



OPPORTUNITY TO ADOPT LOCAL CQUIN GOAL TO IMPROVE HOSPITAL FOOD

FAQs about the hospital food CQUIN goals, June 2015

These FAQs provide a brief overview of the hospital food CQUIN goals, broadly covering what they are, the incentives provided for achieving CQUIN goals, and how hospitals and commissioners can adopt them. It has been compiled and written by the Food for Life Catering Mark team in response to questions from caterers, hospitals and commissioners, and reflects our best understanding of the hospital food CQUINs at this time. If you have any further information or questions to add to this resource, please do let us know.

What is CQUIN?

1. What is 'CQUIN'?

In 2009 the Department of Health introduced the 'CQUIN framework' as a way for commissioners of healthcare to encourage and reward improvements in service quality – CQUIN stands for 'Commissioning for Quality and Innovation'. The framework allows commissioners to make some of the healthcare providers' (hospitals, care homes, mental health services etc.) annual income conditional on achieving locally agreed goals to improve quality.

Every hospital, each year, has a 'CQUIN scheme' - this is a list of goals intended to improve the quality of care delivered that has been agreed with the local commissioner. If the goals are achieved in the financial year then a hospital will receive the CQUIN payment in full.

The achievement of the CQUIN goal is measured using several 'CQUIN progress indicators', on the basis of which payment is made. A payment threshold is agreed for each indicator - this is the level of performance which must be achieved to earn payment.

2. How do hospitals decide what their CQUIN goals should be?

A hospital's CQUIN scheme is made up of 'national' and 'local' goals.

The national goals are decided by NHS England, and are mandatory (unless not applicable to the healthcare provider). Not delivering against a national CQUIN would result in a hospital not being paid a proportion of their CQUIN payment. The national CQUIN goals are made public each year by NHS England, in their CQUIN guidance for next financial year.

The current year's CQUIN guidance is available at:

<http://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/9-cquin-guid-2015-16.pdf>

The local goals are decided by the commissioner, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) and the NHS Trust, guided by local needs and strategies. NHS

England provides a pick-list of 'exemplar CQUINs goals' which commissioners, providers and clinicians can draw on when agreeing local goals. The exemplar CQUIN goals, as the name suggests, are intended to exemplify 'well-defined evidence-based quality improvement goals' that commissioners and hospitals may want to adopt, but there is no requirement to include these exemplar goals in CQUIN schemes.

3. What are the hospital food CQUINs?

Included in the pick-list of exemplar CQUIN goals published by NHS England in March 2015, the exemplar CQUIN goals 'Improving Hospital Food by achieving compliance with recommended or best practice standards' – numbers 294 and 295 on the pick list – are relevant to all providers who deliver food services to patients, visitors or staff, irrespective of how the food is provided. The goal of these CQUINs is to increase the number of NHS organisations that comply with recognised standards on hospital food, including (but not limited to) those identified by the Department of Health.

An additional CQUIN goal – number 309 on the pick list – aims to improve the provision of healthier food and beverage options for staff and visitors, acknowledging that staff who work shifts are particularly vulnerable to making poor food choices and that this is exacerbated when hospitals provide less healthy choices in their out-of-hours food services.

Further information about the hospital food CQUIN is outlined in the Department of Health briefing 'New measures for rewarding excellence in hospital food', attached at the end of this document. The NHS England pick-list of exemplar CQUIN goals is available at: <http://www.england.nhs.uk/nhs-standard-contract/>

4. Do the hospital food CQUINs have to apply to all food served in the hospital?

The CQUIN goals 294 and 295 can be applied to any food served within a hospital – staff, patient or visitor catering, just one of these services or all of them. The area of food service these CQUIN goals apply to will be agreed between the commissioner and hospital according to their priorities for care improvement and what is achievable. The CQUIN goal 309 applies to food served to staff and visitors; food services aimed exclusively at patients are not included.

Incentives provided for achieving CQUIN goals

5. How much money do hospitals get for achieving the CQUIN goals?

The amount of money a hospital receives for achieving all the goals in their CQUIN scheme (including national and local goals) will be 2.5% of Actual Contract Value, as defined in the 2015/16 NHS Standard Contract, dependant on provider performance.

A minimum of 1.5% of the 2.5% is to be linked to achieving the national CQUIN goals, where these apply. The remainder will be allocated to reward the achievement of local CQUIN goals, with the % available being based on provider type. The amount assigned to achieving each local goal depends on how many goals are agreed, and this varies between hospitals. NHS England advises that care providers are set no more than 10 local CQUIN goals.

6. Who decides if a hospital has successfully achieved their CQUIN goals?

Progress towards achieving CQUIN goals is monitored through the year by the hospital's commissioner, the local Clinical Commissioning Group. The achievement of the CQUIN goal is then measured using progress indicators, on the basis of which payment is made. A payment threshold is agreed for each indicator. This is the level of performance which must be achieved to earn payment.

7. When a hospital achieves CQUIN goals, when do they receive the money for doing so?

NHS England recommends that 90% of the money is paid in monthly intervals from the start of the financial year, on the assumption that the hospital will achieve the majority of its goals. Adjustments may be required through the year to reflect variation in activity levels and/or progress towards achieving agreed goals.

8. What can a hospital spend the money they receive on?

The money allocated to hospitals to reward the achievement of CQUIN goals, both national and local, is to be spent at the discretion of individual hospitals; it is not ring-fenced to be spent in the department or area where care improvements are made.

9. If it isn't guaranteed that catering departments will receive the money, why pursue a CQUIN?

CQUINs are designed to improve the quality of care provided. Adopting a CQUIN goal to improve hospital food is a lever for change: it raises awareness of the importance of food provision at a commissioner and Trust level and sets shared targets for change. If the targets are not met, the money is withdrawn from the Trust. Experiences from this year show that having a CQUIN for hospital food has raised the profile of hospital food, stimulated top level and multi-disciplinary engagement in food, and highlighted the importance of boosting patient experience of meals.

10. Can a hospital include a CQUIN goal for improving hospital food in two consecutive years?

A hospital can agree with their commissioner to include a goal to improve hospital food in their scheme for two or more consecutive years. This will depend on a hospital demonstrating that significant improvements will be made to care provision by doing so.

CQUIN and the Catering Mark

11. How is the Catering Mark recognised in the hospital food CQUIN goals?

The CQUIN goals for improving hospital food cite the Soil Association's Food for Life Catering Mark Standards as a framework to raise the quality of food provision. This means that food providers can be rewarded for improving food quality and meeting Food for Life Catering Mark Standards for their staff, patient or visitor catering.

How to adopt the hospital food CQUIN goal

12. When are CQUIN goals decided?

Each year, usually in November or December, NHS England publishes CQUIN guidance for the upcoming financial year. Providers and commissioners have until April the following year to agree their CQUIN goals, to be implemented in that financial year.

While final decisions with regard to the goals to be included in the CQUIN scheme each year will be made between December and April, many providers will start to consider their goals ahead of December, and the proposal to include a particular goal in the next year's scheme can be made at any time.

13. Who in a hospital is responsible for agreeing the hospital food CQUIN?

In the cases we are aware of, the recommendation to include a particular local CQUIN can be led by the CCG or by a caterer, by Estates & Facilities and by Chief Executives. Final decisions on which local CQUIN goals are to be adopted are made at Trust's board level and negotiated with the CCG. CCGs can decide not to adopt CQUINs that Trusts have recommended. There are differing levels of engagement from CCGs when it comes to the detail of the CQUIN goals adopted - some leave the setting of CQUIN progress indicators for example to the Trust staff, and others will request that certain indicators (e.g. an improvement in patient satisfaction) are included.

14. I have more questions, where can I find out more information?

For further information about the hospital food CQUIN please refer to:

- NHS England (March 2015) Commissioning for Quality and Innovation (CQUIN): 2015/16 guidance - <http://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/9-cquin-guid-2015-16.pdf>
- NHS England webpages on the NHS Standard Contract and CQUIN –
- www.england.nhs.uk/nhs-standard-contract/
- Food for Life Catering Mark webpages on hospital food and the hospital food CQUIN - www.sacert.org/catering/hospitalscaresettings/newhospitalfoodcquin

If you have any further questions about the hospital food CQUIN or how to achieve the Catering Mark in hospitals please get in touch with the Catering Mark team –

Contact us and we'll be happy to help

Call 0117 914 4206
Email catering@foodforlife.org.uk
Visit www.sacert.org/catering/hospitalscaresettings

Interested in including a goal to improve hospital food in your CQUIN scheme?

Would like more information about the Catering Mark?



New measures for rewarding excellence in hospital food

Department of Health, 2014

Commissioning for Quality and Innovation (CQUIN)

CQUIN number 295, 'Improving the Patient Environment – Improving Hospital Food by achieving compliance with recommended or best practice standards', was published in December 2013, as part of the CQUIN picklist, a supporting document of the NHS Standard Contract 2014/15. This CQUIN is relevant to all providers who deliver food services to patients, visitors or staff, irrespective of how the food is provided. The goal of this CQUIN is to increase the number of NHS organisations that comply with best practice standards on hospital food, including (but not limited to) those identified by the Hospital Food Standards Panel.

There is strong evidence that better nutritional status improves clinical outcomes in many illnesses. Across the population there is good evidence that a diet lower in saturated fat, sugar and salt would lead to improved health, especially in relation to heart disease, high blood pressure and stroke. There is also evidence that sustainable food procurement and animal welfare improvements can have beneficial consequences for the environment and for British farmers, fishermen and growers.

Improvements in patient outcomes and in public health would be expected to lead to efficiencies across the NHS. There are also likely to be direct efficiencies in procurement that arise from the scrutiny that a standards assessment requires. Establishing a CQUIN payment is an appropriate motivator because for most organisations, achievement of higher standards is likely to require one-off initial investment. A CQUIN payment would thus directly incentivise action towards compliance. Indicative standards/guidance include:

Defra produce detailed information on Food GBS, including information directed specifically at the NHS:

sd.defra.gov.uk/advice/public/buying/products/food/

The Soil Association produces guidance to help organisations achieve the Food for Life Catering Mark (Bronze, Silver or Gold):

www.sacert.org/catering/standards

The British Dietetic Association produces guidance in improving outcomes through food and beverage services (the Nutrition and Hydration Digest):

www.bda.uk.com/publications/NutritionHydrationDigest.pdf

Link to CQUIN picklist:

www.england.nhs.uk/nhs-standard-contract/