The Getting It Right First Time programme is helping to improve the quality of care within the NHS by reducing unwarranted variations

- National, clinician-led programme
- Delivering efficiencies and cost savings
- Improving quality of care
- Improving patient outcomes
- Sharing and promoting best practice
- Focused on 40+ specialties
Getting It Right First Time

Getting It Right First Time (GIRFT) is a national programme which aims to improve the treatment and care of NHS patients. Our mission is to identify and reduce unwarranted variations in the way services are delivered.

We do this by reviewing surgical and medical specialties and the NHS services they provide. As well as identifying areas of variation in clinical practice, we highlight what is working well and share examples of good practice in our national reports. Our goal is to improve quality, efficiency and patient outcomes.

The programme is a partnership between the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Trust and NHS Improvement. We advise trusts throughout England on more than 40 surgical and medical specialist areas.

Why is there unwarranted variation?

Some variation is warranted
- Local needs and priorities shape services
- Innovative approaches are helpful

Some is unwarranted
- Patient outcomes vary
- Clinical practice can be different across areas
- Providers’ costs for similar items also range widely

Raising performance improves quality and efficiency
- Greater productivity often leads to better care
- If all providers’ cost bases were at the median level, the total savings would be more than £5 billion

Poor or inconsistent recording of data across trusts inhibits understanding of treatment decisions. The GIRFT reviews have highlighted issues with both the accuracy of the data collected and the way it is recorded. Only by improving data quality will trusts know how well they are treating patients and how they can improve patient treatment and care.

In tackling the variation in the way services are provided and delivered, we are able to identify recommendations that can help improve the quality of care and outcomes for patients, as well as helping the NHS deliver much-needed efficiency savings.

Prof Tim Briggs CBE, Chairman of GIRFT and National Director of Clinical Improvement for the NHS

How does GIRFT work?

The programme is led by some of the UK’s leading clinicians, who are experts in their field. We work with each trust to analyse and understand their performance data, which we then compare to that of other trusts across the country. We use this to produce comprehensive data packs which help trusts to identify where improvements can be made. We also make national recommendations on good practice to reduce variation in clinical practice and improve outcomes for patients. This in turn helps to deliver a more efficient and cost-effective NHS.

How does GIRFT help?

GIRFT has already helped trusts save millions of pounds in orthopaedics, following our first review which saw leading surgeon Professor Tim Briggs visiting more than 200 hospitals undertaking orthopaedic surgery.

The recommendations adopted following the publication of the first GIRFT national report on orthopaedic surgery in 2015 have helped to free up to 50,000 beds annually by reducing the length of stay in hospital for hip and knee patients. Trusts have also been able to ‘ring-fence’ more orthopaedic beds, reducing infection and enabling patients to go home sooner.

GIRFT Regional Hubs provide on-going support to trusts to interpret their datasets and reduce unwarranted variations. The hub teams assist in the delivery of agreed improvements, tracking progress and prioritising support where needed.

We also work with professional bodies and NICE to explore whether clinical guidance may support implementation. The programme may also identify wider lessons for NHS policy, which we will discuss with all relevant stakeholders as they arise.

See our reports at:
www.gettingitrightfirsttime.co.uk/girft-reports/

See the surgical and medical specialties to be reviewed by our programme at:
www.gettingitrightfirsttime.co.uk/workstreams