

Revision of Care of Older People in Hospital Standards (2015): Scoping Report

Aims and purpose of standards

Healthcare Improvement Scotland published the Care of Older People in Hospital standards in 2015. Over recent years, policy and practice has moved to focus on the integrated care of people with age-related frailty. The new ageing and frailty standards will reflect this change and will replace the Care of Older People in Hospital standards (2015).

The ageing and frailty standards will be for people who plan, commission, oversee and deliver services. They will provide a benchmark for progress towards nationally consistent, integrated, and equitable frailty services that put people and their rights at their centre.

The standards will:

- set out what people can expect to experience
- outline evidence-informed best practice in the care of older people living with frailty
- provide a framework for services to monitor progress and improvement
- provide a national benchmark for integrated services and teams to work towards.

The standards will be underpinned by the principles and aims of the [Health and Social Care Standards \(2017\)](#) including, specifically:

- prevention and early intervention
- reducing health inequalities
- promoting rights, compassion, dignity and respect.

Background

The Care of Older People in Hospital standards (2015) are being revised to reflect changes in evidence, policy and practice. We established a multiagency Scoping Group in August 2022 to inform the scope of this work, provide strategic oversight of the standards and identify and agree change areas. A Development Group was convened to support the standards development process. Many Scoping Group members contributed as members of the Standards Development Group.

The scope was further informed by a six-week engagement exercise between 1 March and 14 April 2023. A total of 105 responses were received from stakeholders.

During the engagement exercise, we asked:

- the populations who should be included in the revised standards
- what settings the revised standards should apply to.

This paper reviews the feedback from the scoping work and presents the proposed scope of the revised standards. 89% of respondents are in favour of updating the Care of Older People in Hospital (2015) standards. Responses to the engagement survey were analysed in SmartSurvey.

Responses:

- 61% of respondents worked in an area related to care of older people.
- 24% of respondents identified themselves as older people or someone caring for an older person.

Of those who worked in an area related to the care of older people:

- 41% of respondents worked in hospital care.
- 6% of respondents worked in primary care.
- 9% of respondents worked in community care.
- 8% of respondents worked in care homes.
- 6% of respondents worked for a local authority or government agency.
- 12% of respondents worked in the third sector.
- 17% of respondents chose 'Other' when asked about the sector they work in.

We asked respondents to identify which areas should be included in the standards. There was considerable support for a range of services to be covered, including:

- 60% for support services (including clinical and third sector)
- 64% for adult social work
- 68% for care homes
- 78% for primary care
- 79% for community care
- 82% for secondary (hospital) care.

71% of respondents skipped the question on which care settings should not be included.

Population to be included in the standards

- 28% of respondents supported defining 'older people' as those aged 65 and older
- 25% of respondents supported the standard covering 'older people who are frail'
- 34 free text comments proposed a scope based on additional factors such as frailty and inequalities.

Proposed scope

Title of the standards

The proposed title is 'Ageing and frailty standards for the care of older people'.

Population that will be covered

The standards will apply to all older adults who are or may be at risk of frailty as they age. The standards will focus on 'biological' age¹ or frailty rather than chronological age or disability. A full definition of ageing and frailty will be outlined in the introduction of the standards.

Setting

The ageing and frailty standards will apply in all settings where people receive assessments, treatment, care or support from health or care professionals. This includes hospitals, primary care, community healthcare facilities, hospital at home services and care homes. It also includes independent health and social care providers.

Proposed areas of development

The standards will cover the following areas:

- leadership and culture
- identification of frailty and assessment of need
- person-led care coordination and future care planning
- support for staff and carers
- keeping active
- nutrition and hydration
- living and dying well
- medicines and polypharmacy
- care in hospital
- dementia, delirium and cognition
- depression and mental health.

The following themes will be included throughout:

- prevention
- palliative care

¹ Department of Health and Social Care. Chief Medical Officer's Annual Report 2023: Health in an Ageing Society. 2023 (p16).

Available from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/654cecdc5d609500dbec88c/CMO_s-annual-report-2023-health-in-an-ageing-society-full-report.pdf