

Briefing: Audit, Inspection and Regulation in Wales

The purpose of this briefing paper for new Assembly Members and their staff is to outline the role of audit, inspection and regulation in Wales. The paper also highlights how the Inspection Wales Programme helps collaboration between audit and inspection bodies in Wales and provides practical examples.

Who are the Inspection Wales Partners?

Auditor General for Wales and the [Wales Audit Office](#).

Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales ([CSSIW](#))

[Estyn](#) – Her Majesty’s Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

Healthcare Inspectorate Wales ([HIW](#))

Collectively, we are the External Review Bodies for Wales.

What do we do?

Each partner has a unique and distinct role and set of functions. We all work to different laws and reporting arrangements (our remits). Put simply, our roles collectively provide:

- Public assurance.
- Political assurance.
- Oversight of the effectiveness of arrangements to manage public services.
- Assessments of the effectiveness of public service delivery, including the costs, quality, and safety of different services.

The areas where we have a common interest are confined to certain specific areas, in the main, around governance (including leadership and management).

Where we work together

Inspection Wales was established in 2011 because we knew that working together on areas of common interest would help improve services for the people of Wales. We reviewed our own progress in 2015, and published a stocktake report on our website. We established a solid foundation for better collaboration, knowledge sharing and business planning. One building block is sharing information, another is how we share serious concerns about an organisation, and our most recent paper is on whistleblowing. A practical example of how these help us work together is our joint work on the Independence of Older People.

We have done a lot of work together, and some of this will be familiar to you, but you might not have known they were joint.

- Throughout 2011 and 2012, we worked together at Pembrokeshire County Council looking at safeguarding and corporate governance, resulting in a number of high profile changes. [CSSIW, Estyn, the Wales Audit Office, HIW, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Probation.]

- Our joint reviews of governance arrangements at Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, resulted in Public Accounts Committee enquiries, significant changes in the Board, and ultimately in the Health Board being placed in Special Measures. [HIW and the Wales Audit Office in 2013, 2014 and 2015]
- The reviews of Regional Consortia for School Improvement are helping regional education consortia increase the impact their improvement work has on school improvement. [Estyn and the Wales Audit Office.]
- In Monmouthshire combined fieldwork meant the council only had one site visit and received better informed conclusions for both its Educational Monitoring return, coming out of special measures, and its Corporate Assessment. [CSSIW, Estyn and the Wales Audit Office]
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards examines the key findings contributing to the improvement in outcomes for people [HIW and CSSIW joint reports]

What do we mean by Audit, Inspection and Regulation in Wales?

Audit - Independent examination and public reporting to enable organisations to be held to account for their probity and stewardship of public funds. This means we look at how public bodies spend their money, and whether they use their money to do the right things. The Auditor General for Wales and his staff in the Wales Audit Office are primarily auditors.

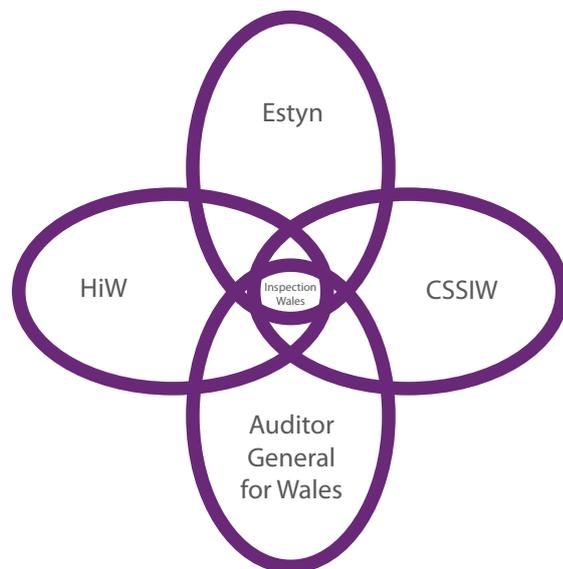
Inspection - Evaluating and publicly reporting on the standards and quality of public services and the impact this service delivery has on people. We check, and report on whether public services are meeting the standards we expect in Wales. Estyn, CSSIW and HIW carry out inspection activity.

Regulation - Ensuring professional and service quality standards which meet the needs of and improve outcomes for people who use the service. So we make sure services abide by the regulations made by the National Assembly, and Welsh Government. CSSIW and HIW are primary regulators. The Auditor General and Estyn are not regulators.

What is Inspection Wales?

Inspection Wales is a programme of joint and collaborative working between the four audit and inspection bodies in Wales. Our shared aim is to support better outcomes for the people of Wales, protecting their interests by reporting independently on public services.

Inspection Wales helps us to work together on areas of common interest. By working together we share intelligence and information, increase the efficiency of external review both for us and public services, and increase the power of our work to drive improvements in services.



More information: www.inspectionwales.com

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