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Grading is Coming – 1 April 2008

What people who use care services, their families and carers need to know



So that care in Scotland continues to improve, we are introducing grading. We want our inspections to be more targeted and to focus more on people who use care services, their families and their carers. Better information, more involvement with people who use care services and clear grades will help people make more informed choices about the care services they want to use.

What is grading?

Each service is graded against four quality themes at each inspection. The themes are:

- quality of care and support
- quality of environment/information
- quality of staffing
- quality of management and leadership.

The six point grading scale

Each of the themes is graded against the following scale:

- 6 excellent
- 5 very good
- 4 good
- 3 adequate
- 2 weak
- 1 unsatisfactory

This means that for each care service there will be four grades awarded after inspection, for example 5,3,4,6. There will not be one overall grade.

Self assessment

Services self-assess themselves against the guidance provided by the Care Commission. The Care Commission Officer takes this into account when doing the inspection and then grades the service. To achieve better grades, care service providers must show that they have involved people who use their service in the assessment. The final say on the grades awarded sits with the Care Commission, as the regulator.

What are the benefits?

Whether a service is good or poor will be much more transparent. People choosing services will have a clearer idea of the quality of the services available. Because a grade for each quality theme will be published at each inspection, all services will be under more pressure to improve. And, most importantly, it responds to the needs of people who use services, their families and carers, who have expressed a strong demand for grading.

How will it affect me?

This is the biggest change since the Care Commission started in April 2002, so it will affect everyone. Firstly, we all need to find out more and become familiar with the details of the change.

How can I find out more?

Discuss what's happening with your service and ask them how you can get involved.

Ask your service provider to:

- arrange a group discussion
- produce a questionnaire for you to complete anonymously, in your own time
- talk to you, your relatives and carers regularly about what they will do with the feedback you have given.

To find out more about the new grading scheme, call **0845 603 0890** or visit **www.carecommission.com**