

# What are human rights?

The Human Rights Act contains 16 rights. These originate from the European Convention of Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998 brings them into UK law.

"Human rights are the basic rights and freedoms that belong to every person in the world, from birth until death. They apply regardless of where you are from, what you believe or how you choose to live your life. They can never be taken away, although they can sometimes be restricted – for example if a person breaks the law, or in the interests of national security.

"These basic rights are based on shared values like dignity, fairness, equality, respect and independence. These values are defined and protected by law. In Britain our human rights are protected by the [Human Rights Act 1998](#)."

Equality and Human Rights Commission

Some of us may feel that human rights aren't relevant to us, as they are often linked to issues such as crime, citizenship and migration, but they are protection for us all. Creating a legal framework for human rights protects our humanity – what makes us unique as human beings, through law. Our human rights need protecting most when we feel the least powerful and are relying on others for our basic needs – including when we are using health and care services. Where care is delivered in line with human rights legislation, it is by nature good quality – this is what we **describe as rights-respecting care**.

As a public authority, CQC is legally required to operate in ways that are compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998. Many of the fundamental standards in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 are related to human rights. As such, the Human Rights Act forms a legal contextual background to the [regulations](#) that we use.