



Improving Quality in Physiological Services, IQIPS

*Delivering quality physiological services*



*Delivering  
Confidence  
in Healthcare*

# The key to delivering quality physiological services

**Improving Quality in Physiological Services, IQIPS**, is an assessment and accreditation scheme that aims to improve the quality of service, care and safety for patients undergoing physiological tests, examinations and procedures. Strongly supported by **NHS England**, the **Royal College of Physicians** and recognised by the **Care Quality Commission (CQC)**, accreditation brings national recognition with a badge of quality.

Clearly defined, professionally led standards form the cornerstone of high quality healthcare. Commissioners, referrers and patients are increasingly seeking accreditation as formal and impartial assurance of high quality services that meet defined standards.



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We fully support a commissioning system focus on the prioritisation of accredited diagnostic services. We are confident that with continued resolute focus, accreditation will become the baseline standard for diagnostic services across the NHS in England.”

# About IQIPS

The United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) delivers the IQIPS scheme from the pre-application stage through to formal third-party assessment for accreditation. The IQIPS scheme is available to eight physiological science disciplines across the UK:

Audiology

Cardiac Physiology

Gastro-Intestinal Physiology

Neurophysiology

Ophthalmic and Vision Science

Respiratory and Sleep Physiology

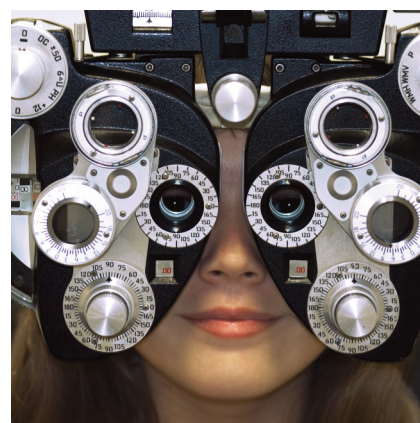
Urodynamics

Vascular Science

NHS England is fully committed to, and strongly endorses participation of diagnostic services in UKAS accreditation for the IQIPS scheme, as confirmed in their position statement published in October 2016. UKAS accreditation to the IQIPS Standard is also fully recognised by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and will be considered by its inspection teams in their new approach.

Commissioners are increasingly recognising the proven value of UKAS accredited services. All participants in the IQIPS scheme are provided with written evidence of their active participation that can be used in the tendering process.

The IQIPS Standard consists of a number of standard statements, each addressing a key aspect necessary for the provision of high quality physiological services accompanied by detailed professional guidance on what is required in order to achieve it. The IQIPS Standard continues to be developed and owned by the professional bodies that represent the eight recognised physiology disciplines.



Providers with UKAS accreditation for IQIPS give commissioners assurance that their hearing services are delivering high quality services for service users, and meet a range of clearly defined quality standards. UKAS accreditation should therefore be used by commissioners as a benchmark indicator...”

*Commissioning Services for People with Hearing Loss:  
A framework for clinical commissioning groups, NHS England, July 2016*

# Why participate?

The first choice for patients, professionals and commissioners through informed decision-making

Reduced assessment burden through recognition within CQC inspection methodology

Consistency across all sites where physiological diagnostics services are delivered

National recognition of a high quality service with increased credibility and reputation

Demonstrable commitment to patient safety and raising the standard of care locally and nationally

A mechanism for continuous service improvement, enhanced efficiency and evidence that can be used as leverage for change

Meeting NHS England objectives to increase the availability of accredited services

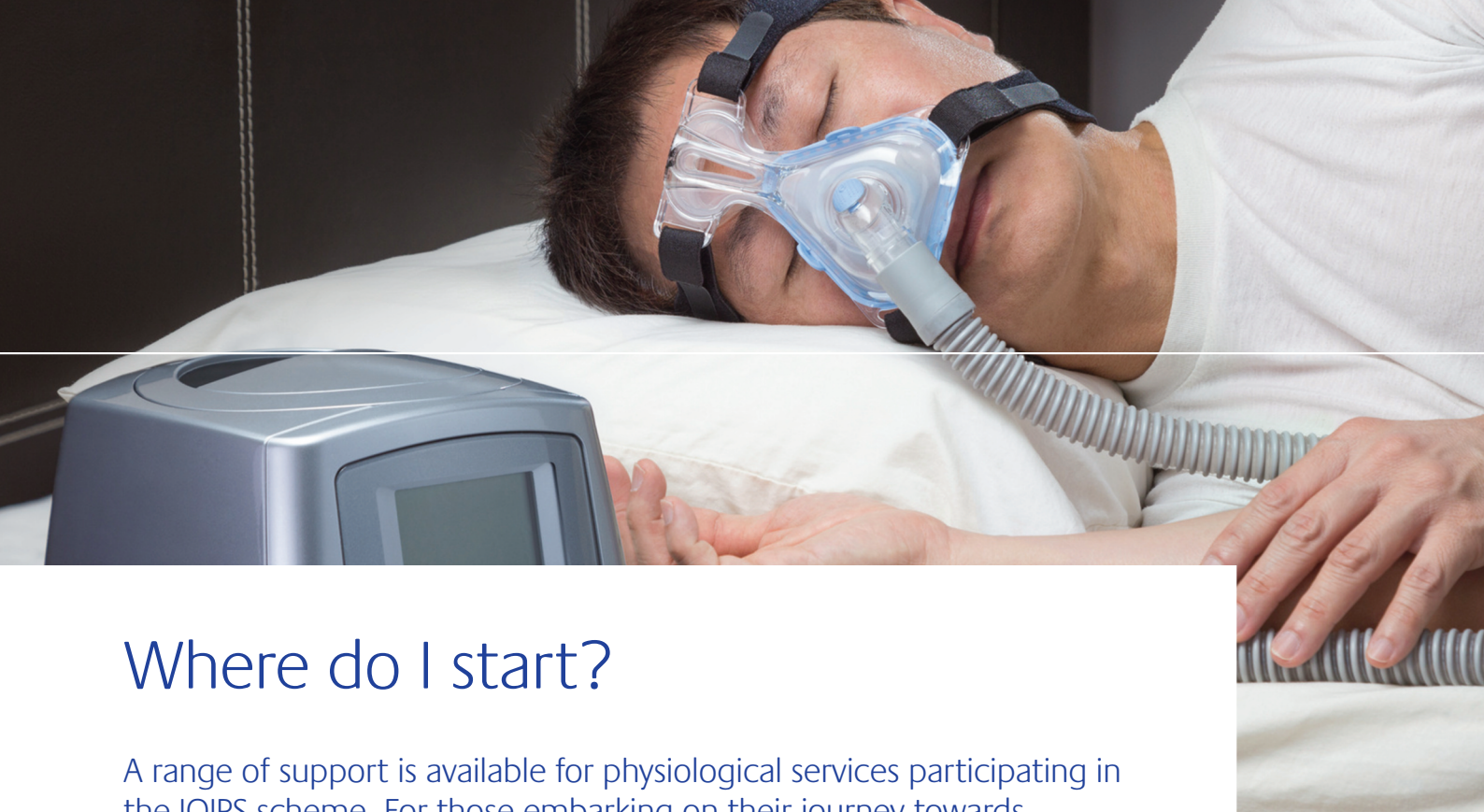
Patient-focussed ethos at the core of all physiological diagnostics and treatment



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...The benefits for services go beyond those we expected to find... Ultimately we'd like to see all services accredited so parents know that their deaf child is cared for by a safe service that has been assessed as high quality by an independent body.”

*Lessons from Accredited Paediatric Audiology Services –  
Why Commission and Provide an IQIPS Accredited Service? National Deaf Children's Society,  
November 2015*



## Where do I start?

A range of support is available for physiological services participating in the IQIPS scheme. For those embarking on their journey towards accreditation, UKAS provides an extensive pre-application support package which ensures that a service is confident and prepared to continue towards assessment for accreditation.

Services embarking on their journey towards accreditation should ensure they do a full gap analysis against the IQIPS Standard to help identify areas for development to ensure conformity to the standard. UKAS provides a gap analysis template, Preparation for Accreditation Workshops and a Holistic Quality Management for the Healthcare Sector training course to assist services in their preparation for accreditation. Further information is available on the UKAS website.

## Who conducts assessments for accreditation?

UKAS assessments are conducted by teams of trained assessors which normally consist of peers from the particular physiological specialism, lay assessors and a UKAS Assessment Manager who leads the assessment. The Assessment Team takes a holistic approach to determine the physiological service's overall ability to consistently deliver the best possible diagnosis and care to its patients and users.

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We were impressed by the professionalism of the UKAS team... they were very thorough but remained positive and constructive throughout and all their findings were justified and clearly explained.”

**Jane Shaw,**

*Chief Executive, Action for Deafness*

# Route to Accreditation



# Hear from IQIPS accredited services

**Practical top tips** from **Tony Kay**, *Head of Audiology Services* at Aintree University Hospital, who led the team to become the first NHS Audiology accredited against the IQIPS Standard.

- Share information across the team regularly to prevent duplication of work
- Set tight but realistic deadlines to keep the process moving
- Existing patient support groups are an excellent source of feedback on the service. Use their knowledge and act on their input
- There is no single rule for improving care or evidencing your processes, do what works for you and your organisation
- Sell accreditation to management. In an AQP environment accreditation showcases the quality of your service. Management buy-in makes everything easier.

**Practical top tips** from **Richard Pole**, *Operations Director* at Independent Vascular Services (IVS), who led the team to become the first accredited provider of vascular services.

- Have one single point of contact, and then a team behind this person
- Create a shared drive, where all IQIPS documentation can be held and easily accessible
- Make use of other resources available to you e.g. PALS
- Embed patient experience within your operations e.g. survey into clinical pattern
- Audit was an area that brought challenges – with limited inter-observer variability. It was decided to measure agreement in 10% of cases.

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We were somewhat nervous about what to expect but we needn't have worried. Our Assessment Manager was highly supportive throughout and answered our numerous queries patiently and promptly. The on-site visit itself was a very positive experience. The UKAS team were very professional and thorough but their friendly manner put staff and patients at ease. Their recommendations were constructive and we all felt that the IQIPS process had been well worthwhile in raising standards for our service.”

**Rosalind Kandler,**

*Consultant Clinical Neurophysiologist,  
Clinical Neurophysiology Department,  
Sheffield Teaching Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust*

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Whilst the process is time consuming the benefits are immeasurable. The standards across the wider department are undoubtedly lifted and we came through the assessment as a stronger team. Everybody thinks we know what we are doing, it's only when you try and map these processes do we realise how much improvement can be made. We would recommend departments to undertake UKAS accreditation in order to ensure every patient receives the very best treatment they can”

**Keith Pearce,**

*Consultant Cardiac Physiologist, Cardiac Diagnostic Unit,  
University Hospital South Manchester*



## UKAS

The United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) is the UK's national accreditation body appointed by Government to assess, against internationally agreed standards, organisations that provide conformity assessment services such as certification, testing, inspection and calibration.

UKAS is a non-profit-distributing private company, limited by guarantee. It is independent of government but operates under a memorandum of understanding with the government through the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy.

The influence and use of UKAS accreditation in the Healthcare sector is growing. UKAS accreditation is now also available in the areas of Diagnostic Imaging (ISAS), Medical Laboratories, Point of Care Testing, Clinical EQA Schemes, Healthcare Pathway Reviews and Dental Service Certification. For more information about UKAS and healthcare accreditation, please visit:

**[www.ukas.com/sectors/healthcare](http://www.ukas.com/sectors/healthcare)**

For more information about IQIPS, please visit:  
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