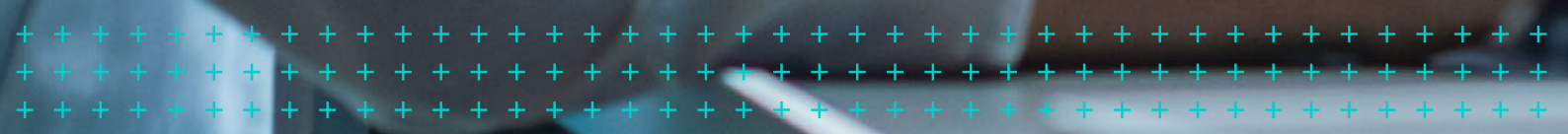




# Improving quality in physiological services



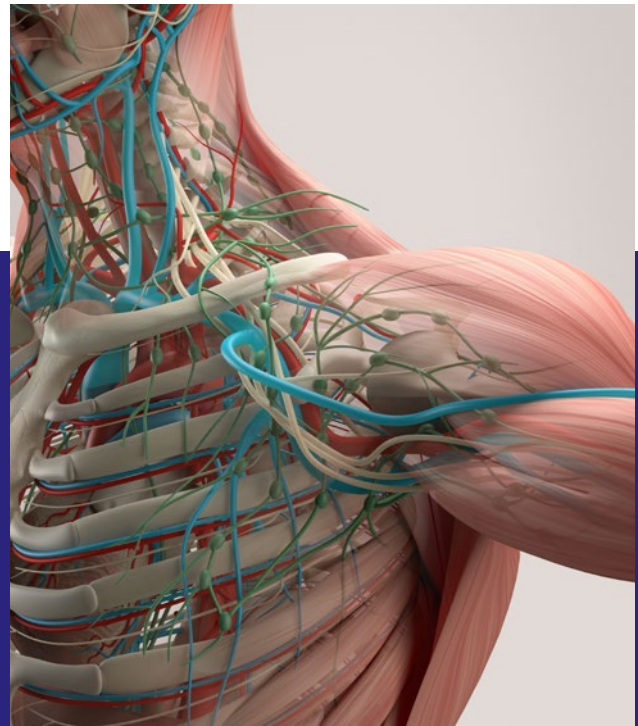
# The key to delivering quality physiological services

**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.

“ 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. ”

**NHS England | October 2016**



## 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 & Vision Science

Respiratory & Sleep Physiology

Urodynamics

Vascular Science

“ 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. ”

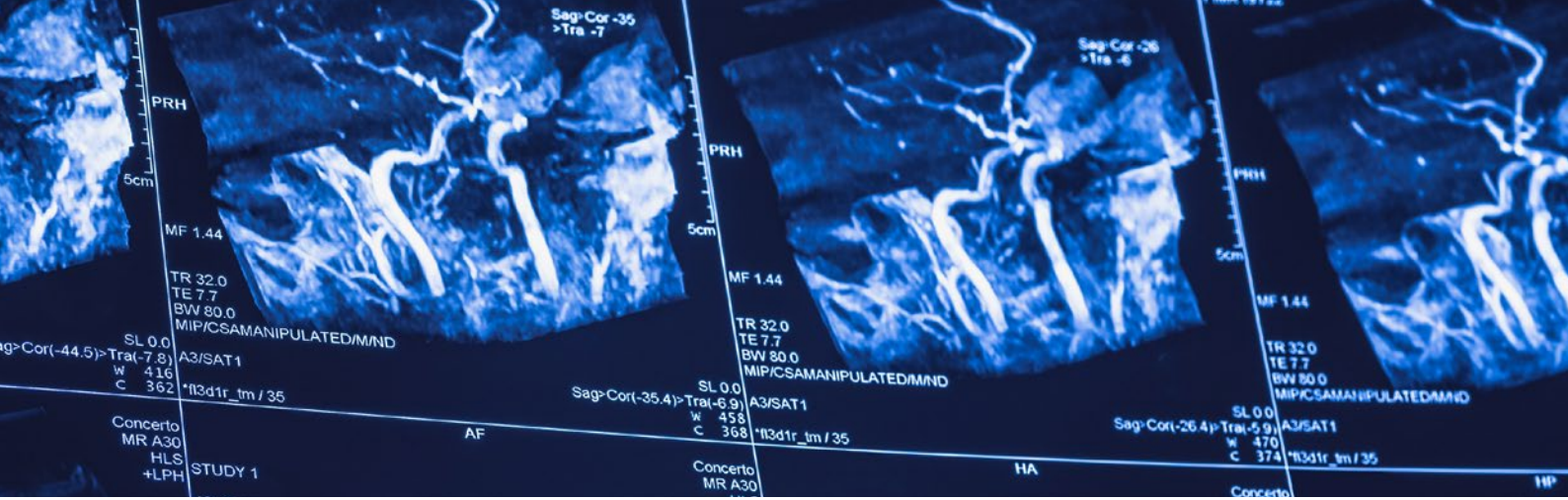
**Commissioning Services for People with Hearing Loss: A framework for clinical commissioning groups,**  
**NHS England | July 2016**

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.





## 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 and training courses for the healthcare sector to assist services in their preparation for accreditation. Further information is available on the UKAS website.

### 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

## 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.

“ 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**

“ 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

1

## Pre-application

- + Conduct gap analysis and attend one of the healthcare related training courses
- + Telephone and email support from UKAS Assessment Manager



2

## Application for accreditation

- + Read all application information thoroughly including GEN 1 and terms and conditions documents
- + Submit application pack with detailed gap analysis and application fee



3

## Optional pre-assessment stage

- + Collation of information related to the scope applied for to inform contract review process
- + Assessment Manager and technical assessor provides written report based on review of the service's QMS with guidance on proposed formal assessment timeline



4

## Examination of evidence

- + Evidence submitted via document repository for review by the assessment team
- + Assessment plan formulated to determine assessment approach



5

## On site assessment visit

- + Assessment Team observe practice, review facilities and interview staff
- + Assessment Team give feedback on outcome of entire assessment and recommendation to be made to UKAS



6

## Improvement actions

- + Submit evidence to address areas of non-conformity found during the assessment within agreed timescale
- + Submitted evidence reviewed by Assessment Team



7

## Grant of accreditation

- + Final Decision with issue of certificate and publication of Schedule of Accreditation at [ukas.com](https://www.ukas.com)
- + Start of 4-year accreditation cycle



8

## Annual surveillance

- + Annual submission of web-based assessment and on-site assessment visit in Year 2
- + Re-accreditation at year 4



# Hear from IQIPS accredited services

**Practical top tips from Gaynor Chittick, 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 patter
- + Audit was an area that brought challenges – with limited inter-observer variability. It was decided to measure agreement in 10% of cases.

“ 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**

“ 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**

## Further information:

For more information about IQIPS, please visit: <https://www.ukas.com/>

## Get in touch

sales@ukas.com  
+44 (0) 1784 429000  
[ukas.com](https://www.ukas.com)