



About us

What we do and how we do it

Who we are

We are the Care Quality Commission (CQC), the independent regulator of health and adult social care services in England.

Our purpose is to make sure health and social care services provide people with safe, effective, compassionate, high-quality care, and we encourage care services to improve.

Our role is to monitor, inspect and regulate services to make sure they meet fundamental standards of quality and safety and we publish what we find, including performance ratings to help people choose care.

From September 2013 we will start to regulate different services in different ways, based on what matters to people. We will make better use of tailored information and expert inspection to assess health and social care services.

Our new Chief Inspectors of Hospitals, Social Care and General Practice will improve the way all the services we regulate are assessed and judged to make sure they provide people with safe, effective, compassionate, high-quality care and we encourage them to make improvements.

What we do

- We set quality and safety standards that people have a right to expect whenever they receive care.
- We register care services that meet our standards.
- We monitor, inspect and regulate care services to make sure they continue to meet our standards.
- We protect the rights of vulnerable people, including those whose rights are restricted under the Mental Health Act.
- We listen to and act on people's views and experiences of care.
- We involve people who receive care and the general public in our work, and work in partnership with other organisations and local groups.
- We challenge all care providers, concentrating mainly on the worst performers.
- We make fair and authoritative judgements, supported by the best information and evidence.
- We take appropriate action if care services are failing to meet our standards.
- We carry out in-depth investigations to look at care across the system.
- We report on the quality of care services, publishing clear and comprehensive information, including performance ratings to help people choose care.



Enforcing standards

If we find that a service isn't meeting our standards, we take action to make sure it improves. We have a range of powers that we can use.

We can instruct care managers to produce a plan of action to make improvements or we can do the following.

- Issue a warning notice, asking for improvements within a short period of time.
- Restrict the services that the care provider can offer.
- Restrict admissions to the service.
- Issue a fixed penalty notice.
- Suspend the care provider's registration.
- Cancel the care provider's registration.
- Prosecute the care provider.

We work with local authorities, other regulators and agencies, and sometimes the police, to make sure the necessary action is taken.

Monitoring the Mental Health Act

We protect the rights and interests of people who are detained under the Mental Health Act.

Our Mental Health Act Commissioners make sure that the powers under the Mental Health Act are used properly. They check that people are being lawfully detained and are well cared for.

The commissioners visit patients detained in hospital and meet them in private to find out about their experience of care. They also meet patients who are on a community treatment order.

Involving people in our work

We involve people who use services to help us plan, monitor and evaluate our work.

We involve people in different ways depending on their circumstances, but we always put people who use services at the centre of our work.

As well as involving individuals, we actively involve local community groups and voluntary organisations. We also share information and concerns about local health and social care services with local government and health organisations.

To read more about how we involve the public, people who use services, their families and carers, visit the website at www.cqc.org.uk and see our booklet 'Putting People First'.

Tell us about your experience of care

You have a right to expect safe, compassionate, high-quality care.

If you have experienced poor care, or you know that poor care is being provided somewhere, you should report it, anonymously if you wish, to us.

You can also tell us about good care.

Your feedback is important as it helps us decide where, when and what to inspect.

To tell us about your experience of care use the 'Tell Us About Your Care' form on the CQC website at www.cqc.org.uk/public/sharing-your-experience, phone us on **03000 616161** or email us at enquiries@cqc.org.uk.

Complaints

We do not settle individual complaints about health and social care services but there are other organisations who do.

By law, every provider of care services must have an efficient procedure for dealing with complaints.

If you are not happy with the way the managers of a care service have dealt with your complaint there are a number of things you can do.

- If your complaint relates to a service provided by the NHS, you can contact the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman at www.ombudsman.org.uk.
- If your complaint is about a service provided by a care home or home care agency, you can contact the Local Government Ombudsman at www.lgo.org.uk.

To find out more, visit our website at www.cqc.org.uk and see our booklet 'How to complain about a health or social care service'.

Working in partnership

Nationally and locally we work with other regulators and organisations that manage and oversee the health and social care system.

We work with Monitor, NHS England and the NHS Trust Development Authority to develop a clear programme for action if an NHS trust fails to meet the fundamental standards of quality and safety.

We work with Healthwatch England to make sure that we are responding appropriately to information we receive, and that we do not miss opportunities to identify poor care or shed light on failings that affect people using health and social care services.

We talk regularly to charities, representative groups and voluntary organisations, and listen to the issues that most concern them.

We continue to develop our relationships with local authorities, clinical commissioning groups, local Healthwatch groups, overview and scrutiny committees, foundation trusts' councils of governors, quality surveillance groups, and health and wellbeing boards.

Keeping people informed

We publish all of our inspection reports on our website www.cqc.org.uk, so you can find out what we think of any hospital, dentist, care home, GP surgery or home-care agency.

We publish information about whether or not the services we regulate are providing safe, effective, compassionate and high-quality care.

If our inspectors have asked services to make improvements, we update our website to let people know if the necessary action has been taken.



We have published a series of guides to help you find out more about what standards to expect from the regulation of care. You can download them from our website at www.cqc.org.uk.

- What standards you have a right to expect from the regulation of your hospital
- What standards you have a right to expect from the regulation of your care home
- What standards you have a right to expect from the regulation of agencies that provide care in your own home
- What standards you have a right to expect from the regulation of your dental practice
- What standards you have a right to expect from the regulation of your GP practice
- How to complain about a health care or social care service

How to contact us

Call us on: **03000 616161**

Email us at: enquiries@cqc.org.uk

Visit our website at:

www.cqc.org.uk

You can give us feedback online.

Write to us at:

Care Quality Commission

Citygate, Gallowgate

Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4PA



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