



GUIDE TO ACCREDITATION



Understand the benefits of applying for the only UK-wide, health-specific social value accreditation

Social Value and the future of healthcare

Together, we have an immense opportunity to realise a more positive, sustainable and collaborative system.

The health industry: few sectors play such a vital role in our everyday lives, and few come with the same challenges and demands. From skills shortages and squeezed budgets, to a lack of capacity and the impacts of mental health. The ongoing effort to keep the UK healthy, happy and well against such a backdrop is nothing short of heroic.

While the reasons for the current challenges are multiple and complex, we believe social value can be one important tool in building a stronger, more resilient future. We define social value as 'the positive impact created for society by the actions and legacy of an organisation'.

But what does this mean for healthcare? Social value prompts us to embed the best practice approaches to health and wellbeing that are so crucial to retaining happy and motivated staff. It encourages a focus on skills and supporting future generations into the industry. It prioritises localism – the act of sourcing, recruiting and reinvesting within our communities, to help them thrive. And it encourages us to work in collaboration with other organisations for mutual benefit – sharing knowledge, skills, capacity and resources.

The case for embedding social value within healthcare has never been so urgent – or presented such a compelling opportunity. It's one of the reasons that local and national government now require a commitment to social value as part of health commissioning.

Whether you are motivated by the chance to quantify, maximise or simply be recognised for your social value, you're in the right place. Through consultancy and accreditation, we can help you distinguish yourself for the highest standards of ethics and fairness.

Richard Dickins

MD, Social Value Quality Mark CIC



The SVQM CIC leadership team. Top: MD Richard Dickins; middle, Director Natalie Wadley; bottom, Director Jane Strand.

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“This has given a focus to our vision, mission and brand.”

Mary Wishart

Director of Strategy and Partnerships, Locala Health & Wellbeing

About the Social Value Quality Mark® – Health

Nurturing and celebrating the highest value standards in healthcare.

The Social Value Quality Mark Health accreditation is the UK's first health-specific social value award. It is being delivered in collaboration with NHS Arden & GEM Commissioning Support Unit – a multi award-winning partner to the health service. The Health Award has been designed to reflect national health and care policy and responds to the needs, challenges and opportunities of the industry.

Born from the UK-leading Social Value Quality Mark framework, the health award recognises the additional social value delivered for patients, the community, staff and NHS partners within the UK.

Adopting the Social Value Quality Mark and its framework enables NHS organisations to develop a clear social value strategy and roadmap.



The benefits of accreditation

Accreditation is probably the biggest outward-facing sign that you are:



Supporting an integrated and sustainable healthcare sector



Tackling inequality, driving fairness and inclusion

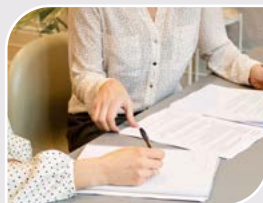


Supporting happier, healthier workforces.

These are some of the reasons that healthcare organisations choose to seek accreditation.



Compete across public and private healthcare sectors



Have your value independently audited and assured



Attract and retain talent



Benchmark your performance



Empower integrated delivery



Evidence your statutory and legal responsibilities



Progress your Net Zero commitments



Build your reputation with commissioners and stakeholders



About Bronze accreditation

The Bronze Health Award is the entry point and marks the first step in verifying your commitment to creating, measuring and reporting social value.

During the accreditation process, your organisation will build:

- ✓ A clear view of how your social value aligns to the needs of your staff, patients and communities.
- ✓ An understanding of your social legacy.
- ✓ A set of pledges and key value indicators that will help frame the way you think about and measure social value.
- ✓ A roadmap showing how you will develop, measure and report social value over a 12-month period.

Successful Bronze accreditation will enable you to:

- ✓ Approach social value tender questions with confidence.
- ✓ Compete more equally across sectors, with a social value identity that is meaningful and relevant.
- ✓ Have your performance independently assessed and benchmarked against other NHS organisations.
- ✓ Demonstrate your commitment to care commissioners, customers, and stakeholders.
- ✓ Have the edge when it comes to attracting and retaining healthcare talent.
- ✓ Promote your award – signifying independent assurance of your commitment to sustainable and collaborative ways of working.



"We are proud to support the development of a dedicated 'Health' Social Value Quality Mark to give recognition to healthcare organisations and their partners on delivering improvements in care and outcomes."



Alison Tonge

Executive Director of Strategy and Innovation, NHS Arden & GEM CSU

1. What you can expect from us

The award is licensed by Social Value Quality Mark CIC – an independent social enterprise that exists to uphold the highest standards of values-led business. SVQM operates an independent scrutiny panel who will review your evidence and either confirm successful accreditation, or give reasons why the award has been declined. There are two routes to apply – these are explained below.

Route A: Guided Accreditation

Most clients opt to receive consultancy – enhancing their chances of success.

Our consultants have a deep understanding of the accreditation framework and are uniquely well placed to guide you.

If you are choosing this route, please [skip to Section 2: Guided Accreditation](#).

Route B: DIY Accreditation

You can also choose to ‘go it alone’ – simply register on the link below, pay the required fee and submit your evidence for our panel to review. This is most suited to organisations with a detailed understanding of social value and who are already advanced in their journey.

The Bronze Online Application area of our website offers additional advice and guidance.

[SVQM Health – Bronze Award](#)

If you are choosing this route, please [jump straight to Section 3 – Preparing your evidence](#).



2. Guided accreditation (optional)

Our team is invested in your journey. We want you to be successful and will guide you through every step. You'll be matched with a specialist who understands your sector and can tailor elements of the approach to meet your needs.

To get started, we will:

- Ask you to agree a brief costed proposal.
- Issue a Terms of Engagement.
- Allocate a specialist from the team.
- Create a project plan and give you access to a shared Teams folder.
- Diarise mutually suitable workshop dates.

You will be asked to nominate a small working party of 2-3 people – this might typically include senior stakeholders from different parts of your organisation.

	Workshop Overview	Outputs
<p>Workshop 1: Introduction to Social Value and the SVQM Bronze Health Award</p> <p>(Duration: 2 hours)</p>	<p>This workshop aims to give you a greater understanding of social value and how it applies to your organisation. We will introduce you to the 'Wheel of Value' – a diagram setting out the thematic areas that an organisation can impact when it comes to creating social value.</p> <p>You will be asked to consider a series of pledges against these themes and how to align these to the needs of your patients and communities. We will invite you to think about your own definition of social value and to draft a social legacy statement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear understanding of social value and the actions you will need to take in advance of the next workshop. • Ideas for engaging your patients and communities.
<p>Workshop 2: Your Pledges and Key Value Indicators</p> <p>(Duration: 2 hours)</p>	<p>This workshop provides a facilitated discussion on four central themes: Environment, Economy, Social and Community, Education and Skills. We will allocate 30 minutes to each theme, supporting you to develop your pledges. You will be invited to think about your Key Value Indicators – these are the specific targets that will enable you to track and measure progress.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your first four pledges, as required for Bronze-level accreditation. • Your Key Value Indicators (targets) for each pledge. <p>You will be asked to take these back to your organisation for input and agreement.</p>
<p>Workshop 3: Finalising Your Pledges & KVIs</p> <p>(Duration: 2 hours)</p>	<p>In this third workshop, We will work with you to agree your remaining pledges. The themes for these may vary according to your organisation – you may decide some themes are less applicable, while others are particularly important.</p> <p>You do not have to make a pledge against every theme; however, the Bronze Health Award requires that you make at least 6 pledges in total. You will also be asked to establish Key Value Indicators for each pledge.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your remaining pledges, as required for Bronze-level accreditation. • Your Key Value Indicators (targets) for each pledge.
<p>Workshop 4: Planning your journey to Silver</p> <p>(Duration: 2 hours)</p>	<p>In this fourth and final workshop, you'll look ahead 12 months to fully understand the aspiration for where you'll be then versus your starting point now. SVB will walk through the requirements of Silver accreditation and support you to develop a 3-page roadmap and action plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 3-page roadmap and action plan, as required for Bronze accreditation.

We will review and comment on your evidence. They will check it's robust, realistic and confirm whether it's likely to meet the requirements of the SVQM Health Award.



3. Preparing your evidence

Before you complete the application form, please check you have the following evidence ready to submit.

↳ You have appointed an Executive Sponsor, Environmental and Social Value Leads

An ethical culture starts at the top. Your sponsor is the senior person with overarching accountability for measuring, reporting and embedding social value.

Your Social Value and Environmental Leads will chair the working group and track progress, ensuring there is a clear plan for achieving your Social Value pledges and carbon commitments.

↳ You have established a working group

This group will help embed social value throughout the organisation, so we recommend it includes department heads or influential people from different areas of the organisation.

↳ You have defined what Social Value means to your organisation

Social value is the positive impact you create for society. Taking this as your starting point, can you make it more specific to healthcare and the communities you support?

Don't develop this in isolation; we suggest making it a collaborative process, together with your working group. Encourage them to seek feedback from their teams.

Example Social Value definition

'Social value is the positive impact we create for our staff, customers and communities, through our role in delivering exceptional healthcare and as a major regional employer.'

📌 You have developed and agreed a Social Legacy statement

This is your outward-facing statement of your organisation's role in society – so it should feel impactful. Think beyond your products and services to the difference you make to people's lives. You might want to start by taking your existing mission or purpose statement, if you have one. Is it outward facing? Does it articulate the positive impact you have for your people, communities and society in general?

Example Social Legacy Statements

'We aim to support the highest quality of life for all.'

'We exist to enable healthy, happy and thriving communities'

'High quality, inclusive and accessible healthcare for everyone'

📌 You have set a series of Social Value pledges, aligned to stakeholder need

You will need to submit a minimum of 6 pledges in total, aligned to the Community Themes shown. You are **not required** to make a pledge against every theme; of the discretionary themes, we suggest you focus on the ones most relevant to your organisation and consider where you can make most impact.

Mandatory themes

- ✓ Health & Wellbeing
- ✓ Employment & Volunteering
- ✓ Education & Skills
- ✓ Economic
- ✓ Environment

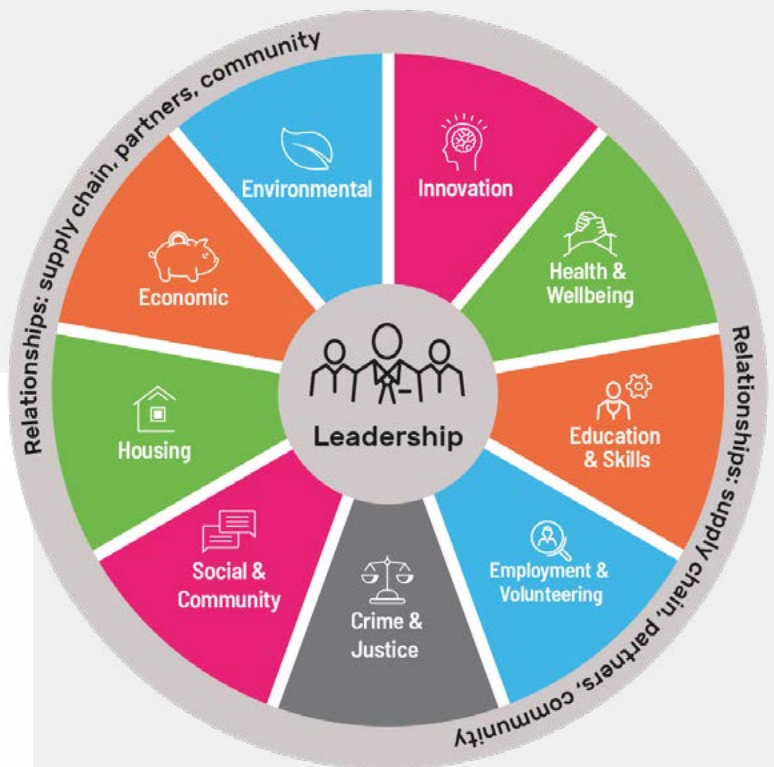
Discretionary themes

- ✓ Housing
- ✓ Crime & Justice
- ✓ Social & Community
- ✓ Innovation
- ✓ Leadership

At the back of this pack, we've included some good practice examples of pledges and KVIs.

Tip: Be creative with your thinking

You may look at a pledge area such as 'Housing' and wonder how it applies to healthcare. This is about ensuring people are safe, warm and secure in their homes. Consider your local community: could you donate to a Food Bank to help household finances stretch further? Could you introduce 'cost of living' vouchers for employees – or a hardship grant?



Community engagement and volunteering

You will be asked to show evidence that these pledges align to the values and expectations of your patients and communities. We recommend carrying out an engagement exercise, seeking to understand the local issues people face, what they expect from their healthcare providers and where you can affect the greatest impact.

You'll also be asked how many active volunteers you have and the total number of hours they donate to local communities.



📌 You have identified Key Value Indicators for each pledge

Your Key Value Indicators are the targets by which you'll measure progress against your pledges. These should be SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound.

Example Key Value Indicators

'Reduce the need for unplanned health intervention by 3.5% in the Cambridge area by 2025'

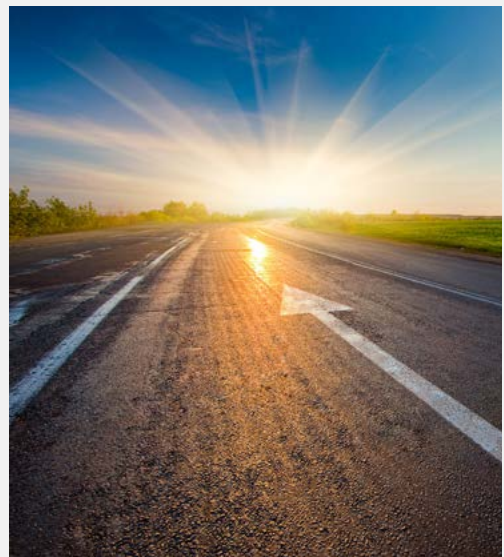
'Provide 24 weeks of meaningful, paid work placements to secondary school students in 2024'

📌 You have developed a Social Value roadmap

You'll need to provide a 2-3 page roadmap on how you will research, consult, measure and report social impact and value over a 12-month period. This should be aligned to your pledges and KVIs.

Answering the following questions can help you structure your plan (for guidance only).

- › What activities/products/services/companies are in scope?
- › How will you capture the information required to prove your value?
- › Which stakeholders will you consult to gain the required data?
- › How will you analyse the data and information?
- › What are the key milestones?
- › How will you measure your performance against your Social Value pledges?
- › How will you ensure your whole organisations is aware of and understands social value?
- › What processes and policies will support your future measurement and reporting?
- › How will you continuously improve and embed best practices?
- › How will you manage any Social Value underperformance?



4. Finalising your application

Please access a copy of the application form below:

[Apply Here – Bronze Health Award](#)

You will be asked to provide:

- › Your contact details
- › Details about your organisation, locations, number of staff and turnover
- › The name of your Executive Sponsor and Social Value and Environmental leads
- › Your Social Legacy statement
- › Your Social Value definition
- › Your pledges, aligned to the 'Wheel of Value' themes
- › Evidence of community engagement and volunteering
- › Your Key Value Indicators
- › Your Social Value road map
- › Your social value and environmental policies and carbon statement, including Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions
- › A copy of your logo

5. Presentation and communication

Once you've achieved Bronze, we will present you with a sustainable award bearing your company's logo.

Awards are sourced through our social enterprise suppliers, The Workshop, Aberfeldy.

Our Communications Associate will share an interactive toolkit to help you promote your achievement. This includes:

- › Standard messages to use for press releases and internal communications.
- › Links to the award logos.
- › Image tiles for use on social media.
- › Helpful hints and tips for communicating your award.

We will add you to a growing directory of companies choosing to stand out for the impact they create for society.

➤ Award Validity

Your award is valid for one year – after which you'll need to pay a small fee to re-audit and retain the licence, submit your application for the Silver Award or relinquish your rights to the accreditation. We will book a 12-month review meeting to confirm your preference.

You will also be asked to 'Opt-in' to agree to transparently report your social value.

On receiving your application, Social Value Quality Mark CIC then has a 2-week window to review. We will let you know if further information is required, giving you the opportunity to submit further evidence. We'll then either confirm successful accreditation, or the reasons why we've declined your award.



➤ Progressing to Silver Award

We hope the accreditation process will give you the confidence and enthusiasm to move up the levels – demonstrating an increasing commitment to sustainable, ethical business. The Silver Quality Mark takes the pledges and targets you created at Bronze, and requires you to submit evidence against these to produce a 12-month forecast for social value.

Obtaining Silver is a significant achievement, giving you even greater recognition of your impact for society. Please ask us for an audit pack.

6. Appendix: Good practice pledges and KVIs

Community Theme	Example Pledge	Example Key Value Indicator (Y1 target)
Health and Wellbeing	We pledge to play a proactive role in supporting the physical and emotional wellbeing of our staff, service users and communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › The training and continued support of mental health first aiders, maintaining a ratio of 1:50 throughout 2024. › Support staff to have access to flexible working where appropriate and possible by 2024. › Sign up to Mental Health at Work by 2024.
Education and Skills	We pledge to continuous training and improvement that supports our staff and communities to deliver quality services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Create a minimum 80/20 split between mandatory and non-mandatory training for all staff by 2023. › Provide one paid apprenticeship opportunity per year per business area by 2024. › Provide 24 weeks of unpaid work experience for secondary school students.
Employment and Volunteering	We pledge to help people reach their potential, increasing employability with access to sustainable work and volunteering.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 815 sessions of employability support accessed › 75% of people accessing employability support attend an interview for paid work › 40% of people accessing employability support gain paid work › 1,300 hours of volunteering given
Housing	We pledge to support people to maintain safe and good quality standards of living as a vital aspect of staying healthy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Provide monthly donations to local food bank. › Establish a hardship grant scheme for care staff, with £10,000 ringfenced per annum. › Formalise a partnership with [organisation] to help an additional 25% of our patients receive home-based care.
Social and Community	We pledge to reduce social isolation and improve the lives of people supported in our communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 75% of service users report an improved change in mental health › 75% of service users report an improved change in physical health › 75% of service users report an improved change in living skills › 75% of service users report an improved change in managing money › 75% of service users take part in social inclusion activity (sport, art, social, volunteering, employment, or education activity)
Economy	We pledge to build our local economy by employing local people, local volunteers and using local suppliers and partners in our work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 65% people employed from local area within a 20-mile radius › 90% volunteers employed from local area within a 20-mile radius › £65,000 spent with local suppliers within a 20-mile radius › £7m generated through contracts with local partners (20 mile radius)
Environment	We pledge to reduce our carbon footprint and negative impact upon the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Carbon plan established with specific actions to be taken against Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions. › 10% reduction achieved in electricity consumption › Recycling- weight reduced by 5% › 5% reduction achieved in travel costs
Leadership	We pledge to improve equality in our workplace and community, develop strong partnerships and make services easy to reach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › 5.7% pay gap – gender › 5% pay gap – ethnicity › 3% pay gap – disability › 100% of employees have a personal anti-racism objective › 100% of employees affected by racism feel safe to talk openly at work about race › 12% of people from Ethnic Minority background access services

7. Frequently Asked Questions

How much does the Bronze Award cost?

All organisations need to pay the audit fee, which is based on the size of your organisation. Please see the pricing structure here.

Additionally, organisations opting for guided accreditation will need to cover 3 days of consultancy. Please ask us for a quote.

What is the difference between the SVQM Health Award, and the standard Quality Mark?

The Health Award is specific to the healthcare sector, including the NHS, suppliers to the NHS, and providers of health products and services across the UK.

Can we apply as a service/department/individual business within a wider organisation?

Yes. Your award will be made out accordingly, and any communications you issue should clarify that the accreditation is specific to one service or department.

Is Bronze always the entry point?

As the SVQM Health Award is new, organisations will need to start at Bronze. You will need to have these basics in place - such as your social value pledges - for us to assess you against these for Silver. The Silver Award will launch later in 2024.

What if we've got a Bronze SVQM which isn't health specific?

We are reviewing the approach for clients who would like to transition from a Bronze award under the general framework, to a health-specific Bronze or Silver award. Please ask us for more details.

How many pledges do we have to make?

As part of the Bronze Award, organisations must make a minimum of 6 pledges - 1 for each mandatory thematic area. The mandatory and discretionary areas are set out on page 5.

How long is our award valid for?

Your award is valid for 12 months. After this, you'll need to pay a small fee to re-audit, apply for the next award level or relinquish your rights to the accreditation. We only allow one re-audit - SVQM encourages organisations to see through the commitments they make under Bronze, and to demonstrate progress through application to Silver.



For further information and advice, drop us a line:

Rutherford House, Warrington Road,

Birchwood, Warrington WA3 6ZH

 www.socialvaluequalitymark

 info@socialvaluequalitymark.com

 0345 017 97 67

Company Number: 12179802

