

**Standards, Principles and Practice of the
International Accreditation Programme of the
International Society for Quality in Health
Care External Evaluation Association
(ISQua EEA)**

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Head of Operations**





About Us

ISQua is a non-profit organisation dedicated to improving healthcare quality and safety worldwide for over 40 years. We do this through education, knowledge sharing, and supporting health systems. Our network of health care professionals spans over 70 countries.



The International Society for Quality in Health Care External Evaluation Association (ISQua EEA) was established by the International Society for Quality in Health Care in 2018 to deliver its external evaluation services.

ISQua EEA's primary programme is the International Accreditation Programme (IAP). It delivers a unique global accreditation service to health and social care external evaluation organisations and standards developing bodies.

Introduction to the International Accreditation Programme (IAP)

- We ‘**Accredit the Accreditors**’ through four unique programmes:

Programme	Standards/Principles
Accreditation of Health and Social Care Standards (desktop/remote survey)	6 th Edition of the Principles for the Development of Health and Social Care Standards
Accreditation of Surveyor Training Programmes (desktop/remote survey)	4 th Edition of the Standards for Surveyor Training Programmes
Accreditation of Quality and Patient Safety Training Programmes (desktop/remote survey)	1 st Edition of the Standards for Quality and Patient Safety Training Programmes
Accreditation of External Evaluation Organisations (virtual/on-site survey)	5 th Edition of the Standards for External Evaluation Organisations

ISQua EEA Global Reach

Clients with at least one programme accredited.

Argentina (1)

Australia (6)

Bahrain (1)

Belgium (1)

Brazil (11)

Cambodia (1)

Canada (5)

China (2)

Colombia (1)

Egypt (1)

France (2)

Germany (1)

Hong Kong (1)

India (4)

Indonesia (5)

Japan (1)

Jordan (1)

Kazakhstan (1)

Korea, Rep (2)

Lebanon (2)

Malaysia (1)

New Zealand (4)

Norway (1)

Oman (1)

Romania (1)

Rwanda (1)

Saudi Arabia (2)

South Africa (2)

Spain (1)

Taiwan (1)

Thailand (1)

The Netherlands (2)

Tunisia (1)

Türkiye (1)

United Arab Emirates
(2)

United Kingdom (1)

United States (6)

IAP Standards



**95 sets of standards
accredited by ISQua
EEA**



**60 clients have
standards accredited**



**18 clients have more
than one set of
standards accredited**

Standards Accredited by ISQua EEA

Hospital Standards (29)

Neonatal Standards (1)

Healthcare Facilities Standards (19)

Pulmonary Function Standards (1)

Laboratory Standards (10)

Sleep Medicine Standards (1)

Primary Care Standards (7)

Physical Therapy Standards (1)

Ambulatory Care Standards (3)

Breast Imaging Standards (1)

Dental Standards (3)

Mental Health Standards (1)

Diagnostic Imaging Standards (4)

Palliative Care Standards (1)

Blood Service Standards (2)

Medical Tourism Standards (1)

Home Care Standards (2)

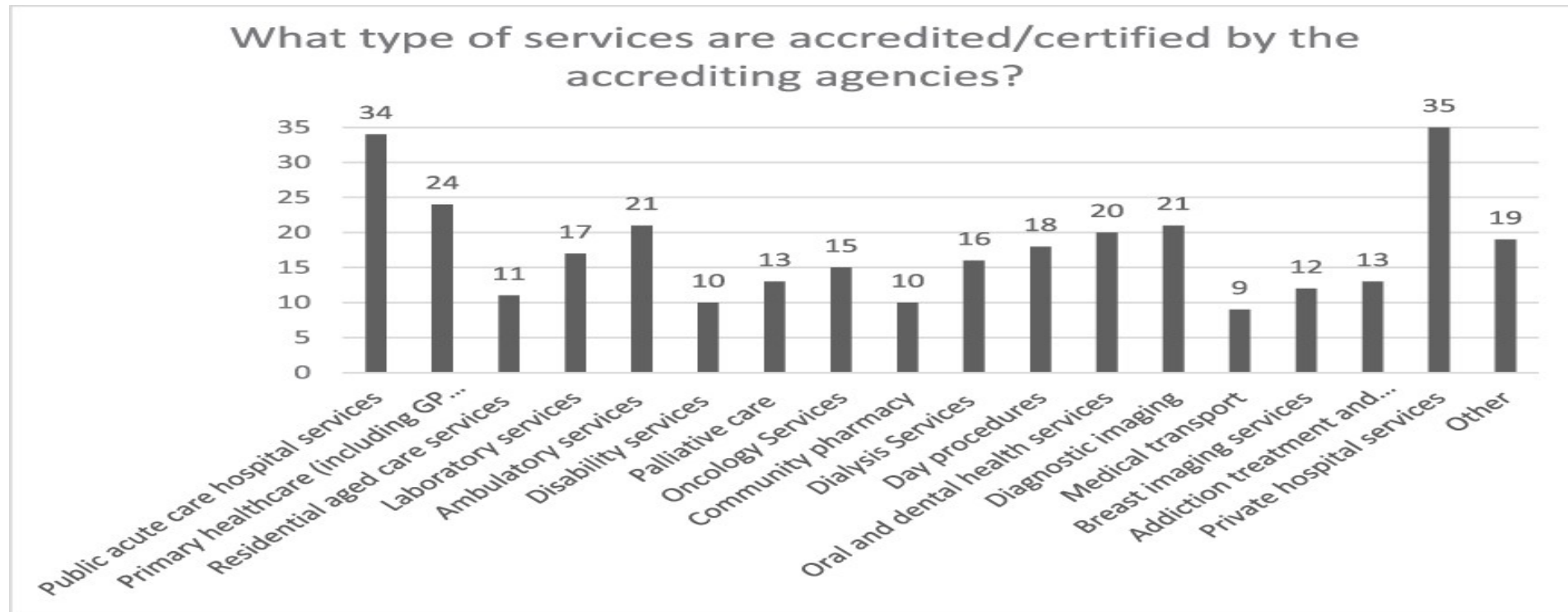
Dialysis Standards (1)

Residential Care Standards (2)

Clinical Care Standards (1)

Social Care Standards (2)

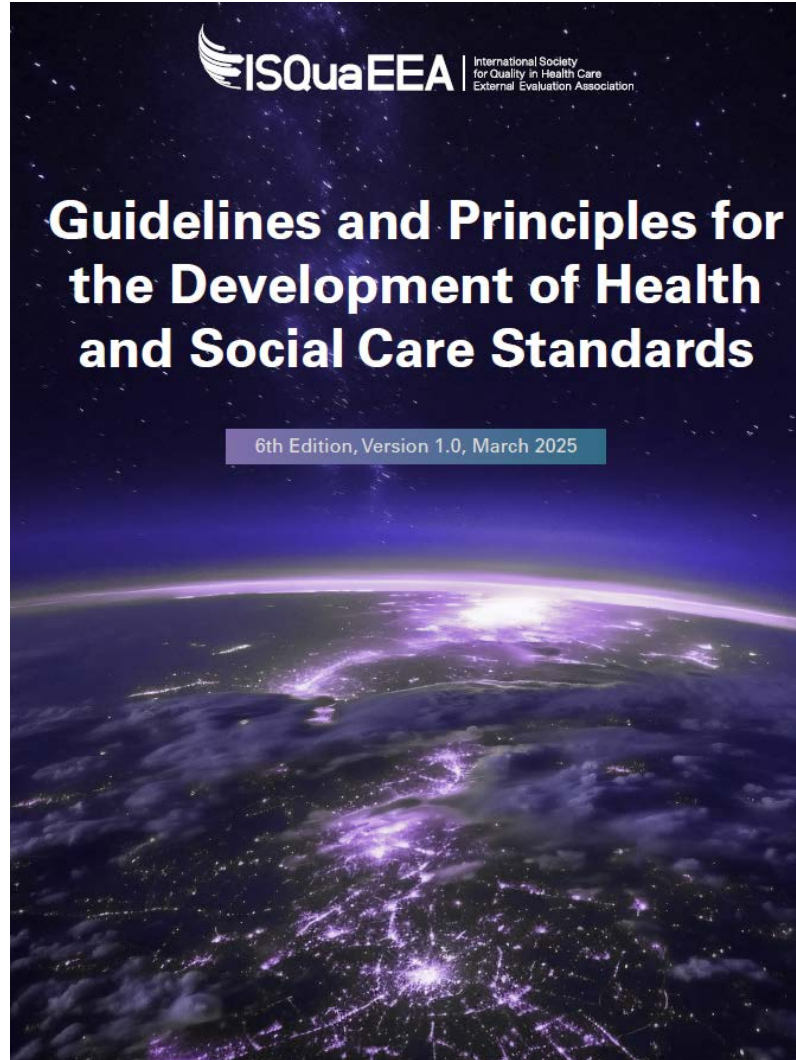
Figure 1 Type of service accredited.



Greenfield et al, *Int J Qual Health Care*, Volume 33, Issue 4, 2021, mzab150, <https://doi.org/10.1093/intqhc/mzab150>

Guidelines and Principles for the Development of Health and Social Care Standards

6th Edition, Version 1.0, March 2025



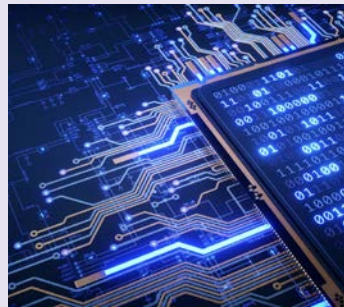
6 th Edition Principles	No. of criteria	Change from 5 th Edition
1. Standards Development and Rating Methodology	16	Previously Principle 1 and 2 – now merged
2. Organisational Governance, Leadership and Management	8	Previously Principle 3
3. Person-Centred Care	11	Previously Principle 5*
4. Patient/Service User Safety and Organisational Risk Management	13	Previously Principle 4
5. Process of Care Delivery	12	Previously Principle 5*
6. Sustainable Care	7	New
7. Digital Care and Artificial Intelligence Systems for Care	8	New
8. Supporting the Care Workforce	10	New
9. Quality Performance	5	Formerly Principle 6

* Person-Centred Care and the Process of Care Delivery have been divided into two separate Principles

Three New Principles



Sustainable Care



Digital Care and Artificial Intelligence Systems for Care



Supporting the Care Workforce



Principle 6 - Sustainable Care

The WHO defines an environmentally sustainable health care system as one 'that improves, maintains or restores health, while minimizing negative impacts on the environment and leveraging opportunities to restore and improve it, to the benefit of the health and wellbeing of current and future generations'

Principle 6 – Sustainable Care

No.	Criterion
6.1 NEW	The standards require organisations to undertake a strategic level review of the impact of environmental issues, sustainability of service provision and how negative environmental impacts arising from activities can to some extent be mitigated.
6.2 NEW	The standards require organisations to provide information to their staff and patients/service users on the organisation's strategic approach to environmentally sustainable care and the organisation's goals in this area.
6.3 NEW	The standards require organisations to monitor their progress against defined goals for environmentally sustainable care and to report on this progress to the governing body .
6.4 NEW	The standards require organisations to consider the responsible stewardship of resources in their use of supplies and management of procurement.
6.5 NEW	The standards require organisations to manage their use of non-renewable energy by: a) monitoring their use of energy including electricity, gas, oil and other fuel sources b) taking steps to reduce the use of energy from fossil fuels.
6.6 NEW	The standards require organisations to carry out an assessment of their carbon footprint to monitor and help reduce greenhouse gases produced through the care processes provided.
6.7 NEW	The standards require organisations to consider their resilience to major environmental, climate or health emergencies which could disrupt the provision of services and to plan for a range of actions in response.



GREEN CARE IS HIGH QUALITY CARE

The ISQua Green Paper and Call to Action for Environmentally Sustainable and Climate Resilient Health Systems



Authors: Hans C. Ossebaard & Aditya Vyas

ISQua Green Paper is freely available from the ISQua website:
<https://www.isqua.org/resources-blog/isqua-green-paper.html>



MEMBERSHIP ▾

EVENTS ▾

EXTERNAL EVALUATION – IEAA

EDUCATION ▾

NETWORKS ▾

Select Language

BLOG

RESOURCES

IJQHC JOURNAL

IJCOMS JOURNAL

IKAS DATA

ISQua GREEN PAPER

ISQUA WHITE PAPER ON PATIENT SAFETY

ISQua GREEN PAPER

Green Care is High Quality Care



Principle 7 - Digital Care and Artificial Intelligence Systems for Care

The term 'digital care' is used in the Principles to cover a range of care delivery approaches which include, but are not limited to, remote monitoring of patients/service users, smart-phone apps, wearable devices, virtual consultations which may be by telephone or online meeting platforms, remote reporting of test results, such as scans and X-rays. Other digital health approaches that are coming online should also be included.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to dynamic systems which use approaches such as machine learning and rules-based algorithms, developed from large data sets, to support, for example, diagnosis or individualised medicine.

Principle 7 - Digital Care and Artificial Intelligence Systems for Care

No.	Criterion
7.1 NEW	The standards require organisations to have a documented process for the assessment, costing, implementation and ongoing management of digital care systems.
7.2 NEW	The standards require that organisations have a process to ensure that the use of digital care does not disadvantage patients/service users who are not able to use digital devices or do not have access to the internet to facilitate the use of digital approaches.
7.3 NEW	The standards require organisations to have access to technical expertise to support the effective use of digital care systems.
7.4 NEW	The standards require organisations to introduce and manage AI systems in accordance with any national or regional legislation or regulations on the use of AI , where these exist, or in their absence, based on available guidance for best practice.
7.5 NEW	The standards require organisations to monitor and evaluate the use of AI systems to deliver safe, high-quality care, with mitigation of any unintended consequences.
7.6 NEW	The standards require organisations to consult with staff delivering care, prior to the introduction of AI systems, to gain understanding of the practical implications and staff training needs.
7.7 NEW	The standards require that organisations consider accountability arrangements for all care and treatment delivered with support from AI systems.
7.8 NEW	The standards require organisations to inform patients/service users when aspects of care are delivered with the use of AI systems.

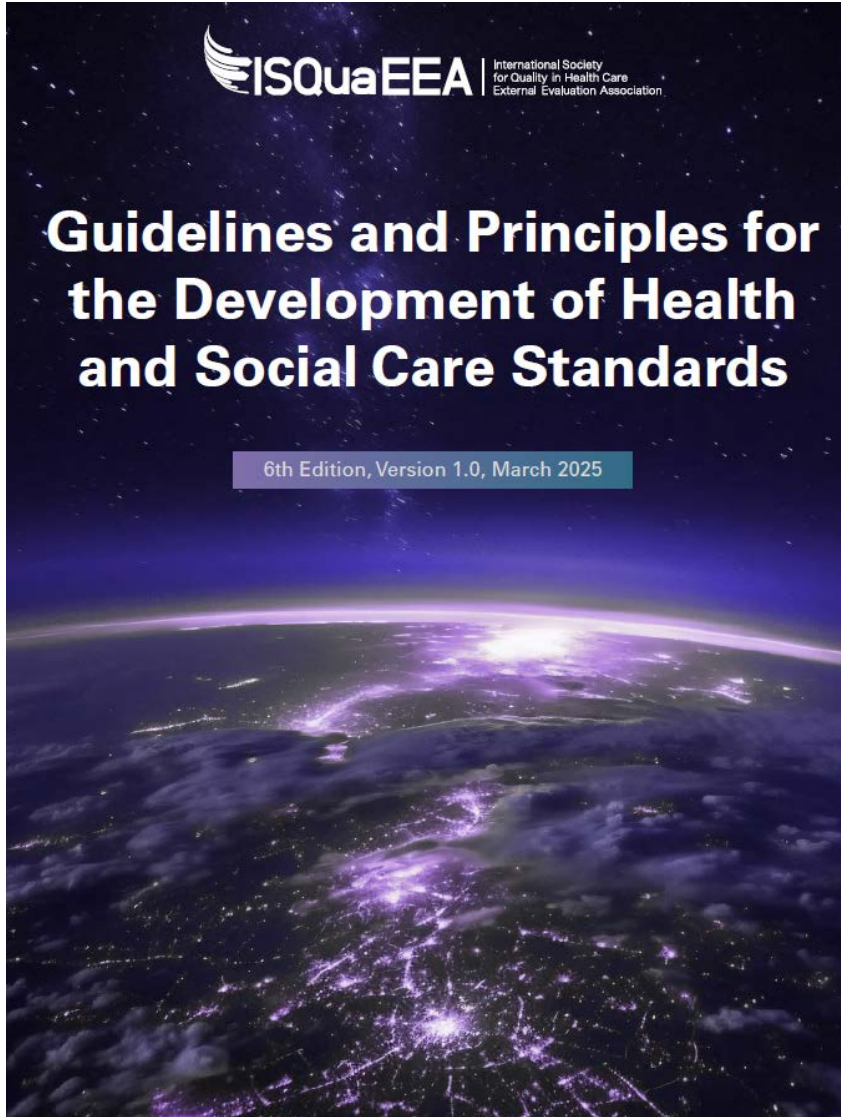


Principle 8 – Supporting the Care Workforce

The standards require healthcare and social care organisations to **support the mental and physical wellbeing and professional development of their workforce and keep people safe at work.**

Principle 8 – Supporting the Care Workforce

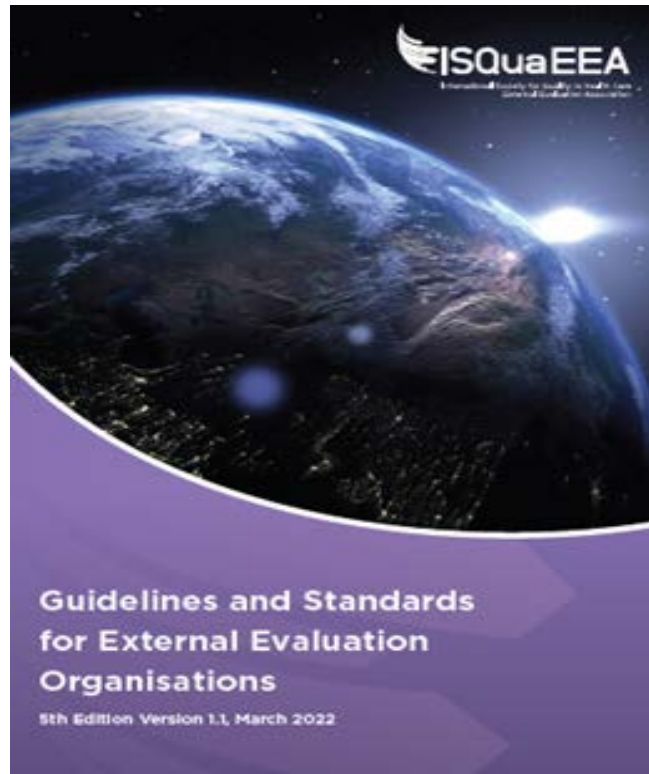
No.	Criterion
8.6 NEW	The standards require organisations to take steps to protect staff from violence and aggression from individuals including patients/service users.
8.7 NEW	The standards require organisations to have a systematic approach to gaining feedback from the workforce on their experience of working for the organisation and to implement improvement based on the feedback.
8.8 NEW	The standards require organisations to monitor and analyse data on staff sick leave and the reasons for staff leaving and these are used to inform organisational learning and changes in practice to support staff wellbeing and retention .
8.9 NEW	The standards require organisations to have processes to monitor, review and respond to issues of equality, diversity, inclusion and equity , in relation to recruitment, work allocation, scheduling and promotions across the workforce.
8.10 NEW	The standards require organisations to support workforce wellbeing and psychological safety .



Implementation

- Published **March 2025**
- Clients can elect to have their standards assessed against the 5th or 6th Editions from **June 2025 – June 2026**
- **6th Editions mandatory from 1st July 2026**

Guidelines and Standards for External Evaluation Organisations (5th Edition)



8 Standards

- **Standard 1: Governance (15 criteria)**
- **Standard 2: Strategic, operational and financial management (9 criteria)**
- **Standard 3: Risk management and quality improvement (11 criteria)**
- **Standard 4: Human resource management (12 criteria)**
- **Standard 5: Information management (11 criteria)**
- **Standard 6: Surveyor management (11 criteria)**
- **Standard 7: Survey and client management (16 criteria)**
- **Standard 8: Accreditation or certification awards (10 criteria)**

Standards for Surveyor Training Programmes (4th Edition)



Standard 1: Programme Development and Planning (6 criteria)

Standard 2: Programme Management (8 criteria)

Standard 3: Trainee Management (4 criteria)

Standard 4: Training Programme Delivery (9 criteria)

Standard 5: Assessment of Competence (5 criteria)

New programme – Quality and Patient Safety Training Programme (1st Edition)



New programme launched in 2022 to assess quality and patient safety training programmes

5 Standards

Standard 1: Programme Development and Planning (7 criteria)

Standard 2: Programme Management (11 criteria)

Standard 3: Training Programme Delivery (7 criteria)

Standard 4: Trainee/learner management (8 criteria)

Standard 5: Assessment of Competence (5 criteria)

IAP Process



All surveys are conducted using our **online survey management system Collaborate**.



Surveyors receive access to Collaborate typically **2-3 weeks before the survey start date**.



2-3 surveyors allocated to a survey team.



Assessments of sets of standards, surveyor training and quality and patient safety training programmes undertaken as **remote/desk-top assessments**.



Assessments of **external evaluation organisations** are undertaken **on-site**.

Future work



- Revising 5th Edition of *Guidelines and Standards for External Evaluation Organisations*.
- Revising associated assessment methodology.

ISQua Membership

As a member of ISQua, you'll be in good company. Our Members are doctors, nurses, health care professionals, policy makers, patients and carers across 96 countries.

Being a member gives you access to ISQua's global community, exclusive website content, discounts to our conferences, access to the International Journal for Quality in Health Care, and much more.

When you join ISQua, you are making an investment in yourself, in addition to changing health care quality across the world.



Fellowship Programme

An international online learning programme designed for healthcare professionals who are passionate about making healthcare safer. The curriculum is presented under 9 topical themes comprised of expert-developed modules and e-learning activities. **Our newest courses Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning in Healthcare and Sustainability in Healthcare** are available now.



1000+
participants



5
continents



60+
countries



3
languages



12
learning journeys





Save the Date For #ISQua2026

ISQua's 42nd International Conference will be held in Dublin, Ireland from 27th – 30th September 2026, in partnership with The Irish [Department of Health \(DoH\)](#), and the [Health Service Executive \(HSE\)](#)

תודה
Dankie Gracias
Спасибо شکرًا
Köszönjük Merci Takk
Grazie Dziękujemy Terima kasih
Děkujeme Vielen Dank Paldies
Kiitos Täname teid 谢谢
Thank You Tak
感謝您 Obrigado Teşekkür Ederiz
Σας ευχαριστούμε 감사합니다
Bedankt Děkujeme vám
ありがとうございます
Tack



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External Evaluation Association

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