Provider Quality Assurance and Improvement Strategy

Tameside Adult Social Care and Tameside NHS Integrated Care Board

2026-2029



Tameside Metropolitan Borough

LIVING WELL AT HOME

Tameside Integrated Care Partnership

Foreword

We are pleased to present the joint Provider Quality Assurance and Improvement Strategy for adult social care, and the Tameside NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB).

This work strengthens our commitment across adult social care and the ICB to make sure that people are supported to live well at home, with access to high-quality, person-centred support in their communities.

We work collaboratively across the health and social care sector with a range of provider services such as care homes including those that offer nursing care, home care, supported living and local voluntary services. By working together, we can make sure people's experiences of care and support are seamless and we deliver the best offer we can.

High-quality services are essential. They enable people to stay independent, feel confident, and have positive experiences of care. Our Commissioning and Quality Teams continue to drive this improvement, ensuring every provider, including our own services, delivers safe, consistent, and effective support.



Cllr Jacqueline Lane
Executive Member (Adult Social Care, Homelessness & Inclusivity)



Joe Kelly
Interim Strategic Director of Adult Social Care

Introduction

This strategy sets out how we monitor, assess, and respond to the quality of services provided to people. It ensures that all services meet required standards and that any concerns are addressed promptly to safeguard people's wellbeing.

Quality

In health and social care, quality means delivering care that is safe, effective and provides a positive experience for the person who is receiving it. This includes other principles like being person-centred, timely, efficient, and equitable.

Ultimately, quality is determined by how well a service helps people achieve desired outcomes and supports their well-being while respecting their individual needs and values.

Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance (QA) in health and social care is the process of monitoring, evaluating, and improving services to ensure they consistently meet or exceed required standards for safety, effectiveness, and person-centeredness.

This involves a range of activities, such as self-auditing, regulatory inspections, and acting on feedback to make necessary improvements and ensure the service is effective, safe, and meets people's expectations and legal requirements.



Quality and assurance matters

Quality and quality assurance matters – we put people first in Tameside

When care and support services meets and exceeds expectations, **people feel safe, valued, respected and listened to.** Positive experiences are shared with family, friends and others, because it feels personal.

A high-quality service **builds trust, works in equal partnership with us** and genuinely wants to hear about people's experiences so that it can learn and improve in the future.



Strategic context

Find all strategies and plans at **www.tameside.gov.uk/Policy/Our-People-Our-Place-Our-Plan/Strategies-and-Plans**



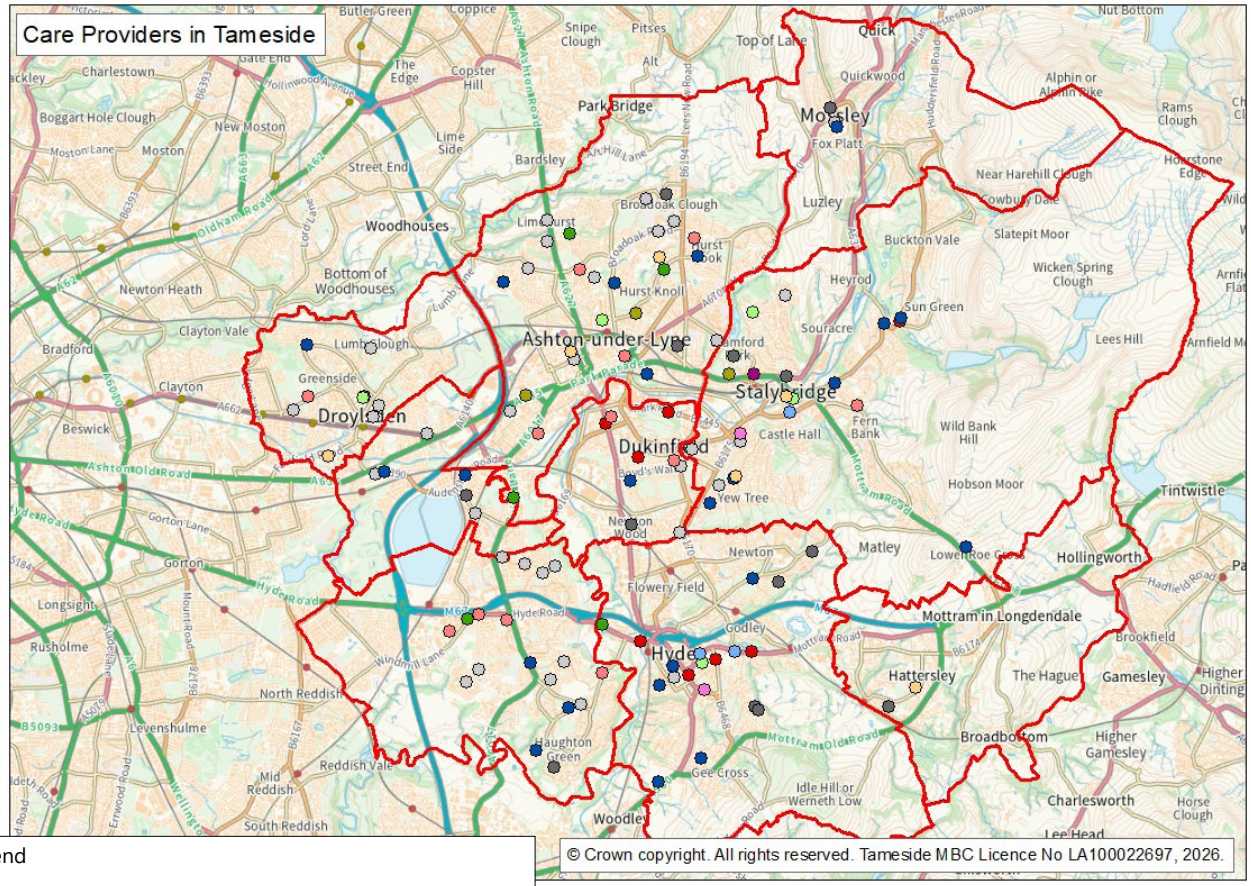
Care providers in Tameside

Support at Home providers

- **Careline** - Ashton
- **Comfort Call** - Audenshaw, Denton, Droylsden
- **Direct Care** - Hyde, Longdendale
- **Esteem** - Dukinfield, Mossley, Stalybridge

Home Care Providers

- **365 Medicare** - Tameside wide
- **Care Needs** - Tameside wide
- **City Care Solutions** - Tameside wide
- **Complex Care** - Tameside wide
- **Elmar** - Tameside wide
- **I Care** - Tameside wide
- **Link Care** - Tameside wide
- **Ornate** - Tameside wide
- **Routes** - Ashton, Denton
- **Sams Helping Hands** - Tameside wide
- **Shabach** - Tameside wide
- **Smartway** - Ashton, Dukinfield, Hyde, Longdendale, Stalybridge
- **Surecare** - Tameside wide
- **Valour** - Tameside wide



All services commissioned by Tameside Council and/or Tameside NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) are underpinned by a contract and service specification.

CQC rating in Tameside

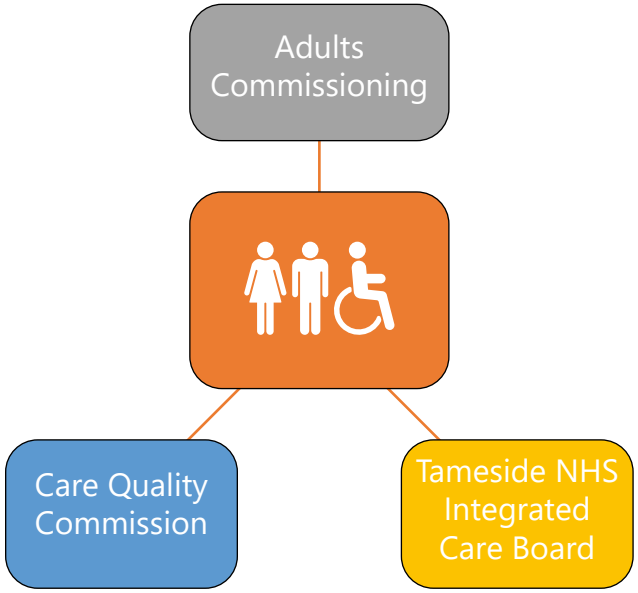
The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health and adult social care services in England.

CQC inspects services using a structured national approach, with a set of Quality Statements that describe what "good" care looks like.

Inspection looks at how well a service meets five key questions:	CQC gathers evidence from six categories to build a balance picture of quality:	Final ratings fall into four nationally recognised categories:
Safe	People's experiences	Outstanding
Effective	Feedback from staff and leaders	Good
Caring	Feedback from partners	Requires Improvement
Responsive	Observations	Inadequate
Well led	Processes	
	Outcomes	

Regulated by Care Quality Commission

To see the CQC inspection reports of providers in Tameside, please visit their website **www.cqc.org.uk** where you can search for the service you're interested in.



Quality is a whole system approach to ensure support is of a good standard.

We all work together to support providers through medication management, nursing, or care and support issues.

Monthly catch ups are held with CQC Inspectors to share updates on quality visits, and the Adults Commissioning Quality team works together with the Quality Lead from the Tameside NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) to support improvements.

Our vision

The difference we want to make.

In Tameside, quality care and support is everyone's responsibility. We will create a culture where information and insight are shared openly, and acted upon, so that people, their families, and carers can trust the services they receive.

Through collaboration, partnership, and continuous improvement, we will deliver care that promotes wellbeing, independence, and positive outcomes for every person who needs support.

We want every person in Tameside to live in the place they call home with the people and things that they love, in communities where they look out for one another, doing things that matter to them.

I receive personalised and inclusive support, where the people who care for me know me as an individual, and recognise me as having unique strengths and aspirations, and know that my background, values and requirements are unique to me.

I have a good choice of alternative housing and support options, so I can choose where I live and who I live with.

I can live as part of a community, where I am connected to people who are important to me, including friends and family.

I lead a fulfilling life in a home which is accessible and designed with access to support, aids and adaptations.

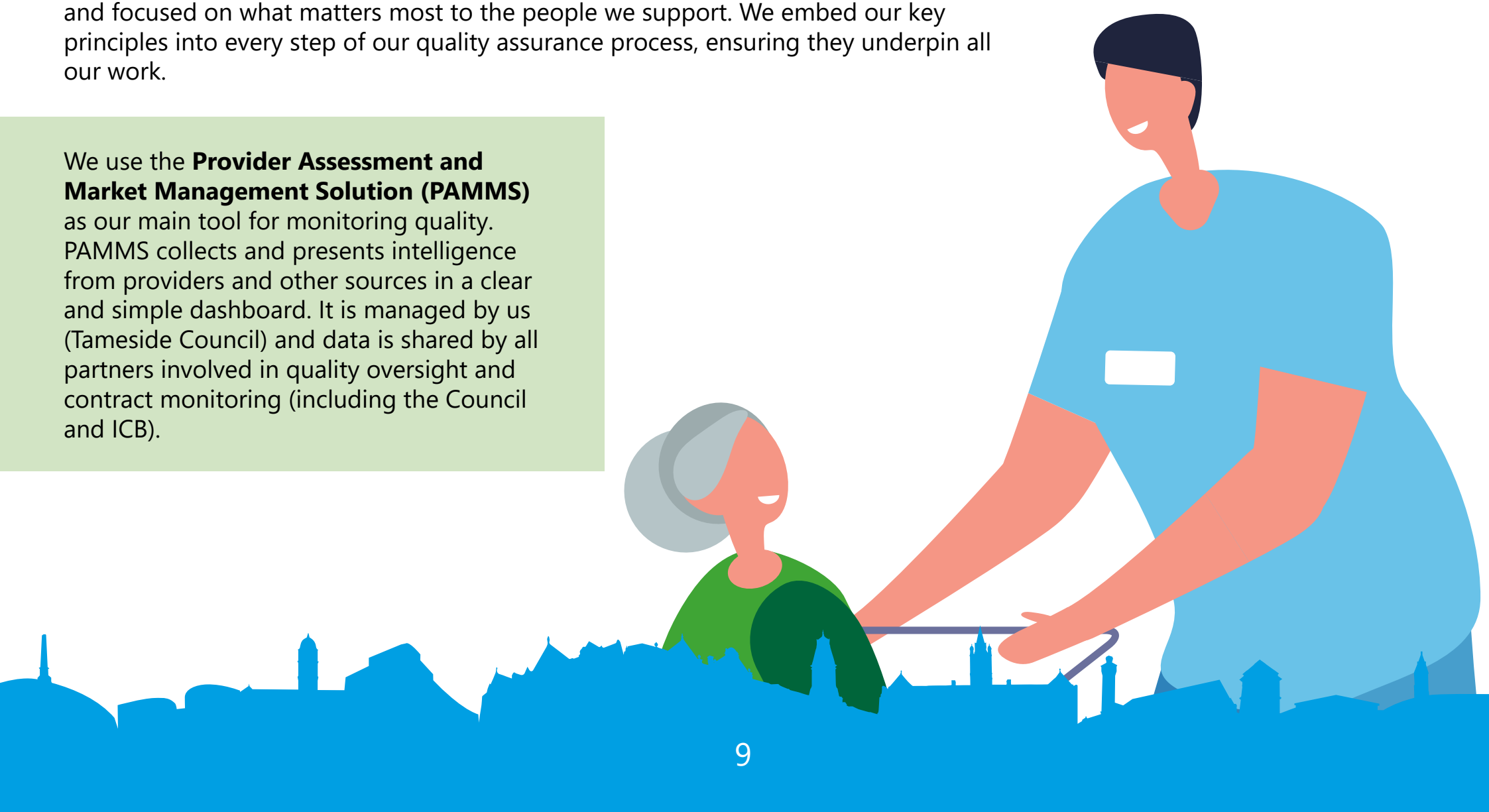
I receive care and support that is co-ordinated, and everyone works well with me to plan my care.

Our approach to quality assurance

At Tameside, quality means putting people first.

We work with partners and providers to make sure care and support is safe, effective, and focused on what matters most to the people we support. We embed our key principles into every step of our quality assurance process, ensuring they underpin all our work.

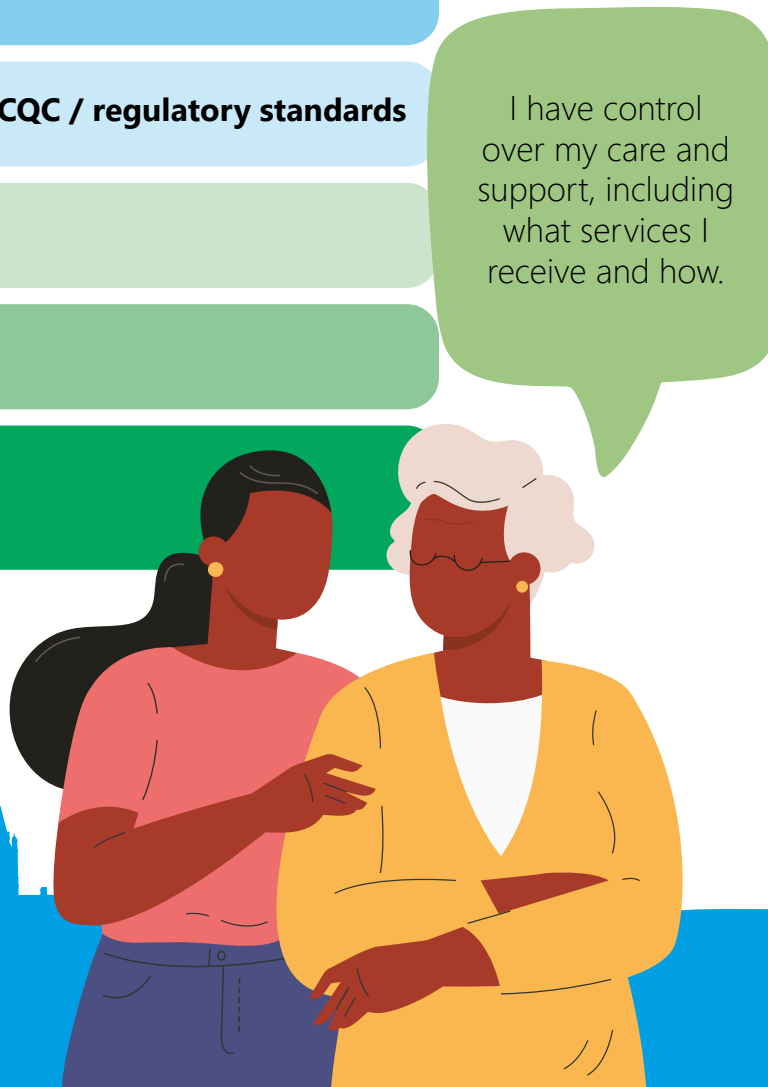
We use the **Provider Assessment and Market Management Solution (PAMMS)** as our main tool for monitoring quality. PAMMS collects and presents intelligence from providers and other sources in a clear and simple dashboard. It is managed by us (Tameside Council) and data is shared by all partners involved in quality oversight and contract monitoring (including the Council and ICB).



Our approach to quality assurance

We will Improve the quality of services for people by:

- **ensuring that the people who use services are actively involved in their care and support arrangements**
- **empowering individuals to have greater choice and control over their care**
- **ensuring services are safe, effective, caring, responsive, and well-led, in line with CQC / regulatory standards**
- **helping different services and organisations work together more smoothly**
- **making effective and efficient use of public resources**
- **undertaking our quality audit tool (PAMMS) and initiating our Multi Agency Concerns (MAC) process to support Providers on their journey to improvement**



Our quality assurance process

How do we determine what threshold level our providers are at and what support they need?



This helps us understand what is working well and where improvements are needed.

1. Intelligence gathering

We collect information from different places:

- feedback from people, their family, and carers
- reports from care providers
- concerns raised by professionals
- safeguarding alerts
- ratings and reports from the Care Quality Commission (CQC)
- neighbourhood hub meetings that include Tameside NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB), commissioning and social care colleagues to share intelligence

2. Monitoring and review

How often we check services depends on what the information tells us and is proportionate.

- we ask for monthly reports on key areas of care
- providers share annual plans for improvement (as a minimum)
- we visit services to talk to residents and families, observe care, and check the environment
- for services provided by both Tameside Council and ICB, visits may be done together

After visits, providers get feedback and support to make improvements.

Our quality assurance process (continued)

How do we determine what threshold level our providers are at and what support they need?



This helps us understand what is working well and where improvements are needed.

3. Response and action

Graduated offer for quality improvement
We use a clear system to decide what action to take based on the level of concern.

***Good* or *Outstanding* provision:**
Small issues managed by the Commissioning and Quality Team with support from medication management or nurse led issues led by the Tameside NHS Integrated Care Board. Escalation decisions are made by the team manager, jointly with the ICB for joint services.

***Requires Improvement* provision:**
Reviewed at monthly multi-agency quality meetings. The panel decides whether to escalate or de-escalate. Decisions are made jointly with the ICB for joint services.

***Inadequate* provision:**
A multi-agency meeting is called urgently if needed. Senior leaders from commissioning, health, and social care attend. Actions may include placement suspension or ending the contract.

****If there is any indication that an adult may be at risk of harm or abuse, we follow Tameside's Safeguarding Adults Policy immediately.**

Delivering the strategy

Quality standards are agreed benchmarks that defined by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) which describe what quality care and support should look like.

The CQC standards are supported locally with an ongoing and regular programme of monitoring, oversight, and support as part of our duties under the Care Act (2014). Tameside's Commissioning and Quality Teams, working closely with Tameside NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) provide a graduated offer of support to providers linked the CQC standards and inspection framework, which includes nurse led advice and guidance for nursing care, and medicines management.

Graduated response	What we do (response and action)	How we measure and monitor
Good or Outstanding  	Light touch monitoring – bi-annual visits and routine reporting requirements: • focus on maintaining standards with continuous improvement approaches and sharing best	• annual service development plan/self-assessment • annual quality assurance visit • annual medicines management review • monthly provider monitoring returns • feedback and questionnaires • monthly Quality Team meetings • case review with team manager • focused visit/support • recommendations and sharing best practice • Provider Assessment and Market Management Solution (PAMMS) audit visit

Delivering the strategy

Graduated Response	What we do (response and action)	How we measure and monitor
Requires Improvement Inspected and rated Requires Improvement CareQuality Commission	Active monitoring – regular visits, improvement plan, increased reviews and support reviews. • additional measures include unannounced visits, quality review meetings, and a formal improvement plan • if progress is slow, advisory notices or placement suspensions may be issued	• service development plan/self-assessment requested • annual medicines management review • quality review meeting with provider • focused visit/support • service improvement and action plan following PAMMS audit process • monthly Quality Team meetings • contract default notice if timescales missed • advisory notice or placement suspension
Inadequate Inspected and rated Inadequate CareQuality Commission	Large-scale intervention – urgent multi-agency meetings, possible placement suspension or contract termination. • intensive intervention with frequent multi-agency meetings and contract monitoring • will lead to suspension of placements or termination of the contract if improvements are not achieved	• large-scale intervention process through quality assurance escalation - Multi-Agency Concern (MAC) • PAMMS Audit • annual medicines management review • monthly (or as required) multi agency quality review meetings • monthly (or as required) contract monitoring meetings with senior stakeholders • automatic contract default notice • unannounced visit • further notices if timescales missed • advisory notice or placement suspension considered • possible termination of contract

Escalation and Accountability Framework for care provision

The Escalation and Accountability Framework for Tameside clearly states the processes, actions and responsibilities of Tameside Council and Tameside NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) in the event of a care provision concern. This incorporates the responsibilities under the Care Act 2014, including our joint response to managing provider failure.

As part of this process, a Multi-Agency Concern (MAC) meeting can be requested at any time, and representation at the meeting will reflect the level of concern. They are categorised as MAC1, MAC2, and MAC3.

Risk matrix scores are assigned to each of the MAC levels. The risk matrix looks at at the safety of individuals accessing the service (safeguarding/whistleblowing), information from the regulator, any contractual or quality concerns and feedback from partners. The risk matrix looks at the safety of individuals accessing the service (safeguarding/whistleblowing), information from the regulator, any contractual or quality concerns and feedback from partners.

MAC 1
Minor concerns
Minor risks score 6- 12

- significant concerns in one area
- minor concerns across a number of areas
- to support the service to improve quality and seek assurance on the specific concerns

MAC 2
Moderate concerns
Moderate risks score 12- 20

- significant concerns in one of more areas
- moderate concerns across multiple areas
- to support the service to improve quality and seek assurance on the specific concerns

MAC 3
Major concerns
Significant concerns risk score 21 -39

- significant risks or failures identified in multiple areas
- serious concerns from CQC or Inadequate rating
- risk of provider failure
- to support the service to improve quality and seek assurance on the specific concerns

How will we know this strategy is working?

We are committed to building a skilled, confident, and adaptable commissioning workforce that can deliver the different commissioning strategies and apply the commissioning cycle principles effectively, ensuring better outcomes for people and value for money.

In terms of quality, we closely monitor:

- % of providers rated good or outstanding by the CQC – care homes
- % of providers rated good or outstanding by the CQC – domiciliary care
- % of residential placements out of borough

People will be able to have a say in the care and support they receive through surveys and during quality monitoring observational visits.

We will report progress against this strategy via:

- provider forums
- newsletters
- Tameside Council's Commissioning and Quality webpage





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