

Using what we have learnt from previous annual health checks

Top tips for third party commentaries

From the perspective of the Healthcare Commission

The most useful commentaries:

- ✓ are written in a **clear** and **concise** way
- ✓ contain information relevant to the **current** annual health check
- ✓ **clearly relate** to one or more standards
- ✓ **clearly state** whether the third party thinks that the trust is **compliant** with the relevant standard
- ✓ contain **supporting evidence** from a range of sources
- ✓ include **detailed information**, for example: dates, outcomes
- ✓ clearly demonstrate the **involvement of the 3rd party**
- ✓ use full names **avoiding** use of **acronyms**
- ✓ **focus** on commenting on the **standards** rather than criticism of the content of standards and the system of assessment

It helps if third parties:

- have regular interaction with the trust
- have access to trust reports that highlight patient concerns e.g. patient survey reports, PALS reports, complaints reports
- have attended board and other trust meetings where these issues are discussed
- are familiar with current legislation and trust policies on relevant issues such as safety, equality
- have carried out their own surveys and reviews
- have witnessed first hand whether policies and initiatives are being implemented
- have been involved in the development of new initiatives
- feel able to challenge trusts and influence change