

Is this just PRI with a different name?

No. PRQC has been developed following learning from the PRI process and discussions with providers and system partners over the last two years.

During this time, we found that some concerns that did not meet safeguarding thresholds were still being reported through safeguarding routes. Whilst PRI provided an alternative way for Providers sharing information with SCCM, it did not always help providers feel more confident about deciding which route was most appropriate in the first place. This highlighted something important. The challenge was not simply where information was being reported, but how decisions were made before the reporting. PRQC has therefore been designed to support confident decision making by helping providers to:

1. Use the Framework

Use the Adult Safeguarding Framework to help understand the concern and identify whether safeguarding may be a consideration.

2. Apply Professional Judgement

The Safeguarding Framework is a useful decision-support tool, but it does not replace professional judgement. Where uncertainty remains, providers can continue to seek advice through the MASH consultation line service.

3. Choose the Most Appropriate Route

Once the concern has been considered, choose the most appropriate response, whether that is Local Management, MASH Consultation, PRQC or Safeguarding.

At the heart of PRQC is one simple principle: The Decision Comes First. The Reporting Route taken follows.

PRQC is not intended to replace PRI with a different form. It is intended to support confidence, professional judgement and more proportionate route selection when concerns arise.

How do I know whether something should be Local Management, PRQC or Safeguarding?

The Adult Safeguarding Framework should always be your starting point.

The framework can help you understand the nature of the concern and whether safeguarding indicators may be present. However, the framework is not an oracle and will not always provide a clear answer in every situation. Where uncertainty remains after using the framework, you are encouraged to seek advice through the MASH consultation service. Following consideration of

the framework, professional judgement and any consultation advice received, you can then choose the most appropriate route.

What if I get it wrong?

PRQC recognizes that decisions are made using the information available at the time. What matters is that you have considered the information available, used the framework, sought consultation where uncertainty remains, applied professional judgement and recorded your rationale. Good decision making is about thoughtful and proportionate judgement, not perfection.

Can I still contact MASH if I am unsure?

Yes. The MASH consultation service remains available and continues to play an important role within the PRQC approach. Where you remain unsure after applying the framework, consultation can help explore the concern, discuss how the framework has been applied and support decision making.

Are you expecting us to report less?

No. PRQC is not about reducing reporting. It is about helping you feel more confident in selecting the most appropriate route. Some concerns will require safeguarding, some may benefit from consultation, many concerns will continue to be managed through Local Management arrangements (inhouse) without the need to report them to Suffolk County Council individually and some of those concerns may develop into patterns or trends that justify a Provider Reported Quality Concern report being submitted.

How will SCCM monitor incidents that are managed through Local Management?

SCCM will continue to review provider quality through routine contract monitoring activities. We may discuss themes and trends such as falls, medication errors, resident-to-resident incidents, skin tears or pressure damage, and the actions you have taken in response.

Local Management does not mean a lack of oversight. It means isolated incidents are managed through your own governance arrangements, with SCCM maintaining proportionate oversight through contract monitoring. Local Management means keeping isolated incidents in-house. SCCM will continue to review how providers identify, manage and learn from those incidents.

What exactly is a Provider Reported Quality Concern?

A PRQC is intended to share quality intelligence that you have gathered about patterns, trends and emerging concerns in your service that may benefit from wider support, learning or oversight.

It is not intended to replace normal incident and accident reporting processes within your organization. If you identify a concern that whilst not meeting the Safeguarding threshold is developing over time, recurring despite action being taken, or may indicate a wider quality issue, PRQC provides a route to share that information with SCCM.

Does every incident now need a PRQC to be completed?

No. Most day-to-day incidents will continue to be managed through your organisation's existing incident reporting, accident reporting, governance and oversight arrangements.

Where incidents are isolated, have been appropriately managed and do not indicate an emerging safeguarding or quality concern, they will often remain matters for **Local Management**. For example, a one-off incident where no harm has occurred and appropriate action has been taken would normally continue to be managed through usual incident and accident reporting processes. **PRQC** should be considered where concerns begin to develop into patterns, trends, repeated incidents of the same/similar types or emerging quality concerns.

What happens to information submitted through PRQC?

PRQCs are reviewed by SCCM as quality intelligence. The information helps identify themes, recurring issues, learning opportunities and areas where providers may benefit from additional support. The intention is to use intelligence positively to support improvement across the Suffolk care market. The information you provide will be reviewed by your SCCM officer and they may contact you to discuss it further if necessary. If you do not hear from SCCM you can consider the quality concern logged and closed.

What support is available to help me make decisions?

A range of resources has been made available including provider webinars, guidance documents, FAQs, practical examples and access to MASH consultation where appropriate. These resources are designed to support confidence and consistency in framework-led decision making.

What are other providers doing?

Providers will be at different stages of their PRQC journey and may not always reach the same conclusions in every situation. The important thing is that decisions are informed by the

framework, professional judgement, consultation where needed and the information available at the time. The same principles apply to everyone regardless of provider type or size.