

QRS new ways of working – Guide for Reviewers

In response to the COVID 19 pandemic and the requirement for the NHS to work differently, the QRS Board has approved a 'New ways of working' paper which outlines how peer reviews can be completed in the future. This is available at qualityreviewservicewm.nhs.uk/peer-review-new-ways-of-working-v1-20201022/

The purpose of this brief guide is to help reviewers prepare for peer review and provide an understanding of how the process will work.

General Notes:

1. In future, wherever possible, the elements of peer review will be completed remotely to reflect the expectations of organisations and to maintain the safety of patients, staff and reviewers. However, it is acknowledged that reviews are more robust when some face to face meetings and on-site observations take place. The majority of this guidance therefore relates to situations where reviewers are required to work onsite at a provider location.
2. This briefing makes references to social distancing. QRS will work with the provider in advance of the visit and will undertake a risk assessment of the base room and other rooms, where appropriate, at the beginning of the visit. However, it is recognised that this will not always be possible during the course of the visit and therefore reviewers will be encouraged to risk assess on an ongoing basis throughout the visit in order to ensure that you continue to be safe.

Guidance

How will the peer review process differ from previous reviews?

We will aim to retain the same level of robustness for all of our reviews, but we recognise that the NHS will expect us to work differently and particularly use technology more effectively to reduce the need for face to face contacts. Therefore, there will be a greater reliance on working remotely and online (including some meetings and review of evidence). Wherever possible we will aim to use a blended approach to online and onsite activity for all of our reviews. The balance for both will be agreed with the host team during the scoping phase, to ensure that the needs of the service can be met whilst ensuring that the review is robust.

It is important that if you feel at any point during the review that you have not been able to address the evidence or complete meetings adequately that you let the QRS review lead know.

The other significant change to how reviews will be conducted will be the need to adopt new infection control and social distancing practices which are discussed in more detail later.

Will I receive any additional training?

Yes.

We will work with all of our new and existing reviewers to ensure that they feel comfortable with the new approach and where additional knowledge is needed – for example new technology, we will work with you to ensure that the appropriate awareness and training is provided.

However, if you are comfortable with the new ways of working, we will not expect you to undertake any further training in order to continue being a peer reviewer.

What processes will be in place for Infection Control

QRS are committed to protecting the safety of patients, staff and reviewers.

In advance of the visit, QRS will work with the infection control team at the host organisation to understand what their specific requirements are in terms of how the review should be conducted. Any relevant information will be emailed out to reviewers in advance of onsite work and a briefing for the review team will also be conducted on the day of the review.

On the day of a visit, we will ask you to respond to a short list of basic health questions.

Social distancing will be observed at all times, where possible, and guidance will be provided to reviewers.

Hand sanitizer will also be provided.

Do I need to bring my own face mask?

Yes.

Reviewers are encouraged to bring their own face coverings. However, QRS will have a limited supply of face masks and gloves available for use. Any further PPE will be provided by the host organisation.

Please be aware that you may be required to wear your face covering for the full duration of a visit, depending on local guidelines, as agreed by the provider.

Will refreshments be provided?

We aim to continue with the usual arrangements for providing refreshments to our review team. However, where this is not possible, we will notify you in advance and if you would prefer to bring your own refreshments anyway, please feel free to do so.

What should I do if I feel I can no longer be a reviewer?

We understand that for some of our existing reviewers the new restrictions and concerns resulting from COVID-19 could mean that you are no longer comfortable being asked to join us on a review team either in the short or long term.

If that is the case, please let us know by sending an email to us at grs@nhs.net

What should I do if I am unable to attend a review that I have agreed to do?

If you are showing any Covid19 symptoms or have been told to self-isolate, **in advance of a visit** please notify us by email at grs@nhs.net immediately.

If you are unable to attend, for whatever reason, **within 24 hours of the start of the review**, please contact the QRS nominated review lead immediately on their mobile telephone, details of which will have been included in the pre visit information pack.

If there are any other concerns that you have that have not been covered by this reviewer guide, please do not hesitate to contact us.