



## **CHKS Accreditation – The Children’s Trust**

### **Why accreditation provides the basis for genuine quality improvement**

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## Summary

The Children’s Trust is the UK’s leading charity for children with brain injury and neurodisability. It works with children and young people from 0-18 years from across the UK with acquired brain injury (ABI), neurodisability and complex health needs. Through [CHKS Accreditation](#), the charity has been able to embed a culture of continuous improvement as well as helping to assure commissioners about the quality of its services. Accreditation has also helped to put the charity on a sound footing that will ensure its future competitiveness and sustainability.



## From CQC inspection to accreditation

Following a government review into the self-regulation of charity fundraising over the summer of 2015 and changes to CQC standards in March 2015, The Children’s Trust recognised significant challenges lay ahead. Dalton Leong, the charity’s chief executive, says this was one of the reasons for looking into accreditation. “We had to do something dramatic,” he says.

The accreditation journey with CHKS started in 2015 and Dalton explains this required buy-in from the senior leadership team as well as all staff. “This is a complex organisation and we didn’t just want to focus on clinical or education excellence, we wanted to aim for excellence in everything we do from fundraising through to facilities. To demonstrate the scope, every corner of our business was inspected, including issues ranging from our evacuation procedures to the way we report and investigate incidents. No stone was left unturned.”

## Putting in place a project plan for success

The charity’s first step was to allocate leads to all standards and criteria. A project lead had overall responsibility and significant elements of the plan were regular reviews and staff communication. Dalton says: “It was clear to us that communication was the key and our starting point was creating ‘high visibility’ with posters highlighting our focus on quality and notifying staff of the accreditation process. We used our staff intranet (“The Loop”) to keep everyone updated on progress. Regular review was equally important and, as well as monthly reviews, we also put in place formal quarterly meetings to ensure we were on track. For the project lead, it was nearly a full-time job to keep everything on track.”

## Accreditation involves culture change

Dalton believes that successful accreditation requires a culture shift. “You have to go beyond systems and process and start to consider the charity’s mindset. This means addressing staff concerns about change and getting beyond the ‘we’ve always done it this way’ approach. External moderation helped us to challenge this and change our culture. We wanted to embed a culture of continuous improvement.”

His view is that any organisation in a similar position has to be prepared to put time into the accreditation process, but also acknowledge there will inevitably be some pain along the way. “At one point I did wobble in terms of our commitment, the amount we had to achieve to meet the standards was immense and seemed unachievable, but after a long conversation with a colleague, we moved beyond this and I’m really pleased we did.”



## Benefitting from support and reaping the reward

For Dalton, the CHKS surveyors were vital when it came to building trust within the organisation. “They weren’t here just to catch us out; their motivation was to help us to improve. By working with them we demonstrated how we are open and transparent in the way we operate. We know that when things aren’t going to plan, we can learn from our mistakes.”

“Another benefit for us was being able to benchmark ourselves against a set of external standards that are recognised globally. We feel much stronger in terms of what we have to face, and we know that maintaining these standards will be just as hard as the journey to meet them.”

CHKS Accreditation has brought about organisation-wide improvement. The accreditation journey has ensured standards and processes are common right across the charity.

## Latest CQC rating reflects the positive impact of accreditation

Dalton is proud of the charity’s achievement and he acknowledges that working with CHKS has inevitably helped to improve outcomes for the children who use its services. Better outcomes have been evidenced by the most recent CQC and Ofsted Care inspections. They both rated The Children’s Trust as ‘Outstanding’ in all areas. The CQC found that ‘Staff treated people with compassion, kindness, dignity and respect. People and relatives felt that staff went above and beyond in how they provided care.’

“I feel strongly that the CHKS accreditation process helped us achieve these ‘Outstanding’ ratings. Members of staff have told me that it was a difficult journey, but they can now see why we did it. We have also seen a huge boost in morale. And, we are all extremely proud to be the first children’s charity to receive CHKS accreditation

# About CHKS

CHKS is a leading provider of healthcare intelligence and quality improvement products and services. Over the last 27 years our team of NHS data experts, clinicians and quality managers have worked with more than 400 healthcare organisations around the world to improve population health.

We enable providers and commissioners to make better decisions at patient, service, organisation and population level and deliver sustainable improvements in care quality, patient outcomes and service efficiency along the entire patient pathway.

## Our services include:

- **Healthcare benchmarking and analytics** – we identify what to improve and model the impact of change at patient, organisation and population level
- **Clinical coding, data quality and costing services** – we ensure data is used for payment and decision making accurately reflects the care delivered
- **Care quality, assurance and accreditation** – we work to the latest international standards of best practice within a proven framework of continuous improvement.

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