

Quality and Improvement Outcomes Framework for NHS Funded Library and Knowledge Services in England, 2019: Overview



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Foreword

Healthcare is a knowledge based industry. Healthcare library and knowledge services make a business-critical contribution to the NHS. Indeed, they are a powerhouse for education, lifelong learning, research and evidence-based practice.

Health Education England (HEE) exists for one reason only: "to support the delivery of excellent healthcare and health improvement to the patients and public of England...". HEE's vision for NHS funded library and knowledge services in England is that "All NHS organisations, their staff, learners, patients and the public use the right knowledge and evidence at the right time in the right place to enable high quality decision making to achieve excellent health care and health improvement."

Patrick Mitchell, Director of Innovation and Transformation said:

"It is not enough to have the right healthcare teams in the right place, collaborating to deliver high quality, efficient patient care. It is equally essential to make sure that everyone uses the right knowledge and evidence at the right time across the NHS. I am hugely impressed by the professionalism of librarians and knowledge managers in health care and their dedication to providing evidence to inform decision-making on the ward, in the community and by the Board."

This new framework signals a step change to help library and knowledge staff both to improve service delivery for patients and to better articulate the positive outcomes of their work. It makes a fundamental shift in emphasis focusing on outcomes rather than process. Its development was informed by current thinking and robust research on impact evaluation methodologies and methods in the field, including those used by the Global Libraries programme of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Therefore, I am delighted to commend this new Quality and Improvement Outcomes Framework to you. It sets the standards and ambition for quality and improvement in the delivery of these vital services."

Professor Wendy Reid, Executive Director of Education and Quality and Medical Director writes:

"Putting timely knowledge into the hands of healthcare professionals working across care settings is vitally important for making clinical decisions that are based on sound evidence. With unprecedented time pressures on health professionals, embedded health librarians and knowledge services to support them in clinical and community settings are a vital resource."

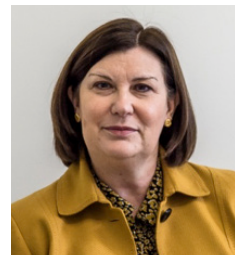
As HEE progresses the implementation of our Knowledge for Healthcare strategy, we build on an exemplary record of cooperation between information professionals, and between healthcare library networks in England. Focused on outcomes and service improvement this framework moves the assessment of these services to the next stage, ensuring that their quality is defined by outcomes not process. The Framework enshrines a commitment to continuous improvement at the heart of service delivery, embedding this approach into the day to day work of NHS librarians and knowledge managers.



Patrick Mitchell
Director of Innovation
and Transformation



Wendy Reid
Executive Director of Education
and Quality and Medical Director



Part 1: Introduction

Healthcare is a knowledge industry. It is not enough to have the right teams in the right place, collaborating to deliver high quality, efficient patient care. It is essential that they use the right knowledge and evidence at the right time. (NHS Library and Knowledge Services in England Policy¹ p.2)

Healthcare library and knowledge specialists (i.e. all members of the library and knowledge team) act as knowledge brokers. They use their expertise to mobilise evidence obtained from research, staff “know-how” and external innovation and good practice to aid the workforce in making effective and informed decisions.

Health Education England (HEE) published *Knowledge for Healthcare: a Development framework for NHS Library and Knowledge Services² in England* in December 2014. This set out a clear vision:

NHS bodies, their staff, learners, patients and the public use the right knowledge and evidence, at the right time, in the right place enabling high-quality decision making, learning, research and innovation, to achieve excellent healthcare and health improvement. p.9

The NHS Library and Knowledge Services in England Policy outlines HEE’s commitment to

ensuring the use in the health services of evidence obtained from research. It is also committed to enabling the NHS workforce to freely access library and knowledge services to achieve excellent healthcare and has the ambition that the role of library and knowledge specialists becomes business critical to the NHS.

The importance of knowledge, evidence and digital technologies to the NHS is reinforced by the NHS Long Term Plan³ and the HEE Topol Review.⁴

1. Health Education England (2016) NHS Library Services in England: Policy.
www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/NHS%20Library%20and%20Knowledge%20Services%20in%20England%20Policy.pdf
2. Health Education England (2014) Knowledge for Healthcare: a development framework for NHS library and knowledge services.
www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Knowledge_for_healthcare_a_development_framework_2014.pdf
3. NHS England (2019) The NHS Long Term Plan.
www.longtermplan.nhs.uk/publication/nhs-long-term-plan/
4. Health Education England (2019) The Topol Review: Preparing the healthcare workforce to deliver the digital future.
<https://topol.hee.nhs.uk>



Part 2: The Quality and Improvement Outcomes (the “Outcomes”)

HEE is responsible for ensuring that there are high quality learning environments for all healthcare learners in England⁵. Key to this are library and knowledge services, supporting both individual and organisational learning and development needs. HEE also seeks assurance that the funding provided to organisations through the Learning Development Agreement is used to deliver library and knowledge services that are fulfilling the requirements of Knowledge for Healthcare, in line with the NHS Library and Knowledge Services in England Policy.

The library and knowledge service's NHS host organisation, and those who commission such services, are required to ensure that the service is helping them meet their obligations under the Health and Social Care Act 2012⁶ to ensure “... the use in the health service of evidence obtained from research...” (section 1E) so that the NHS workforce is enabled to deliver high quality patient care.

From 2010 to 2018 the Library Quality Assurance Framework (LQAF) raised standards across healthcare library and knowledge services using a process-based compliance model. Its replacement, the Quality and Improvement Outcomes, instead focuses on library and knowledge service improvement. The Outcomes have a dual role and have been designed and developed to:

- drive progress in library and knowledge service improvement leading to increased satisfaction for users of the services
- provide a tool for NHS organisations to ensure that library and knowledge specialists are providing a quality, high performing service that is continually developing and improving to meet the changing evidence and knowledge needs of organisations and individuals.

5. Health Education England (2019) HEE Quality Framework 2019-20
https://healtheducationengland.sharepoint.com/:b/g/Comms/Digital/EXmEo9yM_uJNrV4715sujKwBzTUm_N3XoZvtHMyk_rNpDg

6. Health and Social Care Act 2012 c.7
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/7/section/6/enacted>



Part 2: The Quality and Improvement Outcomes (the “Outcomes”)

The Six Quality and Improvement Outcomes: Overview

1. All NHS organisations enable their workforce to freely access proactive library and knowledge services that meet organisational priorities within the framework of Knowledge for Healthcare.
2. All NHS organisations receive services from library and knowledge specialists with the right skill mix to deliver on organisational and Knowledge for Healthcare priorities.
3. All NHS decision making is effectively underpinned by evidence and knowledge mobilised by skilled library and knowledge specialists.
4. Library and knowledge specialists identify the knowledge and evidence needs of the workforce in order to deliver effective and proactive services.
5. Library and knowledge specialists improve the quality of library and knowledge services using evidence from research, innovation and good practice.
6. Library and knowledge specialists demonstrate that their services make a positive impact on healthcare.

Reporting on the Quality and Improvement Outcomes

All NHS organisations with which HEE holds a Learning and Development Agreement will be asked to carry out a self-evaluation against the Outcomes. Strengths in provision need to be celebrated, maintained and continuously reviewed. Areas for improvement require analysis and discussion and the resultant improvement plan should feed the continuous cycle of review and action. The HEE Library and Knowledge Services Leads will validate the self-evaluation reports as part of the HEE Quality Framework⁵ assessment.

The pages that follow provide more details of the six outcomes.



Outcome 1: All NHS organisations enable their workforce to freely access proactive library and knowledge services that meet organisational priorities within the framework of *Knowledge for Healthcare*

Scope	Key Questions to ask	Why is this outcome important?
<p>This covers the strategic development of the library and knowledge service where its staff proactively deliver the priorities of both the organisation and <i>Knowledge for Healthcare</i>.</p> <p>It includes how library and knowledge specialists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create strategic plans with deliverable and evaluated outcomes • engage and consult with senior stakeholders to identify, review and evaluate library and knowledge service developments • routinely use performance monitoring and evaluation processes <p>It will show the extent to which the organisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognises the business-critical role of library and knowledge specialists and • commits to providing appropriate resourcing and enables the workforce to freely access the service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are library and knowledge specialists empowered and supported to improve services and realise the vision? • Are library and knowledge specialists being recognised at Board level as having a business-critical role in achieving the priorities of the organisation? • What new services or innovative projects/developments have recently been introduced? • How are library and knowledge specialists demonstrating the strategic impact and contribution they are making to delivery of organisational and <i>Knowledge for Healthcare</i> priorities. • Is there an ongoing and systematic process in place in for engaging senior stakeholders in the development and evaluation of the service? 	<p>People should be cared for by competent and capable staff, receptive to innovation and able to use evidence from research. All NHS bodies and their staff should be able to access the expertise and resources offered by healthcare librarians and knowledge specialists (HEE NHS Policy for libraries).</p> <p>The Secretary of State for Health has a duty, under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, to ensure "... the use in the health service of evidence obtained from research...".</p> <p>In delivering these requirements it is essential that NHS organisations are served by library and knowledge specialists who are proactively delivering a service to meet the vision and priorities of the organisation and <i>Knowledge for Healthcare</i>.</p>

Outcome 2: All NHS decision making is underpinned by high quality evidence and knowledge mobilised by skilled library and knowledge specialists.

Scope	Key Questions to ask	Why is this outcome important?
<p>This outcome covers the role of library and knowledge specialists in facilitating the mobilisation of evidence and internally generated knowledge to underpin decision making, innovation and change.</p> <p>It shows how the Board and organisations use the expertise of library and knowledge specialists, to work with teams, senior stakeholders and the Board, to implement evaluated and effective approaches to knowledge mobilisation.</p> <p>It also measures the extent to which the organisation recognises the business-critical role library and knowledge specialists have in facilitating the mobilisation of evidence and internally generated knowledge.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How embedded in the organisation(s) are the library and knowledge specialists? • Does the Board consider the expertise of library and knowledge specialists in mobilising evidence and organisational knowledge to be business-critical? • Can it be shown that a range of decisions (management, clinical, patient) are made based on library and knowledge specialist input? 	<p>Healthcare is a knowledge-based industry. It is essential that the workforce use the right knowledge and evidence at the right time to support decision making and best practice (HEE policy).</p> <p>The Topol Review recommends “NHS Boards should take responsibility for effective knowledge management to enable staff to learn from experience (both successes and failures) and accelerate the adoption of proven innovations. (OD5) <i>Topol Review</i> p.16.</p> <p>Healthcare library and knowledge specialists use their expertise to mobilise evidence obtained from research, organisational knowledge, staff ‘know-how’ and from external innovation and good practice to underpin decision making in line with the legal duty of the service.</p> <p>Sharing the ‘know-how’ of staff, using research evidence and implementing good practice are all business-critical.</p>

Outcome 3: Library and knowledge specialists identify the knowledge and evidence needs of the workforce in order to deliver effective and proactive services

Scope	Key Questions to ask	Why is this outcome important?
<p>This outcome highlights how library and knowledge specialists deliver proactive stakeholder and user focused library and knowledge services.</p> <p>The outcome covers how library and knowledge specialists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyse the “market” for their services for existing and potential users • engage and consult with stakeholders • promote and market targeted service offers to existing and potential users • work collaboratively to extend the reach and spread of their services • enable users to access high quality evidence at the point of need and in an appropriate format. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well do the library and knowledge specialists identify and meet the requirements of the healthcare workforce’s broad range of evidence and knowledge needs? • How well do the library and knowledge services provided meet the differing needs of all users? • In what ways do the library and knowledge specialists support individuals and organisations to locate and use evidence and organisational knowledge effectively? • In what ways does the library environment promote and support learning? • How are literacy initiatives supported within the organisation? 	<p>Library and knowledge specialist need to be proactive in responding to changes in workforce needs and related strategies.</p> <p>Patient outcomes and organisational decision making depends on the quality of evidence supplied. The stakeholder workforce needs access to the right knowledge and evidence to deliver high-quality, safe healthcare.</p> <p>A successful library and knowledge service should have a high percentage of use by its stakeholder workforce. The stakeholder workforce experience and satisfaction depend on the quality of knowledge, expertise, customer service and professionalism of all library and knowledge specialists.</p> <p>The stakeholder workforce wishes to access evidence in appropriate formats and services at different times and in different locations. The stakeholder workforce needs consistent and equitable access to library and knowledge services.</p>

Outcome 4: All NHS organisations receive library and knowledge services provided by teams with the right skill mix to deliver on organisational and *Knowledge for Healthcare* priorities

Scope	Key Questions to ask	Why is this outcome important?
<p>This covers the requirements for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • suitably qualified library and knowledge specialists • with the relevant skill mix and • optimum numbers <p>to deliver an evolving service, working in partnership with colleagues from other library and knowledge services where appropriate.</p> <p>It considers the library and knowledge specialist:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • qualifications • skill mix • opportunities for regular continual professional development. <p>The library and knowledge service manager has a duty to ensure that the recruitment, induction and employment review and development processes are in place and effective.</p> <p>The manager should forward plan and review capacity and skill mix to meet changing needs and any demands for the subsequent redesign of existing roles.</p>	<p>For the library and knowledge service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are staffing levels enough and appropriate for delivery of service priorities? • Do staff have the right skill mix? • Have roles been reviewed and redesigned? • How do staff recruitment, induction and training support wider organisational objectives? • How planned and systematic is embedded e.g. clinical and outreach librarian work? • How are staff updated on new knowledge and evidence services and resources? <p>Do you have enough library and knowledge specialist capacity to deliver on change and innovation?</p>	<p>The NHS workforce faces increasingly complex challenges in accessing timely, accurate and tailored evidence, and to effectively manage organisational knowledge.</p> <p>All NHS organisations should be served by library and knowledge specialists with the skill mix to deliver against organisational and <i>Knowledge for Healthcare</i> priorities.</p> <p>To build this capacity Topol recommends increasing “... <i>the numbers of ... knowledge specialist posts, with dedicated, accredited time to keep their skills up to date...</i> (AIR5/DM4). <i>Topol Review p.57</i></p> <p>There are opportunities to embed more library and knowledge specialists in clinical and practical settings to create more clinical and outreach librarian posts. They can then act as knowledge brokers and take an overview of knowledge and evidence needs and identify gaps in provision or skills development.</p>

Outcome 5: Library and knowledge specialists improve the quality of library and knowledge services using evidence from research, innovation and good practice

Scope	Key Questions to ask	Why is this outcome important?
<p>This outcome shows how library and knowledge specialists implement evidence based practice in the planning, design and delivery of the activities, products and facilities ("the library and knowledge service") they provide.</p> <p>Improvement to existing services and the development of new services may involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adopting or adapting innovation/good practice • reviewing effectiveness of services • showing optimised investment • testing for cost-effectiveness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do library and knowledge staff keep up-to-date on the latest developments in the profession to help identify and evaluate ideas for service improvement? • Is this an ad-hoc, opportunistic process or embedded within the culture of the service? • Where opportunities for library and knowledge improvement/development/ innovation are identified how are these progressed, monitored, and evaluated? • How are service improvements and developments shared with the wider library and knowledge profession? • How cost-effective are the services provided? 	<p>Library and knowledge specialists support evidence-based practice across healthcare organisations. It is therefore something which they should practice ensuring the continuing improvement of the services they provide.</p> <p>Expansion of the service into new areas can only be achieved through efficiencies by rationalising investment, reducing duplication, streamlining back-office functions and exploring partnership opportunities.</p> <p>Library and knowledge services need to evolve in a planned and structured way based on the best available evidence and professional knowledge. Changes should be evaluated and shared with others to prevent the duplication of errors and ensure the spread of good practice.</p>

Outcome 6: Library and knowledge specialists demonstrate that their services make a positive impact on healthcare

Scope	Key Questions to ask	Why is this outcome important?
<p>This outcome covers the effectiveness of library and knowledge specialists in collecting evidence to show the impact of their services and how it is used to promote the service both internally and externally to stakeholders.</p> <p>Impact is defined as: <i>"... The difference or change in an individual or group resulting from the contact with library services (3.25)".</i></p> <p>British Standards Institute/International Standards Organisation 16439: 2014.</p> <p>Delivery of the outcome will demonstrate the importance and business-critical nature of library and knowledge services to the organisation and health economy in areas including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal or professional development • service development or delivery • collaborative working • quality of patient care • informed decision making • reduced risk or improved safety • financial effectiveness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we know if the work of the library and knowledge specialists makes a difference to the organisation's staff and the work they do within and outside the organisation? • How are library and knowledge specialists ensuring that impact data are collected in an efficient and effective manner, and that appropriate opportunities to share this data with decision makers are taken? • How are impact data shared with the wider library and knowledge services community and the HEE Library and Knowledge Services Leads to ensure that it is available for use in advocacy, good practice, and for reference by other services? 	<p>The ability to demonstrate the impact of library and knowledge specialists is important for the future and continuation of a library and knowledge service.</p> <p>Organisational decision makers need to see evidence of the difference made by library and knowledge specialists in order to make appropriate funding and investment decisions.</p> <p>Furthermore, an awareness of the differences library and knowledge specialists can make to organisations drives usage of the services they provide and creates the potential for further impact.</p> <p>At national level, using impact data for advocacy provides a valuable tool to promote the message of the need for library and knowledge services to ensure high quality healthcare, evidence-based-practice, and to fulfil the requirement to ensure "the use in the health service of evidence obtained from research" (<i>Health and Social Care Act 2012</i>).</p>

Acknowledgements

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The structure of the Outcomes Framework is adapted, with permission, from that used in *Being the Best We Can Be* (2011) developed by the State Library of Victoria⁷ and the subsequent *How Good is Our Public Library Service?* (Scottish Library & Information Council, 2017)⁸.

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7. State Library of Victoria (2011) *Being the Best we Can*. <http://libraries.vic.gov.au/cgi-bin/infonet/org.cgi?detail=1&id=87>

8. Scottish Library and Information Council (2017) *How Good is Our Public Library? A Public Library Improvement Model for Scotland* <https://scottishlibraries.org/advice-guidance/frameworks/how-good-is-our-public-library-service/>