

Inspection Scheduling & Cygnum

What is Cygnum?

Cygnum is CQC's National Resource Planning Tool, the system was introduced to the business in 2016 to assist with the effective scheduling of inspections and allocation of resources.

Once you are HR compliant you will be issued with login details for the Cygnum portal and are required to use this system in accordance with the guidance document provided.

If you are experiencing difficulties using Cygnum please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) in the first instance.

How do I get started in my role as a Specialist Advisor?

Once you have received your Cygnum login please ensure that you familiarise yourself with the system and update the following on your personal record:

1. Biography in the *About Me* section.
2. Periods of availability and non-availability.
3. Conflicts of interest - please note that conflicts of interest are reviewed by FWO and will be approved or rejected in line with CQC policy.

If any other details are incorrect on your Cygnum record, please advise us via email FlexibleWorkforce@cqc.org.uk.

What information should be included in my biography on Cygnum?

In order to improve the information available to us, we would appreciate if you can take some time to update your personal bio on Cygnum. Provision of greater detail in your bio will improve your chances of selection for inspection.

The bio is an opportunity for you to expand on the job role and specialisms that are already listed in Cygnum. We advise that your bio should be no longer than 500 words and suggest that you include some of the following information about yourself:

- Current up to date information about your general professional experience and expertise, this should focus on experience within the last 2 years.
- If your experience is in the NHS or independent services.
- Type of patients/services you work with - e.g. children, adults, older people, people with learning disabilities, CAHMS, substance misuse etc.

Please refer to the Cygnum Portal Guidance on how to update your bio in Cygnum (pages 8 and 9 - select the *About Me* section and edit *Pen Profile*). If you experience any problems with this please contact the BAU Flexible Workforce Team who will be happy to assist with any issues on 0191 2011687 or FlexibleWorkforce@cqc.org.uk.

Will I be provided with a CQC ID badge?

SpAs are not substantive CQC employees and therefore cannot be issued with CQC ID. You will be issued with a warrant letter at the start of each inspection and you are expected to carry photographic ID when attending inspections, failure to do so may result in refusal of entry to the premises.

How are inspection opportunities allocated?

FWO receive notification of inspection opportunities via Cygnum, the team then approach the most suitable SpAs based on the following criteria:

1. Role - i.e. nurse, consultant, social worker, GP, dentist, etc.
2. Specialism - i.e. theatre, critical care, substance misuse, dementia care, etc.
3. Travel distance to the inspection location - we try to allocate SpAs to inspections within a two-hour driving distance of their home address. However, this is not always possible and therefore you may be invited to attend inspections at any location nationwide.

We will offer inspection opportunities to all suitable SpAs, this ensures that we are best placed to meet the requirements of the Inspection Directorates. Confirmation will be given once the team have identified the most suitable SpA.

Please note: You are not obliged to accept inspection opportunities. If you feel that the travel distance to an inspection is unreasonable, you are able to decline the invitation, or alternatively you can discuss the possibility of overnight accommodation with a member of FWO (please see section relating to Travel and Accommodation).

How am I invited to attend inspections?

Primary Medical Services (PMS) and Adult Social Care (ASC) inspections are allocated through Cygnum, you will be advised of this via automated email, you are then expected to access the Cygnum portal to view full details and either accept or reject the inspection.

Hospitals inspection opportunities are currently allocated to SpAs outside of Cygnum, you will be invited via email from FWOscheduling@cqc.org.uk

You may also receive emails from FWO escalations team requesting your assistance with inspections that are scheduled to take place within 4 weeks. Please respond to the email to accept or reject the opportunity. If you accept the invitation, you will be allocated to the inspection in Cygnum (please note, this may not be immediate). You will then receive an automated email notification and are expected to access the Cygnum portal to accept the inspection.

I've received an automated email but I can't access Cygnum to accept the inspection activity, what should I do?

Please contact us FWO Scheduling 0191 2333591 as we can accept the activity on your behalf.

I've received an email notification but the inspection isn't visible in Cygnum?

Most inspections are allocated to more than one suitable SpA, this ensures that we are able to meet the needs of the Inspection Directorates. If the inspection isn't showing on Cygnum then the opportunity has already been accepted by another SpA or is longer available.

I've been allocated to an inspection but the location details aren't visible in Cygnum, why is this?

Details of inspections are only released to SpAs once the inspection has been announced to the provider, for PMS inspections this is usually 2 weeks prior to the inspection date.

Some inspections are unannounced; details of the location will be provided to you by either the lead inspector or Inspection Planning Coordinator (IPC).

I'm due to attend an inspection but I think I have a conflict of interest with the provider/service. Who should I contact?

Contact the team via FWScheduling@cqc.org.uk or 0191 2333591, we will advise accordingly. If you are unable to contact FWO, you should contact the lead inspector. You should also ensure that update your conflicts of interest on Cygnum.

Please note: You must not disclose the details of inspections, and you are obliged to advise us as soon as you are aware of a conflict of interest as this may affect the credibility of the inspection.

The inspection date(s) on Cygnum doesn't correspond with the details I received from FWO, who should I contact?

Please contact FWScheduling@cqc.org.uk and we will advise as to the correct date(s).

I've been invited to attend an inspection by an inspector but haven't been notified of this by FWO or through Cygnum, what should I do?

Contact the team via FWScheduling@cqc.org.uk or 0191 2333591 to advise us of the inspection details and the name of the individual who has contacted you.

You should only attend inspections that have been allocated to you by Flexible Workforce Office.

I've received an automated email to advise that an inspection activity has been changed, what should I do?

Log into the Cygnum portal, you will be able to review the original and revised details of the inspection activity. If you are not able to accommodate the changes, i.e. the date has

changed and you are not available on the new date, please ensure that you reject the inspection activity as soon as possible. FWO will then allocate the inspection to an alternative SpA.

How much notice will I receive for inspection opportunities?

We try to give at least six weeks' notice for PMS and Hospitals inspections, ASC inspections tend to be scheduled within shorter timeframes and so we usually try to offer 4 weeks' notice. Due to the nature of our work, we are required to manage several requests for SpAs within shorter timeframes, and therefore you may be invited to attend inspections at short notice.

You are not under any obligation to accept inspection opportunities, if you feel that the lead-time is unreasonable then you are able to decline the invitation. Please be assured that this will not affect any potential future opportunities.

I haven't received any contact from the inspector, should I still attend the inspection?

Contact us via email FWOscheduling@cqc.org.uk or telephone 0191 2333591, the team will contact the inspector on your behalf and advise accordingly.

I'm concerned that I haven't been invited to attend any inspections for a while, who should I contact?

This could be due a number of influencing factors, contact us via FWOscheduling@cqc.org.uk or telephone 0191 2333591, the team will be able to advise. Before you contact us, please check if your Cygnum account is still active, and that there are no emails from us in your 'junk' folder.

The inspection I was due to attend has been cancelled at short notice, will I still be paid?

Unfortunately, some inspections are cancelled at short notice, this is usually due to illness or complications with a provider. If you are advised of the cancellation within 48 hours of the inspection, please contact us via email FWOscheduling@cqc.org.uk or telephone 0191 2333591. The team will advise if you are eligible to submit a claim for reimbursement in relation to cancelled inspections.

Where is the role based? Am I able to attend inspections in my own area?

The role is classed as home-based and so travel distance is calculated from your home address to the inspection location. You are usually invited to inspections outside of your immediate area to avoid any potential conflict of interest with local providers.

What are the working hours when attending inspections?

The duration of inspections varies depending on the size of the services and the nature of the inspection. Most inspections take place between 8am and 6pm but the Inspection

Planning Coordinator (IPC) or lead inspector will be able to advise as to the specific requirements.

You may sometimes be expected to attend an inspection for part of a day only, this should be communicated and agreed with you prior to the inspection.

How many inspections can I expect to attend?

We are unable to guarantee a minimum number of inspections as this is dependent on the resource requirements of the Inspection Directorates, and your availability. As you are a casual worker, CQC are not obligated to provide you with regular work, however we will endeavour to allocate inspections to SpAs on a fair and equitable basis.

You may find that you are offered several opportunities to attend inspections within a short period of time. This may be due to where inspection types are grouped into a 3-6 month period, or where there is a shortage of SpAs with a particular skill-set.

You are not under any obligation to accept inspection opportunities. If you feel that the expectations are unreasonable, you are able to decline invitations. Please be assured that this will not affect any potential future opportunities.

Can I go home at the end of each day?

Primary Medical Services (PMS) and Adult Social Care (ASC) inspections are usually one day in duration and therefore you would be expected to return home at the end of the inspection.

Hospital inspections can take place over a number of days and you would be expected to stay in the same hotel as the rest of the team, if you would prefer to return home, please inform the lead inspector or IPC who will seek approval from the Head of Inspection on your behalf.

What is the dress code for inspections?

The dress code is smart casual with no branded clothing or denim, and it should reflect the service you are inspecting. Please ask the lead inspector or Inspection Planning Coordinator (IPC) to clarify if you are unsure.

In clinical areas please wear clothing that is bare below the elbow, ties tucked in (if worn), no nail varnish, long hair tied back and no jewellery except for wedding rings and stud earrings.

Am I expected to do any report writing?

SpAs must keep clear and legible notes throughout the inspection and hand them to the inspector at the end of the day or when requested. You may also be asked by the lead inspector to review draft reports.

For ASC inspections, SpAs may be asked by the lead inspector to do some report writing.

Do I need to complete the timesheet on Cygnum?

It is best practice to complete the Cygnum timesheet, however the timesheet is not currently linked to payment and therefore you are required to submit claims for fees and expenses in the usual manner.