



Joint Statement

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Accreditation: Supporting the Delivery of Health and Social Care

World Accreditation Day 2015 focuses on the support accreditation gives in the delivery of health and social care.

The successful provision of health and social care is one of the greatest challenges today and will only grow in its magnitude and complexity. Whether caused by expanding global population growth, or increased life expectancy, the need to provide reassuring, consistent, cost-effective health and social care grows every day.

Accreditation provides a key tool for health and social care providers in this delivery.

Health and social care have the same goals as virtually all sectors, striving to deliver services that fulfill a balance of quality, economic, social and environmental needs, all ultimately aiming for excellence. Health and social care's excellence is driven by the need to provide assurance and confidence to patients, families, regulators and health and social care providers.

The role of accreditation's role in health and social care is to support this assurance;

- Accreditation means that the certification bodies certifying healthcare providers to leading management system standards, whether ISO 9001 to continuously support quality or ISO 13485 to ensure excellence in the provision of medical devices, are operating to global levels of assurance.
- Accreditation for medical/clinical laboratories based on global standards such as ISO 15189 demonstrates via a rigorous process to all stakeholders including health care providers, the technical competence of that laboratory, giving an international sign of assurance.
- Accredited clinical laboratories are able to ensure the international comparability, reliability, and equivalence of measurement results through the use of appropriate reference materials and methods thereby aiding improved patient care.
- Accredited certification to ISO/IEC 27001 Information Security Management standard gives patients' confidence in those organisations handling their personal data – a vital element in health and social care provision.



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- Accredited inspection for social care drives up standards, and provides assurance and confidence to customers and the public that the care provider has been independently inspected in their specific fields of expertise in social care such as dementia, learning difficulties, nursing, mental health, and domiciliary care, and is compliant with the rigorous standards used by the accredited inspection body.

A growing number of case studies, independent research and supporting information from around the world, illustrating the value of accreditation in the health and social care sector, can be viewed on publicsectorassurance.org¹.

With expanding global markets, especially for medical devices, the systems of the IAF Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MLA) and ILAC's Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) help all patients, regulators and other stakeholders understand the credentials of health and social care providers which holds accreditation or accredited certification. Regardless of geography, those organisations which are linked to the IAF MLA and ILAC MRA systems, demonstrate a commitment to excellence and assurance vital in health and social care.

In addition to delivering assurance, this system also delivers efficiency. The stated and verified equivalence gained through the global MLA and MRA systems allows health and social care providers to use manufacturers and suppliers which have tested products once, rather than multiple times, both in the process of seeking regulatory approvals and moving it across borders.

Maybe more than any other service, having confidence in the delivery of health and social care is of paramount importance to those using and regulating it. Accreditation of laboratories, inspection bodies and certification bodies ultimately provides assurance to patients and all stakeholders. Through the standardisation and regulatory process, coupled with accreditation, health and social care is provided at the right quality, efficiently and using the most appropriate resources from around the world.

Major events, press campaigns, workshops and seminars will take place in conjunction with the celebration of World Accreditation Day in over 90 countries to raise awareness of the value that accreditation plays in providing confidence in supporting the delivery of health and social care. For further details, contact your local accreditation body.

A promotional brochure to celebrate the day is available for download from the IAF and ILAC websites.

¹Publicsectorassurance.org is a joint website set up by ISO, ILAC, IAF, IIOC and IEC to help the public sector learn about the benefits of using conformity assessment.

