Congratulations – you have taken the step of deciding as a practice team to work towards the Royal College of General Practitioners’ “Quality Practice Award” (QPA). Working towards QPA will undoubtedly be one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences you will have as practice. We recommend that you take time as a team to think through the following issues before you progress.

The RCGP is committed to supporting you through this process and this leaflet is to help you use the QPA Advisory Service. This service will provide you with the following:

- Advice on how to interpret the criteria
- Advice on how the criteria relate to your practice and how you might approach presenting your evidence
- Support with monitoring the practice’s progress including regular contact at a frequency and by means to suit the practice (normally email/telephone)
- Support on deciding whether you are ready to submit
- A check through your written evidence prior to its submission for assessment

Please now email or phone your RCGP QPA Adviser, to chat through how they will work to support you. Contact details of your adviser can be found in the email.

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Getting started

Your important first step is to familiarise yourself with the criteria and the guidance. These are on the RCGP web site. The QPA page is at http://www.rcgp.org.uk/revalidation-and-cpd/practice-accreditation-and-quality-practice-award.aspx

1. Consider how to put the advisory service to best use. Consider:
   - Who the contact person will be
   - How the contact person will feed back advice to the practice

2. Identify a leader and agree what their role is. The following are suggestions only.
   - Helping to identify priority working areas with the team
   - Working with the team and the adviser to identify ways of tackling the criteria
   - Identifying timescales
   - Troubleshooting problems with timescales
   - Agreeing how you will approach (eg section by section or in small working groups running in parallel?)
   - Delegating tasks to individuals and groups
   - Monitoring progress of individuals and groups (eg wall calendar, spreadsheet, project management software)
   - Taking an overview of how the project is progressing
   - Motivating people/groups who are struggling
   - Organising submission and assessment visit dates
   - Organising the typing, copying, presentation format and despatch of the document itself
   - Organising proof reader – someone with good attention to detail who is not too close to the work itself, also check no patient identifiable data
   - Sorting out the day of the visit – everyone present, timetable, rooms, lunch etc

3. Do a SWOT analysis to identify present state of readiness of practice

4. Involve the whole team as much as possible in the whole process and keep everyone informed of progress

5. Identify who will do what task; some will be individuals, some will be better as small groups

6. Try to make small group membership as multi-disciplinary as possible

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7. Identify big and/or difficult bits and prioritise how you will tackle them. The following areas are suggestions only.

- records related standards
- prescribing survey
- patient satisfaction questionnaires
- clinical management plans and their audits
- availability audit
- programme of significant events
- staff appraisals

8. Work out what the main barriers to progress are going to be and how you are going to get around them eg

- Teams who are attached to the practice but may not be managed by you
- Involving people who are not in the practice much eg assistants with small amounts of sessions
- People with varying levels of enthusiasm for undertaking the extra work
- How you will manage the need for extra time and other resources

Further help on barriers is at http://www.rcgp.org.uk/PDF/QPA_Overcoming_the_Barriers_to_QPA.pdf

9. Prepare thoroughly for undertaking audits. Make sure that at least one person is familiar with how to run audit – perhaps a local course will be available. Experienced team members could cascade training in the practice and support other team members with audit work. Use the guidance in the QPA criteria and your adviser! Nurses: specific advice is available from the website of the Nursing and Midwifery Practice Development Unit, NHSScotland http://www.nhshealthquality.org/nhsqis/files/qpaguide.pdf

10. One of the most important things to remember is that this is a team project and people are your most important resource. Think about individuals’ strengths/interests/weaknesses and make best use of them.

11. Try to make working towards the award part of the practice ethos

IMPORTANT NOTE:

You will see that under “Practice Profile”, the practice is required to declare any past or outstanding serious formal complaints and/or serious breaches of terms of service or other similar issues. It is vital that, if this applies to your practice, you highlight this to the Adviser at the earliest opportunity so that details can be submitted to the Chair of QPA and an early decision on how to proceed may be made. Please refer to the QPA Guidance for more information.