

Our approach

Focused on excellence: we believe that all services for people with mental health problems should provide high quality care. We seek to work in ways that support services with development needs to improve, and enable those that are performing well to aspire to excellence.

User-centred: we believe that the experience of people using services is key to the design and delivery of high quality care. For this reason, from the design of our programme to our work with individual services, we seek to engage people with real experience of using services, their carers and representative organisations.

Aligned with the performance management and regulatory framework: we know that teams and organisations need to be able to demonstrate the quality of the care they provide. Our work is aligned with national guidelines, standards and legislation.

Locally-owned: we believe that real improvements can only be achieved when those who need to make change happen are fully involved. Our work is led by front-line staff and engages senior service managers, as well as involving patients and their carers.

Multi-disciplinary: we know that providing excellent services does not depend on one professional group. Our process includes staff from different disciplines and professional backgrounds.

Find out more

To find out more about AIMS-PICU and how to join visit our website at www.rcpsych.ac.uk/aims or contact a member of our team below:

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Psychiatric Intensive Care Units (AIMS-PICU)





What is AIMS for psychiatric intensive care units (AIMS-PICU)?

AIMS is an accreditation scheme, working with inpatient mental health services to assure and improve the safety and quality of services and their environments. **AIMS-PICU** is specifically designed for psychiatric intensive care units.

It engages staff and service users in a comprehensive process of review, through which good practice and high quality care are recognised. Services are supported to identify areas for improvement and set achievable targets for change.

Services that are performing well are accredited, assuring staff, service users and carers, commissioners and regulators of the quality of the service being provided.

AIMS is an initiative of the College Centre for Quality Improvement. It is a collaboration between the Royal College of Psychiatrists, the British Psychological Society, the College of Occupational Therapists, the Royal College of Nursing and the National Association of Psychiatric Intensive Care & Low Secure Units (NAPICU), which means that it is led by the professional bodies of those staff most involved in inpatient care.

How we help services

Our accreditation process supports services to evaluate their performance, and improve their practice through:

- **Self-review** of their service.
- **Peer-review** identifying and discussing challenges with the visiting reviewers.
- **A detailed team** report recognising areas of achievement and identifying areas for improvement.
- **Organised visits to other services** supported by an experienced lead reviewer.
- **Report of national findings** identifying trends and enabling benchmarking with other services.
- **Sharing good practice** through our newsletters, email discussion groups, annual conference and publication of resources.
- **Personal development** through training in peer-reviewing and participation in the wider process.
- **Spread of learning** beyond the participating unit to other services within the organisation.



Outcomes for units

AIMS accreditation helps units to:

Demonstrate the quality of care they provide including:

- dedicated, trained and committed staff;
- dedicated time with patients;
- activity and therapy provision;
- involvement of service users and carers;
- communication between services.

Demonstrate that they meet national standards, in line with national policy and guidance from the Department of Health, NICE and the NPSA.

Use our standards and assessment process as a framework to monitor contracts and develop service level agreements.

Use information from the accreditation process in Trust Quality Accounts, as recommended by the National Quality Board.