healthcare Improvement Scotland will have:

- Developed an effective balance of targeted improvement support for local organisations and systems experiencing quality challenges alongside national improvement initiatives
- With partners, supported services and systems to embed a quality management approach with a focus on sustainable, continuous improvement
- Strengthened the ability of health and care services to systematically apply person-centred and evidence-informed approaches to redesign and continuous improvement

- Provide agile and tailored improvement support for NHS boards and health and social care partnerships.
- Continue to work with partners across the health and care system work to embed cultures of continuous learning and improvement.
- Create the conditions for identifying and accelerating the adoption and spread of proven service innovations and improvements.
- Apply our experience, with a range of partners, to an ambitious programme of improvement in relation to adult social care reform.
- Support a better understanding that health and social care is a complex system and enable those designing and delivering changes to apply the most effective approaches for the nature of the problem they are facing.
- Support progress towards the vision that everyone working in health and social care knows how to respond to quality issues within their control and be supported to escalate issues that others need to address.

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