

# Summary of changes to NHS Health Check Pharmacy Specification 2022/23

## 1. Changes in Public Health Team Leads

Ian Black is now leading on training for NHS Health Checks. He can be contacted on Tel: 0191 433 3563 or [ianblack@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:ianblack@gateshead.gov.uk). For queries on all other areas of Health Checks, please contact Helen Bell, Public Health Programme Lead for NHS health checks on Tel: 0191 433 3628 or [Helenbell@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:Helenbell@gateshead.gov.uk).

## 2. External Quality Assessment (EQA) Scheme for Providers who use Point of Care Testing (POCT)

As in recent years, POCT Providers, must be registered with an accredited External Quality Assessment Scheme and undertake monthly quality assessment of POCT equipment. Previously, POCT Providers have been asked to provide the Council with monthly EQA monitoring data. As EQA monitoring is now established, this year we are asking POCT Providers to continue to keep records to demonstrate compliance with monthly EQA and to share results with the Council on request. The Provider is to deliver requested EQA data to the Council within 10 working days of receipt of such request.

## 3. Potential variations during 2022/2023

The national best practice guidance published October 2019 (updated March 2020) recommends the following changes, however the systems/pathways aren't currently in place to allow these changes to be implemented locally and we are awaiting further national guidance:

- **QRisk3**

Estimated 10-year risk of developing CVD should be calculated using QRISK. In 2019, the 10-year CVD risk factor calculator QRISK® 2 was replaced by QRISK® 3, which uses a further seven fields of data (diagnosis of chronic kidney disease, a measure of systolic blood pressure variability (standard deviation of repeated measures), migraine, corticosteroids, systemic lupus erythematosus, atypical antipsychotics, severe mental illness, and erectile dysfunction). These additional variables help to enable a more precise identification of people most at risk of heart disease and stroke.

QRisk3 will be introduced as further guidance becomes available. Providers will be informed in good time and supported to make any necessary amendments.

- Audit score of 16 or more to get referred for clinical follow up  
There is new advice on the clinical management of people with an AUDIT score of 16 or more being referred for an assessment for cirrhosis, via local pathways (see Section 6.7 of Best Practice Guidance)  
Providers should continue to follow local guidance and pathways regarding audit scores, until further guidance is issued.

These potential changes to service delivery will be covered in the annual update training and will be incorporated into the Service Specification by a further Contract variation in due course.

#### **For information:**

- **COVID-19 and NHS Health Check Restart Guidance (updated 3/2/22)**  
NHS Health Checks have been paused for some of the pandemic and this has varied between Providers.  
[Restart preparation guidance](#) was updated in February 2022. This states that on 27 January 2022, NHE England/Improvement published guidance on [Next steps for general practice following the accelerated COVID-19 vaccination booster campaign](#). The guidance advises that all providers should now restore routine care where services were paused in line with the guidance previously released by NHSE/I. Please follow all guidance when delivering NHS Health Checks.
- **Preventing illness and improving health for all: a review of the NHS Health Check programme and recommendations**  
The national review of the NHS Health Check programme, carried out by Public Health England was published at the end of last year. Its recommendations present a vision for the future of the NHS Health Check programme. It advises ministers on how NHS Health Checks can evolve in the next decade, to maximise the future benefits of the programme in preventing illness and reducing health inequalities. Recommendations include launching a digital offer, making the NHS Health Check available to people from a younger age, and addressing more conditions through the NHS Health Check. The full report can be seen [here](#).  
Further feedback will be provided when any information about the implementation of recommendations is published.

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