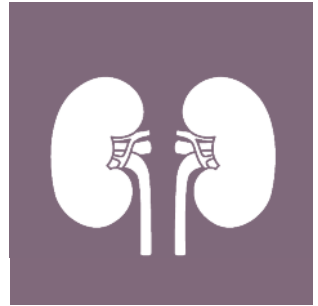
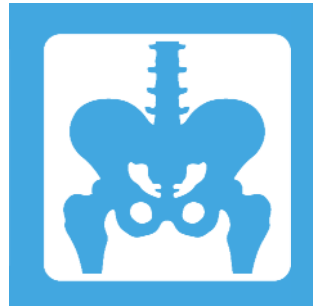


# Providing confidence in your healthcare provision



*Delivering  
Confidence  
in Healthcare*

# How to choose a good healthcare provider

As a patient you should expect to receive the best healthcare from your local healthcare service provider (NHS or private sector).












- Choosing the service that is right for you at any given time, may not always be easy – often you have more than one option, for example, local hospital, GP surgery, local pharmacy, high street shop and sometimes in your own home. How do you know that the service you have been referred to will provide you with the highest standard of testing and clinical care?
- How do you know that your blood tests or other samples have been analysed correctly?
- How do you know that the team conducting your X-Ray or MRI scan are competent and trained to carry out the procedure?
- How do you know that your hearing test is being carried out properly?



# Recognising a quality healthcare service

Did you know that many healthcare diagnostic services throughout the UK have been awarded a national '**badge of quality**' known as UKAS accreditation? This means that these services have been independently assessed by UKAS, using the expertise of 'External Peer Assessors' to confirm that they deliver high quality patient care and testing services.

*UKAS accreditation is available for departments that provide diagnostic testing and include tests for the following:*

- |  |                                       |   |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
|  | Hearing tests & hearing aid fitting   |  | Respiratory & sleep tests             |
|  | General & vascular ultrasound tests   |  | Urodynamics tests                     |
|  | Upper & lower gastro-intestinal tests |  | CT & MRI scanning                     |
|  | Cardiac tests                         |  | Diabetic tests                        |
|  | General X-Rays                        |  | Pathology such as swabs & blood tests |
|  | Neurophysiological tests              |   |                                       |

UKAS accreditation ensures that staff who carry out your diagnostic tests are competent and the equipment being used is safe and fit for purpose. Rapid and accurate diagnosis and appropriate treatment is critical to the outcome of each patient's journey. Therefore ensuring the 'quality' of the diagnostic tests is essential.

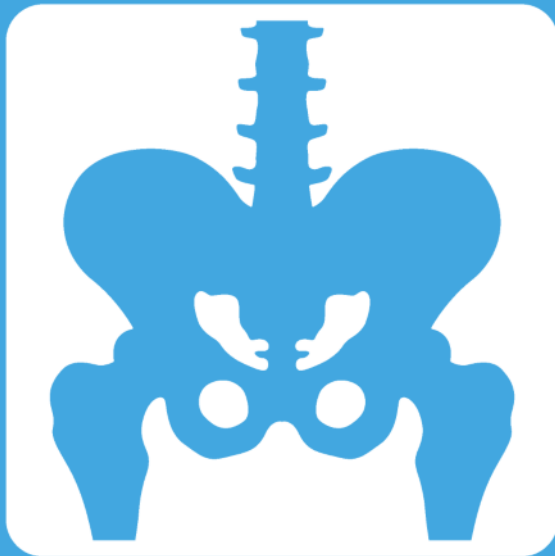
Government bodies such as the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and NHS England recognise the value of accreditation and they are encouraging all relevant scientific and diagnostic services to actively participate in accreditation. Indeed CQC intend to use information from accreditation to support its inspections.

Essentially UKAS accreditation provides you, the patient, with peace of mind that the specific healthcare provider (public or private) you are visiting is providing you with the best possible clinical care. Accreditation also provides additional assurance that the specific test you are having has been performed accurately and safely.

# Imaging tests at the heart of the hospital

Around 98% of people will receive some form of diagnostic imaging test during their lifetime, such as an X-Ray, ultrasound scan, mammography, CT or MRI scanning or, therapeutic radiology. These tests are important, as they are used to assess and diagnose medical conditions and also provide guidance to Clinicians and Consultants with regards to the appropriate treatment.

Effective, safe and high quality imaging is central to most clinical decisions, and can in fact reduce unnecessary medical procedures. So as a patient visiting a diagnostic imaging service that meets these recognised **'badge of quality'** markers, you can have confidence in the tests being carried out and the standard of care you receive.



# Hospital Laboratory testing

Many people will have had blood, urine, tissue or stool samples taken at their local doctor's surgery. These samples are then sent to a laboratory where highly trained staff conduct a series of tests. Often these tests provide important information to assist in the diagnosis and treatment of illness and disease and can also be used to help monitor chronic conditions.

It is essential that you, the patient, can have confidence that the testing laboratory service meets the very stringent standards required to hold UKAS accreditation to ensure accurate and consistent outcomes.

## Point of Care Testing (POCT) in your local community

In today's health climate, there is a growing emphasis on 'point of care' testing, whether you receive this at your local Doctor's surgery or in an emergency situation with on-site paramedics.

Tests are varied and range from taking samples, to testing for glucose and cholesterol levels, to blood tests which encompass a range of conditions.

It is therefore key that you, as the patient, know that these tests will be analysed by highly trained staff, in an environment that meets stringent quality standards to ensure accuracy of results and diagnosis. This is an area where UKAS accreditation is currently developing, so over the next few years POCT testing that meets UKAS accreditation will become more prevalent.



# So how can I ensure that my local NHS Trust or healthcare provider is offering me the highest quality of healthcare?

## You can:

- Request that your local GP refers you to a UKAS accredited service.
- Check that your local healthcare clinical commissioning group, CCG, is contracting with diagnostic services that are UKAS accredited.
- Contact your Patient Group Representative to discuss how they can influence the uptake of UKAS accreditation across the NHS scientific and diagnostic services in your area.

Your *Patient Group Representative* has been appointed by your Medical Centre/GP surgery to improve communication between the practice and you, the patient, with the aim of ensuring the services on offer truly meet all your patient needs. You may like to ask your Practice Manager or your Doctor for more details.

If you would like more information please contact UKAS on **01784 429 000** or visit the website, <https://www.ukas.com/sectors/healthcare/> where you can also find out if your local service is accredited. Simply click on the button on the home page, 'UKAS accredited organisations' and enter the name of your service.

UKAS is appointed by Government as the *sole* national accreditation body for the United Kingdom. UKAS is committed to raise awareness of accreditation and implementation of quality standards across the health and social care arena. Accreditation is the formal recognition that an organisation is competent to perform specific processes, activities, or tasks, in a reliable credible and accurate manner. You can find out more about the role of UKAS by visiting the website.



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